

Zionism During The Holocaust

The Weaponisation of Memory in
the Service of State and Nation

Tony Greenstein



Foreword by Moshé Machover

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The weaponisation of memory in the service of state and nation

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In memory of Anne Frank, Hans and Sophie Scholl, Herbert Baum, the Edelweiss Pirates and the German anti-Nazi resistance, Rudolf Vrba, Alfred Wetzler, Marek Edelman, the fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance and all those who resisted the fascists in Europe. Jewish and non-Jewish.

“Ehud Barak, Tzipi Livni, Gabi Ashkenazi and Ehud Olmert – Don’t you dare show your faces at any memorial ceremony for the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, Lublin, Vilna or Kishinev...You are not Anne Frank of the Bergen Belsen concentration camp but Hans Frank, the German general who acted to starve and destroy the Jews of Poland. Today the Warsaw Ghetto is right in front of you, targeted by your own tanks and artillery, and its name is Gaza.”
(Michelle Warshawski) [↓](#)

¹

Alternative Information Center (AIC) Profile, 4.6.09.
https://www.ngomonitor.org/reports/alternative_information_center_aic_profile/

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Abbreviations & Glossary

- ADL** **Anti-Defamation League** (American Zionist organisation, trains US police forces in Israel, purports to be an anti-racist organisation but has come into conflict with Black Lives Matter)
- AfD** **Alternative for Germany** (far-Right German Party, represented in the Bundestag and virulently pro-Zionist. First entered the Bundestag in 2017)
- AGJA** **Association of Galician Jews in America**
- AHC** **Arab Higher Committee**
- AJA** **Anglo Jewish Association**
- AJB** **Association des Juifs de Belgique** (Belgian Judenrat)
- AJC** **American Jewish Committee** (American Zionist organisation, originally anti-Zionist)
- AK** **Polish Home Army** (underground Polish resistance army during WW2)
- AP** **Auschwitz Protocols** (Vrba Wetzler Report plus that of Jerzy Tabeau)
- BBL** **British Brothers League** (set up in 1901 to oppose Jewish immigration to Britain)
- BDS** **Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions**
- BOD** **Board of Deputies** (today a Zionist organisation that represents about 30% of British Jewry)
- CAA** **Campaign Against Anti-Semitism** (Zionist organisation, set up in summer 2014 during Operation Protective Edge, with the sole purpose of equating anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. The CAA, a McCarthyite group, was heavily involved in the campaign against Jeremy Corbyn. It is widely believed to be funded by the Israeli state and it specialises in targeting pro-Palestinian academics)
- CDJ** **Comité de Défense des Juifs** (established by the Belgian resistance to save Jewish children)
- CFI** **Conservative Friends of Israel** (influential Zionist lobby group)
- COSPA** **Israeli Committee of Solidarity with the Argentine People**
- CST** **Community Security Trust** (British Zionist organisation and

- Mossad project)
- CV** **Centralverein** (major organisation of German Jewry, established in 1893 in Berlin to defend Jewish rights and oppose anti-Semitism)
- EAM-ELAS** **National Liberation Front** (the main communist-backed Greek national liberation front)
- ECR** **European Conservatives and Reformists** (far-right group in European parliament)
- ECSJE** **Emergency Committee to Save the Jews of Europe** (American group formed by dissident Zionists Peter Bergson and Shmuel Merlin)
- EEE** **Greek Nationalist Union** (a far-right anti-Semitic organisation many of whom collaborated with the Nazis during the occupation)
- EK** **Einsatzkommando** (subunit of the *Einsatzgruppen* killing squads).
- EUMC** **European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia**
- EZF** **English Zionist Federation**
- FI** **Front de l'Indépendance** (a left faction of the Belgian independence movement)
- FO** **Foreign Office** (British)
- GG** **Generalgouvernement** (area of Poland which wasn't annexed by Nazis)
- HIAS** **Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society** (HIAS is the world's oldest refugee agency. It was originally established in 1881 to aid Jewish refugees. Today HIAS provides humanitarian aid and assistance to all refugees)
- ICRC** **International Committee of the Red Cross**
- IHRA** **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance**
- IKG** **Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien** (Vienna Judenrat)
- ILP** **Israeli Labor Party** (was Mapai, the original party of ethnic cleansing and apartheid in Israel)
- JA** **Jewish Agency** (Zionist pre-state government and operative arm of Zionist Organisation)
- JAE** **Jewish Agency Executive**
- JC** **Jewish Chronicle** (the main paper of the Jewish bourgeoisie in Britain. Today it is little more than a propaganda sheet)
- JCC** **Jewish Claims Conference** (legal successor with respect to the claims not filed on time by Jewish holocaust survivors against

- Germany)
- JNF** **Jewish National Fund** (established in 1901 to secure land for Zionist colonisation, heavily involved in the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians)
- JDC** **Joint Distribution Committee**
- KPD** **Communist Party of Germany**
- LAF** **Lithuanian Activist Front** (Lithuanian resistance group responsible for murder of thousands of Jews)
- Lehi** **Lohamei Herut Israel** (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (the Stern Gang, a Zionist terrorist group that split from the Irgun in 1940)
- LNNK** **For Fatherland and Freedom** (a far-Right Latvian Party)
- LPZ** **Left Poale Zion** (the different Poale Zion groups in Poland split in 1919 between a Left and a Right Poale Zion)
- LZ** **Lovers of Zionism** (founded by Leon Pinsker in 1881, precursor of Herzl's Zionist Organisation)
- NSB** **Dutch Nazi Party**
- NYT** **New York Times**
- NUS** **National Union of Students (UK)**
- OB** **Operation Barbarossa** (Nazi invasion of Soviet Union began 22 June 1941)
- OKH** **Oberkommando des Heeres** (High command of the German Army, *Wehrmacht*)
- OSS** **Office for Strategic Services** (US intelligence agency during WW2)
- OUN** **Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists** (allied with Nazi Germany during WW2)
- PEL** **Pastors Emergency League** (founded in reaction to the Aryan Paragraph and the German Christians)
- PLO** **Palestine Liberation Organisation**
- PPR** **Polish Workers' Party** (Communist resistance group)
- PSC** **Palestine Solidarity Campaign (UK)**
- PSP** **Polish Socialist Party**
- PZ** **Poale Zion** (Labour Zionist group founded in Russia at the end of the 19th century)
- RSHA** **Reich Security Main Office** (combination of SD and the Security Police (SiPO). The latter consisted of the criminal police (Kripo)

- and the Gestapo)
- RjF** **Union of Jewish War Veterans** (German-Jewish veterans of WW1)
- RV** **Reichsvereinigung** (German Judenrat founded in February 1939, in July 1939 it came under the direct control of the Gestapo)
- RVn** **Rest-Reichsvereinigung** (rump Judenrat left in Germany after the 1943 deportations of German Jewish labourers)
- RVt** **Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden** (Reich Representation of German Jews, Jewish umbrella organization founded in Germany in September 1933)
- SD** **Sicherheitsdienst** (Security Service, SS intelligence service)
- SiPO** **Security Police**
- SPD** **Social Democratic Party of Germany**
- SS** **Schutzstaffel** (Black uniformed elite guard of the Nazi Party and Hitler's personal bodyguard)
- T4** **The Nazis' so-called Euthanasia program**, (named after its address in Berlin, Tiergartenstrasse 4)
- ToI** **Times of Israel**
- ToTP** **Train of the Prominents** (Kasztner's train)
- TUC** **Trades Union Congress (UK)**
- UCU** **University and College Union (UK)**
- UGIF** **Union générale des Israélites de France** (French Judenrat)
- UJS** **Union of Jewish Students** (Zionist student group in Great Britain, funded by the Israeli state)
- UPA** The **Ukrainian Insurgent Army** (armed wing of OUN. Allied with the Nazis and killed hundreds of thousands of Poles and Jews).
- USHMM** **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**
- UZ** **Ustredna Zidov** (Slovakian Jewish Council or Judenrat)
- VWR** **Vrba-Wetzler Report** (report of Auschwitz escapees Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler exposing the purpose and layout of Auschwitz)
- WD** **Working Definition of Anti-Semitism** (bogus Zionist definition of anti-Semitism)
- A**
- WJC** **World Jewish Congress** (originally founded as a umbrella group of Jewish organisations. Today it is just another Zionist organisation).
- WRB** **War Refugee Board** (set up by Roosevelt in January 1944 to coordinate the rescue of refugees)
- (W)ZO** **(World) Zionist Organisation**

- YV** **Yad Vashem** (Israeli holocaust propaganda museum)
- ZAC** **Zionist Actions Committee** (originally the executive of the Zionist Organisation, today the sovereign body between Zionist Congresses)
- ZE** **Zionist Executive**
- ZOA** **Zionist Organisation of America** (far-right Zionist organisation)
- ZOB** **Jewish Fighting Organisation** (Warsaw Ghetto resistance)
- ZVfd** **Zionist Federation of Germany**
- ZZW** **Jewish Military Union** (Revisionist resistance group, Warsaw Ghetto)

Tables

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Acknowledgments

This book has been a labour of love that has taken on a life of its own. When I fell ill with liver disease in 2012, eventually requiring a liver transplant, I feared that this book would not see the light of day.

My obsession with finding out the truth about the Zionist record during the Holocaust originated with my discovery as a young child that American Zionist organisations had opposed the entry of Jewish refugees to the United States from Nazi-occupied Europe. How I made this discovery is still a mystery!

I tried to interest left publishing houses in this book but they found it too 'hot' a topic. Left academics are a safer bet when it comes to publishing books.

I am grateful for the support of the many people who gave me encouragement and support in my endeavour to ensure that this book was published. In particular to Mick Napier of Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign who continually reminded me that the book was overdue! I am particularly grateful to those who were willing to endorse this book and to Hanita Dadswell for the cover drawing. But above all I am grateful to the dozens of contributors to my crowdfunding appeal.

When my original appeal was taken down, after Zionist pressure on Crowdfunder, people rallied round to ensure that the Zionists would not be allowed to silence uncomfortable truths about their appalling record during the Holocaust. The Israeli state, its ideologues and echo chambers on the Right, in Parliament and in the Press, have consciously used the murder of millions of Jews at the hands of the Nazis to sanitise western racism and imperialism.

A false narrative has turned into a received wisdom. A fiction that it was the Zionist movement which led Jewish resistance inside Nazi-occupied Europe, thus erasing the memory of anti-Zionist heroes such as Rudolf Vrba, Alfred Wetzler and Marek Edelman. They have even traduced the memory of the young Zionists fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto such as Hayke (Chajka) Klinger, Tova (Tosia) Altman and Mordechai Anielewicz, rewriting and censoring their writings.

When Ken Livingstone was forced out of the Labour Party because of his casual reference to Ha'avara, millions of people realised that his real crime was not anti-Semitism but summoning ghosts that the Zionists thought they had exorcised.

Above all this book is intended to ensure that an end is put to Israel's weaponisation of the memory of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust as a justification for its war crimes against the Palestinians.

I hope you enjoy reading the book and that it will fortify you in the struggle for a democratic, secular state in Palestine where Jews and Palestinians can live together in a society where no one has superior rights or is privileged over another because of their religion, ethnic or racial origin.

Tony Greenstein

Foreword

Since its inception, the Zionist movement has been active in two main domains. In Palestine – “the Land of Israel” – its project is colonising the land by Jews, while excluding and expelling (rather than exploiting) its indigenous Palestinian Arab people. Around the world, it is active building up support for that project through the WZO and its many affiliates; and forging political deals with world powers, particularly the current hegemonic empire.

The inexorable logic of colonisation has increasingly manifested itself in the humiliation, dispossession, oppression and brutality inflicted on the Palestinian Arabs by their Israeli masters. Many disillusioned former Zionists have, in response, been driven by the impact of the reality in Palestine on their conscience to dissociate themselves from the Zionist project of colonisation. However, some – perhaps a majority – of these reformed individuals find it difficult to renounce their faith in the justification of the original foundation of Zionism as a ‘national liberation movement’ of the Jewish people. There is something of a fashion for a dual judgement: Zionism is immoral, even criminal in its colonising practice; but benign, or at least defensible, as a movement of national liberation of the Jews in the diaspora.

Liberation from what? “Anti-Semitism, of course” is the obvious answer. Obvious – but is it valid? Certainly, Zionism arose as a *reaction* to anti-Semitism. But a genuine liberation movement is engaged in struggle against its oppressor; it fights for the right to live in freedom where it is located. Zionism has fought for no such right. Nor has it struggled against anti-Semitism. I will argue that the reason for this is that Zionism and anti-Semitism share a fundamental premise.

If Zionism can be described as a “national” movement of any kind, it is only in a somewhat Pickwickian sense. Yes, it claims to speak for all Jews around the world; and it further claims that they constitute one nation. But the first claim is patently false; whereas the second is at best controversial, and rejected by many Jews. National movements have myths of their nation’s origins, and of their claim to their (alleged) homelands. Zionism, too, subscribes to myths of the origin of the Jewish “nation” and of its territorial claim; but these are *religious* myths, based on scripture. Furthermore, a necessary and sufficient condition for a non-Jew to become Jewish is religious conversion. A collectivity of this sort is generally regarded as a religious denomination rather than a nation. Also, a Jew who converts to another

religion is no longer regarded as a Jew – except by racists, for whom Jewishness belongs to the (false) category of “race”.

And *here* is the point of intersection between anti-Semitism and Zionism. The former is a modern invention; it differs from medieval *religious* persecution of Jews. Instead, it condemns us as an alien ‘*race*’ (which to racists means more **or** less the same as ‘*nation*’) that must be rejected.

Assimilation of Jews is anathema. And Zionism responds: ‘Yes, we Jews *are* a separate nation/race; we *are* aliens who do not belong here among the Gentiles; we must not assimilate but go to our god-promised homeland, which our ancestors, the Israelites, led by Joshua son of Nun, invaded and ethnically cleansed in days of old, as recounted in the Bible.’

From this conceptual shared premise follows much of the paradoxical dialectic of relations between Zionism and anti-Semitism: each one of the two is all too ready at times to make use of the other for its own purposes.

The present book is about the entire history of this relationship. And I know of no-one better qualified to write it than Tony Greenstein. The book contains some original research using primary sources; but most of what is presented here is previously known, already published somewhere. However, Tony’s encyclopaedic familiarity with the dispersed relevant publications and his achievement in arranging the vast material in a coherent account are second to none. This book is a valuable unique reference work on the subject.

Moshé Machover

Emeritus Professor Moshé Machover,

co-founder of Matzpen, the Socialist Organisation in Israel

Preface

My Journey away from Zionism

'But I can admit to you... that wrong done by my own people naturally grieves me more than wrong done by other people.' (Hannah Arendt) [1](#)

From an early age I had doubts about Zionism, despite being brought up in an Orthodox Jewish home. These doubts originated in my learning that American Zionists had opposed the entry of Jewish refugees during the war. My father was a wandering rabbi, going from one community to another. For him faith was everything whereas I was a rationalist and it was that which made me a socialist. I found it difficult to reconcile Marxism, a universalist political ideology that believes in the unity of the oppressed and the working class, with Zionism, an exclusivist ideology, for whom the only question is whether something is good for the Jews.

My school, Liverpool's King David, held a debate on Zionism. I played devil's advocate and in the process became convinced of the case against Zionism. In 1969 I went on a Zionist Federation tour of Israel whose purpose was to persuade Jewish youth that their real home was in Israel. What I saw in Israel convinced me that my home was where I lived and had been brought up, England, not in a Jewish supremacist state.

I grew up in the shadow of the Holocaust and the first book I read was Lord Russell of Liverpool's *Scourge of the Swastika*. I reached a simple, childish conclusion. If anti-Semitism was wrong then so were all forms of racism. Zionism drew the opposite conclusion. Only anti-Semitism was wrong.

Being a Jewish anti-Zionist in those days was a lonely experience. Maybe one other friend, the late Mike Goodman, later to become the Leader of Hammersmith and Fulham Council, was a non-Zionist. My only contact with anti-Zionist ideas was via the International Socialists (SWP) which I joined when I was sixteen after coming into contact with them at a demonstration against the South African Springbok tour in 1970. A formative article in my political development was an IS pamphlet, *'The Class Nature of Israel.'* [2](#) Three years later I was expelled from IS! [3](#)

When I became a student in 1974 I worked closely with the Palestine Society at Brighton Polytechnic and comrades such as Yousef Qandeel. Twice I was elected as Vice-President of the Student Union and at the Xmas 1977 National Union of Students [NUS] Conference I proposed the first ever

motion supporting a democratic secular state in Palestine. Thirty years later I would speak at UNISON's national conference as a Jewish anti-Zionist proposing a motion on BDS.⁴

In 1979 a group of us went to Lebanon via Syria because the Lebanese Embassy in London, which was controlled by Israel's fascist friends, the Phalange, refused us visas. The Palestine Liberation Organisation [PLO] took us over the border.

With the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 I was one of about fifteen people who met at the University of London Union to form Britain's Palestine Solidarity Campaign [PSC].⁵ In 1993 I resigned from PSC when it voted to support the Oslo Accords. I did not rejoin till 2005. In April 2022 I resigned once again when PSC adopted a new constitution which meant that it had abandoned opposition to Zionism.

In 2005, at the request of Sue Blackwell, I helped leaflet the Association of University Teachers conference in Eastbourne calling for a boycott of Israeli universities. The motion became the policy of the new University Colleges Union [UCU]. The Academic Boycott had begun.

The AUT was heavily criticised by Tony Blair and New Labour but today nearly every trade union supports BDS.⁶ In response the Zionists pursued a lawfare strategy. This rebounded at an employment tribunal, *Fraser v UCU* where it was argued that Zionism was an integral part of being Jewish and therefore a 'protected characteristic'.

The tribunal disagreed and observed that 'a letter was circulated on the Internet voicing support for the Respondents in this litigation, signed by over 50 Jewish members.' It demonstrated the important role that Jewish anti-Zionists can play in the Palestine solidarity movement.⁷ They ruled that:

a belief in the Zionist project or an attachment to Israel or any similar sentiment cannot amount to a protected characteristic. It is not intrinsically a part of Jewishness... ⁸

Whether such a decision would be reached today, given the Zionist campaign to redefine anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism is debatable. 'Anti-Semitism' has now become the equivalent to the term 'communism' in the days of McCarthy. It has become the false anti-racism of the Right.

In 1989 I edited the final issue of *Return* magazine, which was founded on the basis of support for the Palestinian Right of Return and opposition to the Israeli Law of Return. Free speech and Zionism are like oil and water and NUS, at the behest of the Union of Jewish Students, [UJS] banned the magazine.

Jewish anti-Zionists are attacked with a particular viciousness by Zionists because we are living proof that Zionism does not represent all Jews. We are accused of being ‘traitors’, an anti-Semitic charge whose premise is that the prime loyalty of Jews is to Israel. It is the old accusation of dual loyalty. ‘Self-hater’ is a favourite term of abuse for Jewish anti-Zionists yet if this applies to anyone it is to Zionists.² Israel Shahak described “self-hater” as ‘a Nazi expression. The Nazis called German anti-fascists and those who defended Jewish rights ‘self-hating Germans.’ [10](#)

The election of Donald Trump in 2016 demonstrated that the symbiosis between Zionism and anti-Semitism is not just a historical phenomenon.¹¹ Today the most ardent supporters of Israel and Zionism are on the European and American far-right.¹²

At the same time the number of Jews opposed to Zionism has increased exponentially, especially in the United States. Jews are beginning to understand that Zionism offers them nothing other than the thankless task of defending Israeli apartheid. It is little surprise that in a survey of British Jews, the number identifying as Zionists dropped from 71% in 2010 to 59% in 2015.¹³

People often ask me why am I so concerned about Palestine. To many Zionists this is proof of “double standards”, i.e. “anti-Semitism”. Why not China or Uganda? My answer is that of Hannah Arendt. I am more concerned about wrongs done by my own people. But even if there had been no Palestinians and Zionism had colonised an empty Pacific island I would still be an anti-Zionist.

- ¹ *The Jew As Pariah*, 'An Exchange of Letters between Gershom Scholem and Hannah Arendt', p. 247.
- ² Moshé Machover, Akiva Orr and Haim Hanegbi, *The Class Nature of Israel*, NLR. <http://tinyurl.com/kycq4vo>
- ³ <https://tinyurl.com/y2zs2sgb>
- ⁴ Letter to *the Jewish Chronicle* (JC) 29.6.07. <https://tinyurl.com/yxhbfaz2>
- ⁵ *The Origins of Palestine Solidarity Campaign*. <http://tinyurl.com/qy73op2>
- ⁶ *The Guardian*, 'We Will Isolate Them', 9.6.07. <https://tinyurl.com/6thszmws>
- ⁷ Jonathan Goldberg QC, JC April 22. <http://tinyurl.com/kv7tkjo> See also <https://tinyurl.com/y29byyd3>
- ⁸ <https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/judgments/fraser-uni-college-union/>
- ⁹ See Jane Eisner, *The Forward* 16.11.16. 'The Breathtaking Hypocrisy of Jews Who Line Up Behind Steve Bannon's Twisted Vision of America', <https://tinyurl.com/y2hs5agr>, Sam Kestenbaum, *The Forward*, 16.1.17, 'The 'Alt-Right' Hates the Jews. But It Also Loves Them — and Israel'. <https://tinyurl.com/yxrxj4sde>
- ¹⁰ Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, June 1989, p. 19 'Personality - Dr. Israel Shahak', Richard H. Curtiss <https://tinyurl.com/yy4yny83> See also Mike Marqusee, *If I Am Not For Myself: Journey of an Anti-Zionist Jew*, pp. 293-4.
- ¹¹ *Ha'aretz* 4.7.18., 'Israel's Long History of Cooperation With Ruthless, anti-Semitic Dictators'. <https://tinyurl.com/y8qbo266>
- ¹² Lena Obermaier, 'Far-Right Parties in Europe Have Become Zionism's Greatest Backers', *Jacobin Magazine*, 9.8.21. <https://tinyurl.com/2ve7eh59>
- ¹³ *The Attitudes of British Jews Towards Israel*, City University London. <https://tinyurl.com/m3uzxqc>

Introduction

'Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past'
George Orwell, 1984

This book examines the record of the Zionist movement before, during and after the Holocaust and its claim to represent the memory of the Jews who died. It examines how that memory has been falsified and weaponised. As with Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Ben Hecht's *Perfidy* and Lenni Brenner's *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*, Zionist criticism of this book, however shrill, will make little or no reference to its contents.

This book is a response to a Zionist historiography which has attempted to write anti-Zionism out of history and consign it to a 'state of oblivion'.¹

This is not the first book to describe the relationship between the Nazis and the Zionist movement. In 1983 Lenni Brenner brought out a pioneering book on this subject.² Although I have my disagreements with Brenner's analysis, it is only right that I should acknowledge my debt to him.³

The Zionist movement saw the Holocaust as a vindication of its belief that Jews could not live in non-Jewish society and that they needed a state of their own.

It was on the question of Jewish nationality 'that leading religious authorities on both sides of the denominational divide converged in rejecting Zionism'.⁴ The Central Conference of American Rabbis in the Pittsburgh Declaration of 1885 declared:

We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine... nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state. ⁵

Their attitude to Zionism was that it confirmed the claim of the Jews' enemies that 'Jews are foreigners in the countries in which they are at home'.⁶

Moses Gaster, the Hakham (principal minister) of the Sephardi congregations and an early supporter of Theodor Herzl, the founder of Political Zionism, held that the claim to be Jewish by faith and English by nationality was 'an absolute delusion'.⁷ It was this which ensured the hostility of most Jews to Zionism. Lucien Wolf, Secretary of the Conjoint Foreign Committee explained how:

I have spent most of my life in combating these very doctrines, when presented to me in the form of anti-Semitism, and I can only regard them as the more dangerous when they come to me in the guise of Zionism. They constitute a capitulation to our enemies. ⁸

Zionism began as a Christian not a Jewish idea and it was promoted by non-Jews not Jews. Sir Edwin Montagu, the only Jewish member of Lloyd George's War Cabinet was also the only member to oppose the Balfour Declaration. He wrote a memo accusing his fellows of anti-Semitism:

It is no more true to say that a Jewish Englishman and a Jewish Moor are of the same nation than it is to say that a Christian Englishman and a Christian Frenchman are of the same nation [2](#)

Most Jewish immigrants to the West in the 19th and 20th centuries identified with the fight against racism and fascism. This legacy was continued by people like the late Hedy Epstein, a child survivor of the Holocaust. [10](#) Zionism saw the struggle against racism and anti-Semitism as futile, allying itself with the most reactionary sections of society.

Although on rare occasions support for the Palestinians can be a disguise for anti-Semitism, the opposite is far more likely to be the case. It is the Right, from Donald Trump to Boris Johnson, Steve Bannon to Viktor Orban, who disguise their anti-Semitism by support for Israel and Zionism. Even neo-Nazi Richard Spencer, founder of the alt-Right, identifies as a 'White Zionist'. [11](#)

This book gives an overview of the Holocaust and the historical debates surrounding it. It places Zionist relations with the Nazis in the context of the Holocaust. For too long the history of the Holocaust has been the preserve of Zionist historians.

Throughout this book I have used the word 'Holocaust'. I have done this because its use is so widespread. However I have not done so without reservations. It is difficult to think of a more inappropriate word to use to describe the Nazi extermination of millions of human beings.

Holocaust comes from the Greek *holokauston*, meaning a burnt sacrifice or a sacrifice completely consumed by fire. To describe those who were murdered by the Nazis as a sacrifice is to suggest that what happened was divinely ordained, that it had an 'ethereal quality'. [12](#) Not only does it exonerate the perpetrators, it 'sanctifies the Israeli state and its crimes'. [13](#) Unlike the word *Shoah*, however, *holocaust* is used to describe all the victims of the Nazis despite the attempt of Zionist historians to restrict it to Jews.

The most appropriate term to have used would have been the Yiddish word, *Khurbn* (destruction). However this term is rarely used.

Zionism and the Israeli state claim ownership of the Holocaust and a monopoly on its interpretation. The Holocaust has become an integral part of the imperialist narrative, a justification for virtually any act of aggression or

war.¹⁴ In allowing the Holocaust to be used in this way Zionism demonstrates its contempt for the memory of those who died.

Nothing is more monstrous than the way in which the Holocaust has been exploited by Israel and the western powers with their memorials and cheap baubles designed to legitimise imperialism's wars. The Holocaust has been used to exceptionalise Jews as unique victims of racism. Anti-Semitism has been redefined, as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance [IHRA] Working Definition of Anti-Semitism [WDA], to mean opposition to Israel's subjugation and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians rather than its traditional meaning of hostility to and prejudice against Jews as Jews. The very name, IHRA, defiles and insults the memory of those who died as a result of genocidal racism.¹⁵ The founding of Israel as an ethno-religious state represented Hitler's final victory.

Disaster is Strength¹⁶

In October 1941 David Ben-Gurion saw the catastrophe that was unfolding 'as a source of strength and momentum' which would accelerate the realisation of Zionism.

Disaster is strength if channelled to a productive course. The whole trick of Zionism is that it knows how to channel our disaster, not into despondency or degradation, as is the case in the Diaspora, but into a source of creativity and exploitation.¹⁷

The Zionist leadership were determined that concern for the victims of the Holocaust should not undermine or distract from the building of a Jewish state. David Ben-Gurion explained this to the Central Committee of Mapai in February 1943 when he distinguished between 'those Jews we can bring out of Europe, over here [and] those whom we cannot bring over here.' Ben-Gurion insisted that:

...Jewish Agency Executive funds be used only for rescue by immigration to Palestine, whereas rescue by assisting Jews to survive elsewhere was to be funded solely by private and organizational donations.¹⁸

Rescuing Jews where the destination was not Palestine was not the business of the Zionist movement. As we shall see, the policy went further than this. It *actively opposed* rescue attempts where the destination was not Palestine.

Christopher Sykes observed that 'from the very beginning of the Nazi disaster, the Zionist leadership determined to wrest political advantage from

the tragedy.¹⁹ Zionist leaders argued that they could not ask the Allied powers to help the Jews of Europe when they were fighting for their own survival. However, when it came to Zionist demands for unrestricted immigration to Palestine there was no such reticence. Noah Lucas reached similar conclusions: ‘The struggle for a Jewish state became the primary concern of the (Zionist) movement.’²⁰ After the war Lucas described:

... a gnawing sense of guilt among Israel’s leaders, asking: ‘Did the Jewish Agency and other organisations do all that had been possible to save the Jews of Europe from extermination? Were the various wartime negotiations with the Nazi executives of death morally impeccable? ... Did the concentration on attaining statehood itself impede rescue? Did Zionist statecraft contribute to the toll of Jewish life? ... From time to time they came to the surface demanding precise elucidation in the courts of law, as in the Kaszner case.’²¹

Walter Laqueur spoke of ‘an uneasy conscience.’²² Many believed that Israel would not have existed but for the Holocaust.²³

The Origins of Anti-Semitism in Germany

Zionism began from the same philosophical premise as German nationalism.²⁴ This was why Zionism was so appealing to anti-Semites.²⁵ At the core of *völkisch* ideology was the belief in an ethnic or tribal solidarity, based on myths of blood and soil. The Germanic *volk* was defined in opposition to the eternal (wandering) Jew (*der ewige Jude*) who owed no national allegiance.²⁶ Zionism accepted this caricature and stressed the myth of Jewish racial origins in Palestine.

It was the harnessing of the memory of the Jewish role in feudal Europe, coupled with the peculiar nature of German unification from the top, born out of a frustrated imperialism, that accounted for the prominence of anti-Semitism in German nationalist movements. Jews represented everything that the German nationalists hated.

Anti-Semitism, which was a reaction against modernity, developed in the latter third of the 19th century, coinciding with the 1873 depression. The ‘identification of the Jews with the evils of modern capitalism acquired a new political significance.’²⁷ By the 1870s the Jews appeared as bourgeois ‘par excellence in a society that was still not fully embourgeoised, as innovative modernizers in a nation that was not yet modernized.’²⁸

Anti-Semitism had a special attraction to the declining *Mittelstand* (peasants, artisans, small tradesmen etc.) who particularly resented Jewish Emancipation in 1871. Anti-Semitism became increasingly important in the ideological make up of German nationalism and fascism. Fascism, unlike socialism, does not have a coherent doctrine or ideology. [29](#)

The importance of anti-Semitism in Germany lay in its political functionality, ‘the glue that held together a radical right-wing subculture of nationalistic federations, Freikorps groupings and paramilitary leagues.’ [30](#) Anti-Semitism had both a cohesive and integrative function. It held the disparate elements in the Nazi Party together, binding the “old fighters,” who had brawled in Munich’s beer halls, with the more bourgeois members. Anti-Semitism was the price the Nazi party exacted from German capitalism for rescuing it from communism. It represented the “anti-capitalism” of the Nazi Party.

Jewish conspiracy theories lay at the heart of Nazi anti-Semitism. They provided the explanation for Germany’s malaise, according to which the Jews were conspiring to destroy the German nation. Hitler warned of the twin evils of international capitalism and the international labour movement. [31](#)

The Jews were a ‘capitalist people’ who ‘found a way to lay their hands on the fourth estate. [the proletariat]... While Moses Kohn sits in the directors meeting advocating a policy of firmness... his brother, Isaac Kohn, stands in the factory yard, stirring up the masses.’ [32](#)

What do we mean by collaboration?

The relationship of the Zionist movement to the Nazis was no different from its relationship historically to other anti-Semitic movements. But a word of caution. Just because the Zionist leadership collaborated and worse with the Nazis, this did not mean that ordinary Zionists did so.

Many young Zionists under Nazi occupation actively fought against the Nazis, despite attempts from Jerusalem to get them to abandon the fight. At no time were they or any other Jewish fighters against Hitler given support by the Jewish Agency [JA]. The Zionist movement not only abandoned the Jews of Europe it refused even to publicise their plight.

Although the Zionist record was shocking, the responsibility for the Holocaust was that of the Nazis alone. It was they who built the extermination

camps, created the ghettos and organised the deportation trains.

Zionist apologists suggest that accusations of Nazi-Zionist collaboration are equivalent to saying that Jews were active participants in their own destruction.³³ This rests on the assumption that Jews and Zionists are one and the same thing. In fact Zionism was a political minority everywhere in the Jewish world before World War II. German Zionism was 'a minority, fighting alone against a Jewish world.'³⁴ Membership of the ZVfD fell from 33,000 in 1923 to 22,000 in 1925.³⁵ In 1929 just 8,739 people voted in Zionist elections out of more than half a million Jews.³⁶ When Hitler took power Zionists made up about 2% of German Jewry.

If what the Zionists say is true, then criticism of Quisling means accusing all Norwegians of collaboration. There is of course no truth in this accusation but what else can they say? Zionist supporters find it impossible to defend the record of their movement during the Holocaust.³⁷

When the Nazis came to power on 30 January 1933, their policy regarding the Jews was to incrementally deprive them of their political and civil rights as an 'incentive' to get them to emigrate. Because the Zionists also accepted that Jews did not belong in Germany, the Nazis followed a pro-Zionist policy and gave preference to the Zionist minority amongst Germany's Jews.

Francis Nicosia excused this because the relationship between the Zionist movement and the Nazis wasn't between equals. This is true but irrelevant.³⁸ Collaboration is always between parties of unequal strength. Pétain's Vichy regime was weaker than the Nazi occupiers but, faced with the alternative of total German occupation, agreed to collaborate.³⁹

The definition of 'collaboration' is 'traitorous cooperation with an enemy'⁴⁰ This does not, however, differentiate between forced and voluntary co-operation. Daniel Blatman, a holocaust researcher at the Hebrew University, suggested a different formula: harmful vs useful collaboration:

Collaboration is perceived as working with the occupation authorities in a way that clearly threatens the existential interest of the occupied people. However, aid given to the occupier to support the interests of the occupied ... does not fall under the definition of collaboration.⁴¹

It is difficult though to see how aid given to the occupier can ever be in the interests of the occupied. Members of the Judenrate, the Jewish Councils appointed by the Nazis, collaborated involuntarily with the Nazis. 'They were not the wilful accomplices of the Germans'; however, they were 'its indispensable operatives.'⁴² Their actions helped to destroy the Jewish

communities as was evident in the work of the Dutch Judenrat, the *Joodsche Raad*.

The collaboration of Chaim Rumkowski in Lodz, who betrayed members of the Resistance to the Nazis, or the Warsaw Judenrat who helped round up Jews for deportation, can be classified as voluntary and traitorous.

Under the heading of voluntary collaboration one can also include the letter from the German Zionist Federation [ZVfD] to Hitler on 21 June 1933 (see later). Likewise, the actions of Rudolf Kasztner in suppressing the Auschwitz Protocols [AP]. The decision to propose a trading agreement with the Nazis, Ha'avara, was another example of the voluntary collaboration of the Zionist movement.

The charge of collaboration should though primarily be applied to the Zionist leadership in Palestine and not to the behaviour of individuals living under Nazi occupation. Some will argue that only the Nazis bore moral responsibility for the Holocaust. That however excuses the behaviour of those who placed obstacles in the path of rescue or who helped undermine resistance. Moral responsibility is not finite.

If someone sets fire to a house and people die then they are responsible for those who died. But if the fire brigade arrives and someone else cuts their hoses, they too share responsibility for the loss of life. In opposing the rescue of Jews to anywhere but Palestine, the Zionist movement cut the fire hoses that could have saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of Jews. As such the Zionist movement bears a heavy moral responsibility for what happened.

What was worse than collaboration with the Nazis was the Zionist policy of obstructing the attempts of others to provide a safe haven to Jewish refugees. The actions, for example, of Selig Brodetsky, President of the Board of Deputies [BOD], in obstructing the rescue efforts of Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld, Chairman of the Chief Rabbi's Rescue Committee, fall into this category.

Unlike mainstream Jewish organisations, the Zionist movement was eager to collaborate with the Nazis, and it used its relationship with the Gestapo to try and weaken its Jewish opponents.⁴³ By 1935 'encouraged by the pro-Zionist bent of Nazi Jewish policy' the Zionists considered themselves the legitimate spokesmen of all German Jews.⁴⁴

The basis of collaboration between German Zionism and the Nazis was both shared interests and a shared ideology. Both accepted that Jews were not

part of the German *volk*. The Zionists believed that they could reach a mutually satisfactory agreement as to the place of Jews in the new Germany, based on group relations.⁴⁵ German Zionism accepted, if not welcomed, the reversal of Jewish Emancipation, failing to perceive that the Nazis' aim was not a separation of Jews and non-Jews but their exclusion, making Germany *Judenrein*. If necessary through annihilation.⁴⁶

Why then is the question of Zionist relations with the Nazis important? Should not these skeletons be left in the cupboard, as Jacob Talmon suggested to Hannah Arendt? The reason that it is important that the truth be known is in order that Zionism's exploitation of the memory of those who were murdered in the Holocaust can cease. As Yehuda Elkana pointed out, when a false memory of the past participates in the political process, democracy itself is endangered. The weaponisation of the Holocaust has led to the marginalisation and dispossession of the Palestinians.

It is also important that the myth of Israel as a refuge of last resort for Jews be laid to rest. If anti-Semitism were to be adopted by a state today, then Israel is unlikely to be a refuge for left-wing Jews. A state that is anti-Semitic is going to be a state operating in the orbit of US imperialism. It will be an authoritarian state. It will be a state that Israel will be eager to do business with, selling it arms and weaponry. Argentina during the period of the military Junta (1976-83) is a case in point.

Another reason why it is important to understand the history of Zionist relations with anti-Semites is because this is an integral part of understanding Zionism itself. It was their failure to understand the nature of Zionism that led the PLO into signing the disastrous Oslo Accords.

Zionism's rejection of a two-state solution is at one with the revanchist aims of the Nazis. The Zionist acceptance of the idea that Jews were strangers in other people's countries went hand in hand with the belief that the Palestinians too were strangers in what the Zionists considered their homeland.

The Zionist relationship with anti-Semites, the Nazis included, rested on a common ideological framework. The emphasis on racial purity is at the heart of Zionism's opposition to mixed marriages and miscegenation. That is why the German Zionists welcomed the Nuremberg Laws.

Today the Nazis are synonymous with the Holocaust. However in 1933 they gave no indication of wanting to exterminate the Jews. Just as in Israel, the

Nazis sought to solve Germany's 'minority problem' through ethnic cleansing. Israel as a Jewish supremacist state treats its Palestinian subjects in much the same way as the Nazi State treated the Jews in the period 1933-39. Just as the Nazis forced Jews to live in their own segregated areas, the same is true of Arabs in Israel today.

The sad fact is that the pogroms we see today against Israel's Palestinians resemble those in Nazi Germany and Poland in the 1930s. 'Death to the Jews' has been replaced by 'Death to the Arabs.' The object of hate has changed but otherwise the slogan remains the same.

- 1 Stuart Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, p. 15.
- 2 Lenni Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*. <https://tinyurl.com/y4gkxoyo>
- 3 See Tony Greenstein, 'Zionist-Nazi Collaboration and the Holocaust: A Historical Aberration? Lenni Brenner Revisited', *JHLPS*, pp. 187–212 and 'Letters to the Editor', *JHLPS* 14.2 (2015): 235–40.
- 4 Brian Klug, *Anti-Zionism in London's Jewish East End*, p. 10.
- 5 Alan Taylor, 'Zionism and Jewish History', *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, Winter 1972, p. 41.
- 6 Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 70.
- 7 Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, p. 233.
- 8 B. Destani, (ed.) *The Zionist movement and the foundation of Israel 1839-1972*, p. 727.
- 9 *Memorandum of Edwin Montagu on the Anti-Semitism of the Present (British) Government*, <https://tinyurl.com/yxpopr9b> 23.8.17. Montagu (1879-1924), was British Minister of Munitions in 1916, and Secretary of State for India, 1917-22.
- 10 Hedy Epstein, '90-Year-Old Holocaust Survivor, Arrested During Michael Brown Protest,' *The Huffington Post*, 20.8.14. <https://tinyurl.com/y4a98e3p>
- 11 'Richard Spencer Touts Himself As "White Zionist"' *The Forward*, 17.8.17 <https://tinyurl.com/y6d4h7z7>
- 12 Michael Marrus, *The History of the Holocaust*.
- 13 Rebecca Gould, 'Beyond Anti-Semitism,' *Counterpunch*, 1-15 November 2011. <https://tinyurl.com/yypbnhjp>
- 14 See e.g. 'Saddam, the New Hitler,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 November 2002. <https://tinyurl.com/uabhfqy> Anyone who opposes the latest imperialist venture is accused of 'appeasement'.
- 15 The Working Definition of Anti-Semitism. <https://tinyurl.com/ykvdwzjd>
- 16 This is the title of the chapter in Shabtai Teveth's biography of Ben-Gurion, *The Burning Ground*, dealing with the Holocaust. To Ben-Gurion the disaster of the Holocaust meant a strengthening of the Zionist movement.
- 17 Shabtai Teveth, *The Burning Ground 1886-1948*, p. 853.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 858. Mapai was the Israeli Labor Party.
- 19 Sykes, *Crossroads to Israel*, p. 137.
- 20 Noah Lucas *A Modern History of Israel*, pp. 188, 326-7, Weidenfield & Nicholson, 1975.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 326-7.
- 22 Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, p. 561.
- 23 Gilbert Achcar, *The Arabs and the Holocaust*: p. 19. Israel 'owes its creation to the Holocaust ...' This is simply not true.
- 24 Francis Nicosia, *Zionism and Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany*, [ZANG], p. 2.
- 25 Francis Nicosia, *Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy*, D1253.
- 26 Werner E Braatz, p. 570. *The Eternal Jew* (1940) was an anti-Semitic German Nazi propaganda film.
- 27 David North, *A Critical Review of Daniel Goldhagen's Hitler's Willing Executioners*, p. 5.
- 28 Robert Wistrich, *Socialism and the Jews*, p. 56.
- 29 Daniel Guérin, *Fascism and Big Business*, p. 95.

- [30](#) Frank Bajohr, p. 185.
- [31](#) Nicosia, Zionism in National Socialist German Policy, D1258, 31 May 1920.
- [32](#) Robert Black, *Fascism in Germany* Vol. 1, 1973, pp. 196-7. Hitler's speech 28.7.22.
- [33](#) Owen Jones, 'No, Jews did not collaborate in their own genocide', 6.9.21. <https://tinyurl.com/au6ny8bn>
- [34](#) Joachim Prinz, *The New Palestine*, 17.9.37, 'Zionism Under the Nazi Government', cited in Brenner, *51 Documents*, p. 99.
- [35](#) Donald Niewyk, *Jews in Weimar Germany*, p. 156.
- [36](#) Klaus Polkehn, *The Secret Contacts*, p. 56.
- [37](#) This allegation was made by Paul Bogdanor, *ToI*] 15.11.16, when interviewed about his book *Kasztner's Crime*. <https://tinyurl.com/yy4abw2d>
- [38](#) Francis Nicosia, The Third Reich and the Palestine Question [TRPQ], ZANG.
- [39](#) <https://tinyurl.com/yyyn3hlg>
- [40](#) <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/collaboration>
- [41](#) 'Polish Honor and Israeli Hypocrisy,' *Ha'aretz* 22.2.19. <https://tinyurl.com/yymlggqj>
- [42](#) Raul Hilberg, 'The Ghetto as a Form of Government', p. 110.
- [43](#) The ZVfD demanded parity with non-Zionists on the Reichsvertretung [RVt]. Dawidowicz, *War Against the Jews*, pp. 240-1 attributed this power bid to the Zionist belief that the Gestapo favoured them over the non-Zionists. 'The Zionist demand for parity stunned the non-Zionists and their paper, the *C-V Zeitung* of 9.5.35 branded it "unjustified, disruptive and astonishing".
- [44](#) Jacob Boas, 'German-Jewish Internal Politics under Hitler 1933-1938,' p. 3, *Leo Baeck Yearbook*, 1983.
- [45](#) See the memo that the ZVfD sent to Hitler on 21.6.33 above.
- [46](#) Dawidowicz, *War Against the Jews*, p. 203.

PART ONE

ZIONISM BEFORE THE HOLOCAUST

A great deal of nonsense has been written in the attempt to provide a social or mystical interpretation of Jewry or Judaism 'as a whole'. This cannot be done, for the social structure of the Jewish people and the ideological structure of Judaism have changed profoundly through the ages.

(Israel Shahak) [↓](#)

¹ Israel Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion*, p. 50.

Chapter 1

The Origins of Zionism

'The rich plutocratic Jew (who) is the true economic materialist. He is the person whose views upon life make one anti-Semitic. He has no country, no kindred. Whether as a sweeter or a financier, he is an exploiter of everything he can squeeze. He is behind every evil that Governments do and his political authority, always exercised in the dark, is greater than that of Parliamentary majorities... He detests Zionism because it revives the idealism of his race.' [1](#)

(Ramsay MacDonald after visiting Palestine in 1922 at the invitation of Poalei Zion (Jewish Labour Movement)).

Despite the myth that 'Zionism has been an integral part of Judaism from the dawn of our faith'[2](#) Jewish people have been stubbornly hostile to the idea of a 'return' to *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel).

This refusal to come to Israel has been constant since the time of the Second Temple. It is a malady which is deep in our veins. [3](#)

Central to Zionist mythology is the belief in an unbroken 2,000 years of anti-Semitism.

Zionism transposes modern anti-Semitism to all of history and saves itself the trouble of studying the various forms of anti-Semitism and their evolution.[4](#)

Zionism owed more to the dreams of 19th-century imperialists and Christian Restorationism than Judaism. In the United States in 1914 out of three million Jews there were just 12,000 dues payers. Even as late as 1940, just 171,000 Jews out of five million, 3.4%, belonged to a Zionist group.[5](#)

The political idea of a Jewish 'return' to Palestine did not originate with Jews but in 'a merger of Christian theological fantasy and British national self-aggrandisement'.[6](#) A number of societies were formed in the 19th century to encourage the idea of a Jewish settlement in the Holy Land including the British and Foreign Society for Promoting the Restoration of the Jewish Nation to Palestine and the Association for Promoting Jewish Settlements in Palestine.[7](#) The church missionary societies were particularly excited by the prospect of a Jewish 'return' to Palestine).[8](#)

The idea that a Jewish state would fulfill Biblical prophecy was rooted in post-Reformation Europe.[9](#)

The non-Jewish Zionist tradition is thus based on a whole constellation of Zionist myths which managed to creep into Western history most noticeably via the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.[10](#)

Evangelical Christian politicians such as Earl Shaftesbury and Lord Palmerston and the author George Eliot were amongst those who advocated

the Jewish colonisation of Palestine.¹¹ Zionism, then as now, was seen as giving a moral legitimacy to imperialist interests in the Middle East.

In 1799 Napoleon had called for the Jews to join his military campaigns in Egypt and Palestine and to establish a Jewish state under French protection.¹² Sir Ronald Storrs, the first British Military Governor of Jerusalem, outlined the benefits of Zionism for British imperialism: 'A Jewish State will be for England a little loyal Ulster in a sea of potentially hostile pan-Arabism.'¹³

Lovers of Zion [LZ] societies were formed in Odessa in 1881 as a result of a series of pogroms in the Pale of Settlement ¹⁴ after the assassination of Czar Alexander II.¹⁵ The LZ began the process of settlement in Palestine with the first aliyah, establishing the settlement of Rishon LeZion in 1882. LZ supporters eventually ended up joining Herzl's Zionist Organisation [ZO] in 1897.

Zionism was the antithesis of the Orthodox belief that you couldn't hasten the arrival of the Messiah.¹⁶ Jewish Orthodoxy was virtually unanimous in its opposition to Zionism when it first arose. It was considered a secular heresy.

Agudat Yisrael was formed to oppose Zionism in 1912 in Kattowitz, (now Katowice, Poland). Its leader in Palestine, Dutch poet and journalist Jacob Israel de Haan, was assassinated by Haganah, a Zionist terror group, in 1924. It was the first Zionist murder of a Jewish political opponent.¹⁷

The Bible served as the title deeds to Palestine. Golda Meir explained that although she didn't believe in God she did believe in the Jewish people!¹⁸ The early Zionists based their claim to Palestine on the God that they denied. Zionism was a secular nationalist not a religious movement.

Peretz Smolenskin, Moshe Leib Lilienblum and Leon Pinsker were symptomatic of a strand of petite-bourgeois Jewish intellectual who became disillusioned with the Hebrew Enlightenment, Haskalah, after the 1871 and 1881 pogroms in Odessa. Haskalah began in Western Europe in the late 18th century before spreading eastward to Russia.

Our enemies in Russia are venting their rage by demanding that the Jews leave the country.... But is it so wrong even for a Jew to say: 'Why should we not emigrate, if the government allows it?'¹⁹

Moshe Lilienblum believed that 'aliens we are and aliens we shall remain, even if we become full to the brim with culture...'²⁰ He feared the working-class more than the anti-Semites:

Indeed, there is, as yet, one community, the proletariat, which knows neither children nor aliens – only workers. But if this community should at some time and place gain

power – then God protect us from such a day! [21](#)

Jews had made great political advances in western Europe. The French Revolution had liberated the Jews. Count Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre, in a speech to the French National Assembly in December 1789, defined the basis of Jewish Emancipation: ‘The Jews should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals.’ [22](#)

Zionism took as its starting point a rejection of Emancipation, which freed Jews from the confines of the ghetto. Emancipation was seen as leading to assimilation. As Moses Hess wrote:[23](#)

Should it prove true that the emancipation of the Jews is incompatible with Jewish nationalism, then the Jew must sacrifice emancipation.[24](#)

Theodor Herzl was of the belief that ‘In the principal countries where Anti-Semitism prevails, it does so as a result of the emancipation of the Jews.’[25](#) To Max Nordau, Emancipation ‘was solely the result of the geometrical mode of thought of French nationalism of the 18th Century.’[26](#) Emancipation was seen as the result of rational political ideas rather than any deep or fundamental changes in society.

It was not anti-Semitism but assimilation that Zionism hated and feared most. Zionism was a form of political messianism. Nahum Goldmann, feared that:

The danger represented to the survival of the Jewish people by the integration of Jewish communities into the peoples among whom they live is greater than that constituted by external threats of anti-Semitism.[27](#)

Zionism and the Dreyfus Affair

The Dreyfus Affair sent shock waves through the French political system. It represented a conflict between the defenders of the French Republic and those who longed to return to the ancien régime. It is argued that the Vichy regime’s collaboration with the Nazis and its introduction of anti-Jewish legislation was the revenge of the nationalist right for its defeat 40 years previously.[28](#)

During the Dreyfus Affair, over half of French society ended up defending a Jewish officer who had been framed by France’s reactionary establishment, which sought to reverse the achievements of the French Revolution, including Jewish Emancipation. Herzl probably thought that Dreyfus was guilty as did Arthur Ruppin who wrote that ‘even the gravest punishment is not too harsh

for this Dreyfus, since not he alone but all the rest of us suffer for his guilt.’ [29](#) Dreyfus was the anti-hero, the only person who never understood the Dreyfus Affair.[30](#)

Herzl’s reports of Dreyfus’s ordeal for his paper, the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse*, were matter of fact. He accepted what had happened.[31](#) As Rabbi Elmer Berger noted:

Where in all the world a century before, would more than half a nation have come to the defence of a Jew? Had Herzl possessed a knowledge of history, he would have seen in the Dreyfus case a brilliant, heartening proof of the success of emancipation.[32](#)

There wasn’t a single mention of the Dreyfus Affair in Herzl’s pamphlet *Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State)*.[33](#) There are only passing references to it in Herzl’s four-volume diaries where he wrote, in the middle of the Dreyfus Affair, how:

In Paris... I achieved a freer attitude towards anti-Semitism, which I now began to understand historically and to pardon. Above all, I recognise the emptiness and futility of trying to ‘combat’ anti-Semitism. [33A](#)

It was a myth that the Dreyfus Affair had been responsible for Herzl becoming a Zionist.[34](#) The successful fight to exonerate Dreyfus, symbolised by Émile Zola’s *J’Accuse*, proved that Zionism had been wrong. It was the rise of anti-Semitism in Vienna and the election of Karl Lueger as Mayor in 1895 which provided the impetus for Herzl’s conversion to Zionism.[35](#)

Lueger, whose election Emperor Franz Joseph had refused to confirm five times, became Mayor in 1897. He was a formative influence on Hitler who described him as ‘the most eminent type of German Burgomeister.’ [36](#)

Édouard Drumont was the leader of the anti-Dreyfusards and a member of the French Assembly for Algiers. His book *La France Juive* sold 100,000 on its first edition. He published the anti-Semitic paper *La Libre Parole* and argued for the exclusion of Jews from society.[37](#) Yet Herzl admired him, writing that ‘I owe to Drumont a great deal of the present freedom of my concepts, because he is an artist.’ [38](#) Herzl shared Drumont’s antagonism to French Jewry writing that:

I took a look at the Paris Jews and saw a family likeness in their faces: bold, misshapen noses, furtive and cunning eyes.[39](#)

In Austria too, ‘anti-Semites were finding ammunition in Herzl’s arguments, as would the followers of Drumont.’ [40](#) After badgering his friend Alphonse Daudet, a well-known anti-Semite,[41](#) Drumont favourably reviewed *The Jewish State*, in an article ‘Solution de la Question Juive’ published in *La*

Libre Parole on 16 January 1897. Herzl expressed his delight with the review in his Diary.⁴²

In 1897 Herzl wrote 'Mauschel' in the Zionist paper *Die Welt*. It was an attack on anti-Zionist, that is nearly all Jews. The title, a play on the word 'Moses' was the equivalent of 'kike'. It was an 'anti-Semite's dream' and employed every anti-Semitic caricature, for example 'the crafty profit seekers' pursuing 'dirty deals'.⁴³ 'Mauschel (comprised) 'an exhaustive collection of negative stereotypes of the Jew from the end of the nineteenth century... a general prototype of the disreputable Jew.'⁴⁴

A Land without a People

Prior to the Zionist settlement of Palestine, Orthodox Jews lived in the four holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed and Tiberias. They went there to study and die and were maintained by rich diaspora Jews such as Sir Moses Montefiore and Jewish charity. They were what Chaim Weizmann, the long-standing President of the ZO, called the *Chalukah* Jews of the Old Yishuv.⁴⁵ They were not Zionists and they didn't see their presence as having any political implications.

By 1918 there were maybe 30,000 Zionist settlers out of a total Jewish population of 60,000 in Palestine, some 4% of the total population.⁴⁶ By 1948 there were 608,000 Zionist settlers in Palestine, 32% of the population.⁴⁷ The Balfour Declaration of November 1917 enabled the creation of a Jewish state under the protection of British bayonets. It was, wrote Arthur Koestler, 'one nation promising another nation the land of a third nation.'⁴⁸

Britain's motives for supporting a Zionist settler colony were primarily strategic, the safeguarding of the Suez Canal and with it the strategic route to India.

Palestine... lies at the very place where the Powers primarily responsible for the security of the Suez Canal would wish to place it... A mandated territory on the Asiatic side of the great waterway...⁴⁹

Chaim Weizmann emphasised that a Jewish Palestine 'would be a safeguard to England, in particular in respect to the Suez Canal.'⁵⁰ The intention was to 'form a portion of a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism.'⁵¹ A Jewish state meant 'a complete coincidence of American-British-Judean interests as against Prusso-Turkish interests.'⁵²

Arthur Balfour like many Christian Zionists, combined an ardent support for Zionism with anti-Semitism. Jan Smuts, the White South African leader and member of the Cabinet was another who:

thought highly of the Jews, but not so highly that he would not be glad to see some counter-attraction provided for Jews who might otherwise be drawn to South Africa.⁵³

As Prime Minister, Balfour introduced the Aliens Act 1905 which sought to prevent the immigration of Jewish refugees from Czarist Russia. Balfour was happy for Jewish settlers to colonise Palestine but he objected to them coming to Britain.

Balfour was a White Supremacist, known as 'Bloody Balfour' after the death of three people when police opened fire on a political protest in Mitchelstown, County Cork.⁵⁴ In a debate in Parliament in 1906 Balfour defended the refusal to give the vote to Black people in South Africa.

We have to face the facts. Men are not born equal, the white and black races are not born with equal capacities: they are born with different capacities which education cannot and will not change.⁵⁵

In a letter to Ahad Ha'am, Weizmann described a conversation he had had with Balfour, who told him that he had met with Cosima Wagner, the anti-Semitic widow of Richard Wagner. Balfour explained that 'he shared many of her anti-Semitic postulates.' Instead of protesting Weizmann 'pointed out that we, too... had drawn attention to the fact that Germans of the Mosaic persuasion were an undesirable and demoralizing phenomenon...'⁵⁶

To the Zionists, Palestine was a Land without a People for a People without a Land.⁵⁷ The first use of this slogan was by Christian Restorationists as early as 1843. Such an attitude to the natives was common amongst European settlers. Ahad Ha'am warned against such a belief:

We tend to believe abroad that Palestine is nowadays almost completely deserted, a non-cultivated wilderness... But in reality this is not the case. It is difficult to find anywhere in the country, Arab land, which lies fallow...⁵⁸

After the first Zionist Congress in 1897, two Viennese rabbis were sent to Palestine to explore possible Jewish colonisation. The rabbis cabled back that, 'The bride is beautiful, but she is married to another man.'⁵⁹ To the Zionists Palestine, like Australia, was *terra nullis*.⁶⁰

The Search for an Imperialist Partner

Herzl though was in advance of his time. The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the Sick Man of Europe, would have to await the outcome of

the First World War. Herzl died in July 1904, and with him the strategy that 'immigration is futile unless based on an assured supremacy'.⁶¹ The Zionist movement focused on Practical Zionism. With the Labour Zionist second aliyah in 1904, there began the first serious attempt at the colonisation of Palestine with the establishment of Jewish-only settlements. Ha-Shomer was established as a guard to protect them against the natives. This was a time of creating 'facts on the ground'.

Herzl visited many of the leaders of Europe, from Pope Pius X to Kaiser Wilhelm II, the Italian King Victor Emmanuel and the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II, in his efforts to secure a Charter. The Grand Duke of Baden, the Kaiser's uncle 'took my project for building a state with the utmost earnestness. His chief misgiving was that if he supported the cause, people might accuse him of anti-Semitism'.⁶²

'whereas today non-Jewish criticism of Zionism or the State of Israel are often dismissed as motivated by a deeper anti-Semitism, in Herzl's day an opposite non-Jewish reaction, one of support for the Zionist idea, might have resulted in a similar reaction'.⁶³

In a meeting with British Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, Herzl was offered the prospect of settling the White Highlands of Kenya (Uganda). The 6th Zionist Congress in 1903 voted narrowly to approve the Uganda Scheme but it led to a walkout by the Russian Zionists. Politically it was dead and the Territorialists and Israel Zangwill broke away in 1905.

- 1 A *Socialist in Palestine*, p. 6. Poalei Zion Publication, 1922, London,
- 2 Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, 'Ken Livingstone and the hard Left are spreading the insidious virus of anti-Semitism,' *The Telegraph*, 3.5.16. <https://tinyurl.com/yat8z92k>
- 3 A B Yehoshua, 'Zionism was right,' *Jewish Chronicle (JC)*, 22.1.82, in a lecture to the Union of Jewish Students. Yehoshua, a left-Zionist poet set as his task the destruction of some of the myths of diaspora Jews.
- 4 Abram Leon, *The Jewish Question - A Marxist Interpretation*, p. 247.
- 5 Robert Silverberg, *If I Forget Thee O Jerusalem*, pp. 72, 1991.
- 6 Giles Fraser, 'Before Balfour: the Reformation helped to create the state of Israel.' *The Guardian*, 2.11.17. <https://tinyurl.com/y798pzgk>.
- 7 Alan Taylor, 'Zionism and Jewish History.' *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, Winter 1972, p. 38.
- 8 Stuart Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, p. 61.
- 9 Nur Masalha, *The Bible and Zion*, p. 85, London: Zed Books, 2007.
- 10 Regina Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, pp. 9-10.
- 11 Shaftesbury's support for Zionism went hand in hand with opposition to Jewish Emancipation. He described the desire of Jews to sit in Parliament as an 'insult to Christianity' and in 1847, opposing a motion from Lord John Russell, asserting that the Jews were 'voluntary strangers here and have no claim to become citizens but by conforming to our own moral law, which is the Gospel.' Leonard Stein, pp. 10-11.
- 12 Francis Nicosia, *TRPQ* p. 19, *ZANG*, p. 14.
- 13 Sir Ronald Storrs, *Orientalisms*, p. 414.
- 14 The area covered by what is now Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and parts of Western Russia to which the vast majority of Jews were confined by Catherine the Great in 1791.
- 15 Zionism: Hovevei Zion, <https://tinyurl.com/ws2tttc>
- 16 Tony Greenstein, *Holocaust Analogies Repaying the Mortgage*. <http://tinyurl.com/pz4qjz8>
- 17 *Ha'aretz* 30.6.13. 'This day in Jewish history/Zionism's first political assassination' <http://tinyurl.com/ppsmb7x>. See also 'Jacob de Haan, the first victim of a Zionist Political Assassination was a Gay anti-Zionist Jew.' <https://tinyurl.com/y84unamv>
- 18 My Jewish Atheism, <https://tinyurl.com/Syzzz3ue>
- 19 Smolenskin, *Let Us Search our Ways*, 'The Zionist Idea' Arthur Hertzberg p. 150.
- 20 Lilienblum, *Let Us Not Confuse the Issues*, Hertzberg, p. 170.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 174.
- 22 Barnavi, *Jewish Emancipation in Western Europ*. <http://tinyurl.com/mrvldag>
- 23 Francis Nicosia, 'The Yishuv and the Holocaust' *Journal of Modern History*, p. 540.
- 24 Moses Hess, *Rome & Jerusalem*, p. 27.
- 25 Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 25.
- 26 Max Nordau, Speech to the First Zionist Congress, (1897) Hertzberg, p. 236.
- 27 Nathan Weinstock p. 26 citing *Le Monde*, 13.1.66.
- 28 Jean-Baptiste Tai-Sheng Jacquet, *The Significance of the Dreyfus Affair*, p. 1.
- 29 Joachim Doron, *Classic Zionism*, p. 187.
- 30 Michael Marrus, Hannah Arendt and the Dreyfus Affair, p. 156.

- [31](#) Alex Bein, *Theodor Herzl – A Biography*, Meridian Book 1962. pp. 109-115.
- [32](#) Desmond Stewart. Theodor Herzl: Artist and Politician, p. 167.
- [33](#) Herzl, *The Jewish State*.
- [33A](#) Arie Bober, *The Other Israel: The Radical Case Against Zionism*, citing *The Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, London: Gollancz, 1958, p.6.
- [34](#) Contrary to Simon Schama's assertion in the BBC's *History of the Jews*, "The dramatic and engaging notion that Herzl "converted" to Zionism in the wake of the Dreyfus trial is unacceptable.' Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl: A reevaluation*, p.228. The myth was based on an attempt by Herzl to rewrite history and an 1899 article, which wasn't published until 1920.
- [35](#) Henry Cohn, Theodor Herzl's Conversion to Zionism, p. 110.
- [36](#) Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, pp. 41.
- [37](#) Édouard Drumont. <https://tinyurl.com/3w5vy9sm>
- [38](#) Herzl, *Complete Diaries* (ed. Raphael Patai), p. 99.
- [39](#) *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- [40](#) Stewart, *Herzl*, p. 251.
- [41](#) Bein, p. 119.
- [42](#) Stewart, *Herzl*, p. 251.
- [43](#) Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl, From Assimilation to Zionism*, Indian University Press, 1993, p. 164.
- [44](#) Joachim Doron, *Classic Zionism*, p. 202.
- [45](#) Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, p. 225.
- [46](#) <https://tinyurl.com/yx7a2ees>
- [47](#) <https://tinyurl.com/48s2u6s6>
- [48](#) Avi Shlaim, "The Balfour Declaration And its Consequences,' in Wm. Roger Louis, ed., *Yet More Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain*, London, 2005, p. 251.
- [49](#) Michael Cohen, *Churchill and Palestine: At the Exchequer 1928*, pp. 283-4. Memo from Balfour to the Cabinet 13.3.28.
- [50](#) Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, p. 192.
- [51](#) Herzl, *The Jewish State*. p. 30.
- [52](#) Letter from Chaim Weizmann to Louis Brandeis, 14.1.1918. Leonard Stein, p. 580.
- [53](#) Leonard Stein p. 478.
- [54](#) David Cronin, *The racist worldview of Arthur Balfour*, 18.10.17. <https://tinyurl.com/y4r lukjw>
- [55](#) Yousef Munayyer, 'It's time to admit that Arthur Balfour was a white supremacist — and an anti-Semite, too', *The Forward*, 1.11.17, <https://tinyurl.com/yc24yfxs> citing *Critics of Empire: British Radicals and the Imperial Challenge*, p. 306, Bernard Porter <https://tinyurl.com/y4ey42p7>
- [56](#) Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* p. 154.
- [57](#) Israel Zangwill, 'The Return to Palestine,' *New Liberal Review*, Dec. 1901, p. 615.
- [58](#) *The Truth From the Land of Israel*, 1891. "Zionism at 100: The Myth of Palestine as "A Land Without People"; *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, March 1998, pp. 29-31. *Jews*

and Israel, Allan C. Brownfeld, <http://tinyurl.com/qcwasve>

⁵⁹ Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, p. 3, Penguin, 2000.

⁶⁰ Prior to 1992 and the decision of the Australian High Court in Mabo the law was that no Aboriginal or Islander communities enjoyed traditional rights to land. This was the doctrine of *terra nullius*.

⁶¹ Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 29.

⁶² Marvin Lowenthal, *Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, p. 118.

⁶³ Nicosia, ZANG, p. 7.

Chapter 2

Zionism and anti-Semitism

'Anti-Zionism is not the product of the non-Jews. On the contrary, the Gentiles have always encouraged Zionism, hoping that it would help rid them of the Jews in their midst. Even today, in a perverse way, a real anti-Semite must be a Zionist.' (A B Yehoshua) [1](#)

Zionism was both a reaction to and a reflection of anti-Semitism. It was a movement of despair. Zionism accepted anti-Semitism as part of the natural order. It believed that anti-Semitism could not be fought because it was an inherent part of the character of non-Jews.

Zionism did not consider anti-Semitism an abnormal, absurd, perverse or marginal phenomenon. Zionism considered anti-Semitism a fact of nature, a standard constant, the norm in the relationship of the non-Jews to the presence of Jews in their midst... a normal, almost rational reaction of the gentiles to the abnormal, absurd and perverse situation of the Jewish people in the Diaspora. [2](#)

It was a Zionist strategy from the earliest days to harness anti-Semitism to its cause. Herzl compared anti-Semitism to the steam that powered an engine. [3](#)

The governments of all countries scourged by Anti-Semitism will be keenly interested in assisting us to obtain the sovereignty we want.... Great exertions will hardly be necessary to spur on the movement. Anti-Semites provide the requisite impetus [4](#)

Zionism had its roots in the same romantic notions of *volk* and blood and soil which proved so attractive to German nationalists before Hitler came to power. [5](#) Zionism, with its belief that Jews were aliens, was seen as the 'natural and abiding ally of anti-Semitism'. [6](#)

Zionism was unique among Jewish political movements in that it accepted that Jews were strangers in the countries where they lived. This is as true today as it was when Zionism was founded. When five Jews were murdered in Paris in January 2015, Benjamin Netanyahu told French Jews that they should leave France because Israel was their homeland. [7](#) A year later Israel's Foreign Minister, Avigdor Lieberman repeated the message: 'This isn't your country, this isn't your land. Leave France and come to Israel'. [8](#) After the murder of 11 Jews at Pittsburgh, Avi Gabbay, leader of the Israeli Labor Party [ILP] told American Jews that they should emigrate to their 'real home.' [9](#) What was this if not doing the job of the anti-Semites for them?

Zionism believed that exile (*Galut*) had made the Jews into an asocial group. Herzl wrote that Jews:

...naturally move to those places where we are not persecuted and there our presence produces persecution.... The unfortunate Jews are now carrying Anti-Semitism into England; they have already introduced it into America. [10](#)

In other words it was the Jews themselves who were responsible for creating anti-Semitism. A classic example of victim blaming.

The Jewish Chronicle [JC] described Herzl's pamphlet as an example of the 'odious theory... (that) Jews only have to be numerous to be hated.'¹¹ German Jewish refugees were 'the germ-carriers of a new outbreak of anti-Semitism.'¹²

Herzl believed that anti-Semitism was divinely ordained, sent to preserve the Jews:

Anti-Semitism, too, probably contains the Divine will to Good, because it forces us to close ranks, unites us through pressure, and through our unity will make us free.¹³

Indeed, anti-Semitism was beneficial!

(It) will not harm the Jews. I consider it to be a movement useful to the Jewish character. It represents the education of a group by the masses... Education is accomplished by hard knocks.¹⁴

This found a reflection in Israel with the belief that Jews in the diaspora deserved to be the victims of anti-Semitism. Abraham Shpadrong (Sharon) in *Davar* wrote that:

... if I had the power, as I have the will, I would select a score of efficient young men... and I would send them to the countries where Jews are absorbed in sinful self-satisfaction. The task of these young men would be to disguise themselves as non-Jews, and plague these Jews with anti-semitic slogans, such as 'Bloody Jew,'

'Jews go to Palestine,' and similar 'intimacies.' I can vouch that the results, in terms of considerable immigration to Israel from these countries, would be ten thousand times larger than the results brought by thousands of emissaries who have been, for decades, preaching to deaf ears.¹⁵

It was little wonder that Herzl expected that 'the anti-Semites will become our most dependable friends, the anti-Semitic countries our allies.'¹⁶ This was the Zionist dialectic: 'Anti-Semitism was the historic force that would always strive toward evil but work for the good.'¹⁷

Jacob Klatzkin, the editor of *Die Welt* and co-founder of *Encyclopedia Judaica* went even further:

If we do not admit the rightfulness of anti-Semitism we deny the rightfulness of our own nationalism... Instead of establishing societies for defence against the anti-Semites who want to reduce our rights, we should establish societies for defence against our friends, who desire to defend our rights.¹⁸

The Zionist refusal to join the fight against anti-Semitism continued up to and including the Nazi era. Alone of German Jewish organisations, the Zionists opposed neither anti-Semitism nor the Nazis. After all, 'if effective and successful self-defense ever became an end in itself, it would negate the centrality of Palestine and Jewish nationality and, thus, Zionism itself.'¹⁹ It was the political Left who were the main danger!²⁰

At one public meeting of the Centralverein [CV], the main German-Jewish defence organisation, Zionist and anti-Semitic hecklers took the same ground. A Jewish member of Reichsbanner, a paramilitary force allied with the Social Democratic Party [SPD], ‘recalls not a single Zionist among its Jewish members.’²¹ That perhaps explains why Jewish youth turned to socialism, not Zionism, before the rise of the Nazis. Only three out of 240 members of the socialist student group at Frankfurt-am-Main University were non-Jewish and some 50% of those in Berlin University’s socialist group were Jewish.²²

Zionism’s solution to the Jewish Question was the same as that of the anti-Semites: emigration. Zionism might have become one more harmless messianic movement but for one thing – it achieved state power in alliance with British imperialism. Herzl accepted as fact the anti-Semitic stereotypes of Jews:

When we sink we become a revolutionary proletariat... when we rise there rises also our terrible power of the purse.²³

With the Jews gone, ‘a great period of prosperity would commence in countries which are now anti-Semitic.’ Herzl thus accepted all the accusations that the anti-Semites made against them regarding society’s ills: ‘people will say that I am furnishing the anti-Semites with weapons.’²⁴ Likewise the founder of Revisionist Zionism, Vladimir Jabotinsky, was a Zionist ‘because the Jewish people is a very nasty people and its neighbours hate it and they are right.’²⁵

Zionism saw anti-Semitism as an ahistorical phenomenon and racial anti-Semitism as having been ‘grafted’ onto the ‘religious tree trunk’ of ‘feudal anti-Semitism.’ Zionism was incapable of understanding the roots of modern anti-Semitism.²⁶

Zionism was opposed to fighting anti-Semitism because it was ‘a bacillus which every Gentile carries with him.’²⁷ Leon Pinsker, the founder of the Lovers of Zion, believed that ‘Judeophobia is then a mental disease, and as a mental disease it is hereditary, and having been inherited for 2,000 years, it is incurable.’²⁸ If anti-Semitism was incurable, then there was no point opposing it.

The difference between the Exile (Diaspora) and Zion is that the Exile, fighting for its life, wishes to overcome the evil Haman in his country... Zion washes its hands of a war with Haman...²⁹

Friedrich Engels saw anti-Semitism as ‘the reaction of declining medieval social strata against a modern society... a degenerate form of feudal

socialism.³⁰ As the Jews had changed so anti-Semitism had changed. The racial anti-Semitism of the late 19th and 20th centuries represented a break from Christian anti-Semitism, which sought to convert not murder Jews (though it did that too!).

As Hannah Arendt observed:

If it is true that mankind has insisted on murdering Jews for more than two thousand years, then Jew-killing is a normal, and even human, occupation and Jewhatred is justified beyond the need of argument.³¹

Following the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, the concept of the 'survival of the fittest' was extended from the struggle between competing species to 'races'. That became the justification for laissez faire capitalism and colonial expansion. Elites within capitalism were as much part of the natural order as the different races.

Social Darwinism extrapolated from Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection to the political, social and economic spheres. Sir Francis Galton developed a new 'science', eugenics, which held that certain human characteristics such as intelligence and mental illness were inherited and could be improved or eliminated by selective breeding.³² German nationalists such as Theodor Fritsch argued that eugenics should be part of public health and social policy as racial improvement was vital for the preservation and vitality of the German people.³³

Scientific racism and Social Darwinism were used to justify European expansion. Racial superiority gave the White 'races' the right to colonise the lands of 'backward' or 'savage' races who were incapable of developing the land. Zionism accepted this narrative. As Balfour explained:

Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-old traditions, in present needs, in future hopes of far profounder importance than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land. ³⁴

The racism which justified European colonisation was the same racism which justified the colonisation of Eastern Europe. This was the context in which anti-Semitism developed. Scientific racism and eugenics became integral to German nationalism and Nazi anti-Semitism. As Hitler explained:

If for a period of 600 years those individuals would be sterilized who are physically degenerate or mentally diseased, humanity would not only be delivered from an immense misfortune but also restored to a state of general health... ³⁵

It is argued that Martin Luther was the inspiration for the Final Solution³⁶ and that the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 were a continuation of the legislation of

Popes Innocent III and Paul IV in introducing the Yellow Star and the Jewish Ghetto.³⁷

Although the Nazis justified their anti-Semitism by reference to its feudal antecedents there was one crucial difference. Christian anti-Semitism ended where conversion began, whereas for the Nazis, once a Jew always a Jew.

The other key difference between feudal and modern anti-Semitism was that in feudal times anti-Semitic movements were popular movements from below motivated by the peasantry's economic antagonism to the Jews as the agents of the nobility and kings. Under the Czarist autocracy and the Nazis, anti-Semitism was 'inspired, organised and carried out from above by state officials.'³⁸

Wilhelm Marr, the founder of the League of Antisemites, first popularised the term 'Anti-Semitism' in 1879 in his pamphlet *The Way to Victory of Germanism over Judaism*. Marr, who can justly be considered the father of modern anti-Semitism, argued that Jews and Germans were locked in a longstanding conflict, which was racial at its core.

Marr asserted that European Jews were Semites and therefore originated from and belonged in the Middle East not Europe. Marr confused linguistic groups with ³⁹

The volkish movement grew in tandem with the German Youth Movement, which was founded in 1901 by a group of students who began the *Wandervogel* hiking club.⁴⁰ Both these movements were a reaction against modernity and an alienated and impersonal industrial society. Both rejected democracy in favour of elitism. They were based on opposition to secularism and the Enlightenment and on the ideas of Paul de Lagarde and Houston Stewart Chamberlain.

All of these movements came together in the aftermath of the First World War in groups such as the League for National and Social Solidarity and Eduard Stadtler's Anti-Bolshevik League. They were financed by large industrialists such ethnicity in order to assert that the differences were racial not religious.

as Thyssen, Vogler, Stinnes and Siemens. Out of this came the June Club, named after the signing of the Versailles Treaty on 28 June 1919.⁴¹

Anti-Semitism was one of the consequences of a German ethno-nationalism that defined itself through the exclusion of the Jews.⁴²

It was in this context that Zionism emerged. Zionism sought its place in the sun in what was the last gasp of colonialism. Zionism sought to purge and reform the character of the Jews which it saw as a product of the corrupt *Galut*. Joachim Doron described how:

rather than take up arms against the enemies of the Jews, Zionism attacked the 'enemy within', the Diaspora Jew himself and subjected him to a hail of criticism.... Indeed a perusal of Zionist sources reveals criticism **so scathing that the generation that witnessed Auschwitz has difficulty comprehending them.**⁴³ (my emphasis)

Zionism sought to abolish the Jewish diaspora. In the words of Jabotinsky, 'if you do not destroy the *gola*, then the *gola* will destroy you.'⁴⁴

English Zionism and its Anti-Semitic Tory Supporters

During his second visit to Britain, Herzl addressed several thousand people in the Jewish Working Men's Club in the East End on 13 July 1896. To the Jewish masses he was another false messiah, a modern version of the 17th century Shabbetai Zevi, who would lead them to the Promised Land.⁴⁵

However this did not translate into political support for Zionism. As Israel Zangwill, who acted as Herzl's guide, admitted it had all been a seven-day wonder. The prevailing attitude of most Jews was 'bland unconcern'. Herzl's reception from the Anglo-Jewish bourgeoisie was much less warm. The Jewish upper classes received his proposals in 'studied silence.'⁴⁶

In 1902 Herzl came back to Britain to testify to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, lending his support to restrictions on the immigration of Jewish refugees. Its report resulted in the passing of the 1905 Aliens Act.

Zionism held that anti-Semitism was a 'natural phenomenon' like the wind and the rain. Weizmann used a chemical metaphor:

Whenever the quantity of Jews in any country reaches saturation point, that country reacts against them. In the early years of this century, Whitechapel and the great industrial centres of England were in that sense saturated... The determining factor in this matter is not the solubility of the Jews but the solvent power of the country. England had reached the point when she could or would absorb so many Jews and no more.

Translated into today's racist terminology, it was a question of numbers. England could only digest a certain amount of Jews before it suffered racial indigestion. According to Weizmann this 'cannot be looked upon as anti-Semitism in the ordinary or vulgar sense of that word.'⁴⁷ Good gracious, no! Conceding that William Evans-Gordon MP, the leader of the British Brothers

League [BBL], was 'widely and unfavourably known to the Jewish people' Weizmann believed that:

our people were rather hard on him. The Aliens Bill in England and the movement which grew around it were natural phenomenon which might have been foreseen... Sir William Evans-Gordon had no particular anti-Jewish prejudices... He acted as he thought, according to his best lights and in the most kindly way, in the interests of his country... he was sincerely ready to encourage any settlement of Jews almost anywhere in the British Empire, but he failed to see why the ghettos of London or Leeds or Whitechapel should be made into a branch of the ghettos of Warsaw and Pinsk.⁴⁸

Evans-Gordon, who was elected as MP for Stepney in 1900, was the Enoch Powell of his day. Evans-Gordon formed the BBL in 1901, an anti-Semitic alliance between East End workers and sections of the Tory Party.⁴⁹ The BBL was the precursor of the British Union of Fascists. Evans-Gordon and the BBL strongly supported the Zionist movement. Its President, William Stanley Shaw, linking together Dispensationalist Christianity and Zionism wrote:

I am a firm believer in the Zionist movement, which the British Brothers League will do much incidentally to foster. The return of the Jews to Palestine is one of the most striking signs of the times.... All students of prophecy are watching the manifold signs of the times with almost breathless interest...⁵⁰

The English Zionist Federation [EZF] which had formed in January 1899, endorsed the anti-Alienist East End Tory candidates at both the 1900 and 1906 General Elections.⁵¹ It also supported three other pro-Zionist Jewish candidates, all of whom were soundly defeated 'in marked contrast to the fortunes of some prominent Jewish anti-Zionist candidates.' Both Stuart Samuel (Whitechapel) and Benjamin Cohen (East Islington) were elected despite the support of the EZF for their opponents.⁵² Samuel's Conservative opponent, David Hope-Kydd:

cleverly coupled his desire for an aliens' immigration bill with heart-rending support for the infant Zionist movement referring to Jewish immigrants as 'the very scum of the unhealthiest of the Continental nations.'⁵³

English Zionism and its Jewish Opponents

The majority of Jews voted for the Liberals. The immigrant quarters of the large cities were not natural supporters of the EZF. By 1914 there were no more than 4,000 paid up members of the EZF, some 4.5% of the Jewish community. By 1921 this had increased to over 30,000. However the Zionists had still not conquered the BOD.

At the United Synagogue the anti-Zionist Leopold de Rothschild was unanimously elected as President in 1918. At the BOD elections in 1919 Samuel Duiches stood for the Vice-Presidency as a Zionist candidate receiving just 21 votes compared to 123 for Lord Walter Rothschild and 105 for Anthony de Rothschild.⁵⁴ The 'burning issue of immigrant concern' was not colonising Palestine but resisting attempts to draft them into an unpopular war.

The Jews of the East End had fled from the pogroms. The last thing they wanted to do was to fight alongside the Czar's army. At the same time the Zionist leaders were trying to win the support of Britain's imperialist leaders by promising that a declaration of support for Zionism would win over the immigrants to the British war effort. Some Zionists, like Herbert Samuel, favoured the deportation back to Russia of Jews who refused to fight. Jabotinsky was forced off several platforms in the East End and once had to seek police protection from the Jewish workers: 'other Zionist leaders were howled down at shekel-day meetings.'⁵⁵

Opposition to Zionism was the only thing that united all Jewish religious groups, from Chief Rabbi Herman Adler and the Orthodox to the Reform movement. In 1902 no prominent rabbi responded to a call to form the religious Zionist Mizrahi group and a conference to launch Mizrahi in 1904 had to be abandoned for lack of support. Zionism was variously described as 'a peril', a 'travesty of Judaism' and 'a restoration of primitiveness.'⁵⁶

Support for Zionism could have 'serious electoral drawbacks' in the East End of the 1930s.⁵⁷ In 1906 in the Manchester East constituency, Arthur Balfour, the Prime Minister, lost his seat to the Liberals despite his cultivation of the Zionist movement. It was a 'telling verdict upon Zionist political influence at the time.'⁵⁸

Zionism never sought to conquer the masses. The EZF's founders were wary of the East End Jews and fearful of being swamped by a 'mob and rabble.'⁵⁹ The Jewish bourgeoisie feared that their long struggle for Jewish Emancipation would be compromised by accusations of dual loyalty. The Zionist strategy to conquer the Jewish community was by winning over the non-Jewish bourgeoisie.⁶⁰ It was only when Zionism was seen as patriotic that the Anglo-Jewish bourgeoisie slowly fell into line. As one of its fiercest opponents, Claude Montefiore admitted, the BOD and the Anglo-Jewish Association [AJA] were slow to see the convergence of Zionist and imperial interests.⁶¹

On 24 May 1917 a letter from Claude and Alexander Montefiore of the Conjoint Foreign Committee: 'Palestine and Zionism – Views of Anglo-Jewry' appeared in *The Times*. It argued that establishing a Jewish nationality in Palestine would 'stamp(ing) the Jews as strangers in their native lands... undermining their hard-won positions as citizens and nationals of those lands.'

[62](#)

It resulted in a motion of censure at the BOD on 17 June which was narrowly passed by 56-51 with six abstentions. The BOD representatives on the Conjoint Foreign Committee resigned and the Committee folded.[63](#) However this vote was more about the high-handed manner in which the CFC's letter had been issued than the anti-Zionist principles of the executive.

Less than a week after the publication of the Balfour Declaration in November 1917 the League of British Jews was formed at a meeting in New Court, headquarters of the Rothschilds' business interests. Its first AGM in March 1918 was attended by over 400 members. Lionel Rothschild, a Conservative MP was elected President and Lord Swaythling (Samuel Montagu) as Vice-President. *The Times* of 13 March reported that 'all the leading names of Anglo-Jewry are represented on its provisional Committee.' It set up a rival newspaper to the *JC*, the *Jewish Guardian*.[64](#) In 1920, over Zionist objections, the Board accepted Lord Rothschild's recommendations to cooperate with the League in combatting anti-Semitism.[65](#)

Moses Hess, Max Nordau and Jacob Klatzkin - Racial Zionism

The man who can lay claim to being the first Political Zionist was Moses Hess. Hess argued that 'Race struggle is primary; class struggle is secondary.'

The Germans hate the religion of the Jews less than their race... The Jewish race is a primary race which... accommodates itself to all conditions and retains its integrity. The Jewish type has always remained indelibly the same throughout the centuries.[66](#)

Virtually the whole Zionist programme can be found in Hess's book *Rome & Jerusalem*. Herzl doubted 'whether I would have dared to issue my book if the significant works of the German Hess and the Russian Pinsker had been known to me.'[67](#)

Hess was a virulent anti-Semite. In his essay 'On Capital' he wrote that the Jews were originally idolators whose god (Moloch) demanded blood sacrifices before passing to money sacrifices. Shlomo Avineiri wrote of Hess's

description of the God of Israel as ‘Moloch-Jehova,’ that ‘it is difficult to find a parallel to such a collective blood libel in even the most virulent anti-Semitic literature.’⁶⁸

Robert Wistrich attributed Hess’s ‘virulent anti-Judaism’ to his view that the Jewish God demanded human sacrifice just as in his Christian form he had demanded the crucifixion of his own son.’⁶⁹

Max Nordau, Herzl’s deputy, believed that the degeneration of society was due to art and immorality.⁷⁰ ‘Degenerates are not always criminals, prostitutes, anarchists and pronounced lunatics; they are often authors and artists.’ Nordau’s theories on art and illness ‘ripple through the writings of Nazi race ideology, including *Mein Kampf*...’⁷¹

In his address to the first Zionist Congress in 1897 Nordau described the Jews as ‘a race of accursed beggars. More industrious and abler than the average European, not to mention the moribund Asiatic and African...’⁷² In an interview with *La Libre Parole* of 21 December 1903 Nordau explained that Zionism ‘is not a question of religion but exclusively of race, and there is no one with whom I am in greater agreement on this position than M. Drumont.’⁷³ Nordau was correct. Zionism was not a religious but a political and racial movement.

Klatzkin argued that ‘... we ought to be thankful to our oppressors that they closed the gates of assimilation to us and took care that our people were concentrated and not dispersed.’⁷⁴

Arthur Ruppin

Arthur Ruppin was the single most important figure in Palestinian Zionism in the first four decades of the 20th century. From 1908 onwards he became Director of the Palestine Office.⁷⁵ In 1926 he joined the Faculty of the Hebrew University. Ruppin was known as the Father of Land Settlement. A member of the Zionist Executive [ZE], he decisively influenced the collective nature of Zionist colonisation. He was the true founder of the kibbutz and kvutzah.

Ruppin was a fervent believer in the racial sciences and Social Darwinism.⁷⁶ His Zionism was the product of being rejected as a German nationalist. He sought to create a new Jew as part of a non-Semitic Jewish *volk* in Palestine. Ruppin believed that European Jews were descended from Indo-

Germanic tribes.⁷⁷ 'In all his writings Ruppin explicitly stressed the superiority of the Ashkenazi Jews over the Sephardic and Oriental Jews in all fields.'⁷⁸

Jewish settlers in Palestine had to come from the Ashkenazi Jews since the Sephardic and Oriental Jews 'were not suitable since they carried Semitic dysgenic elements.'⁷⁹ Yemenite Jews were imported as cheap labour for the Zionist project. They experienced such extreme suffering that the death toll between 1912 and 1918 approached 50%. They were paid far less than Ashkenazi Jews, in effect starvation wages. They received next to no medical attention. Etan Bloom described Ruppin's attitude to the Yemenites as one of 'pathological stereotyping.'⁸⁰ Even after ideas of race became discredited Ruppin clung to a racial conception of humanity.⁸¹

Before the 1893 Federal elections Ruppin 'felt complete identification with the anti-Semitic parties'. His first intellectual curiosity was in the field of Racial Hygiene (*Rassenhygiene*). He saw inter-marriage as 'detrimental to the preservation of the high qualities of the race.'⁸²

In 1899 Ruppin took second prize in a competition to devise ways of applying Social Darwinism to the organisation of state and society. The Krupp Prize marked 'a turning point in the acceptance of eugenics in Germany.'⁸³ Krupp was the largest company in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. It symbolised the Nazi era. German youth had to be as 'hard as Krupp's steel.'⁸⁴

Ruppin supported 'a selective policy' for immigration to Palestine.⁸⁵ Ruppin's demand for 'quality immigration' meant that 80% of those who aspired to immigrate to Palestine were rejected by the Palestine Office. Ruppin was only interested in the best 'human material.'⁸⁶

Weizmann said in 1919 that 'Alas, Zionism can't provide a solution for catastrophes.' The ZO ensured that Palestine was closed to thousands of survivors of the Ukrainian pogroms. Professor Gur Alroey described how 'Weizmann preferred productive immigrants over needy refugees and thought the Land of Israel needed strong, healthy immigrants, not refugees weak in body and spirit.'⁸⁷

Weizmann even tried to persuade the British authorities to limit the Jewish immigration quota during the third and fourth aliya. "The price was paid by the tens of thousands of Ukrainian Jews who were murdered during this period."

Faced with the choice of the survival of thousands of Jews and building a state, the heads of the Zionist movement a century ago preferred the latter

according to Alroey.

Yehoshua Gordon, deputy director of the Palestine Office's immigration department wrote that 'our criterion must be bringing constructive elements here.' Among "undesirable elements," he listed people with heart disease, epilepsy and syphilis.

In 1920, Menachem Ussishkin told the Zionist leadership in Poland that they had to ensure that would-be immigrants were 'physically healthy in the full sense of the word. Weak people who are ill with nervous diseases, tuberculosis and others are coming to us, and I don't have to explain to you the disaster such wretched people will bring down on the Yishuv.'

When a friend of Ruppin called him an anti-Semite he retorted 'I have already established here [in his diary] that I despise the cancers of Judaism more than does the worst anti-Semite.'⁸⁸ Ruppin associated Judaism with capitalism and his writings reflected his belief in the identity between anti-Semitism and anti-capitalism. His diary contained entries that were symptomatic of self-hatred.⁸⁹ The issue of the physical image of the Jew troubled Ruppin.⁹⁰ At a theatre performance he complained about the 'Jewish physiognomy of one of the actresses.' He subscribed to the myth, much loved by the Nazis, that the Jews had an especially strong sex drive, hence circumcision.⁹¹

On 16 August 1933 Ruppin described how, five days previously, he had travelled to Jena:

to meet Prof. Hans F.K. Günther, the founder of National-Socialist race theory. The conversation lasted two hours. Günther was most congenial... and agreed with me that the Jews are not inferior but different, and that the Jewish Question has to be solved justly.⁹²

Hans Günther, a member of the Nazi party from 1929, was Heinrich Himmler's ideological mentor and 'the highest scientific authority concerning racial theory.'⁹³ In May 1930 he was appointed Professor to the Chair in Racial Anthropology at Jena University, after the intervention of Wilhelm Frick, the first National Socialist state minister. Günther praised Zionism 'for recognizing the genuine racial consciousness (*Volkstum*) of the Jews.'⁹⁴

This meeting appeared in the German edition of Ruppin's diaries but was omitted from both the English and Hebrew editions, which were edited by Alex Bein. Bloom wrote of how:

the idea of segregation was central to Ruppin's eugenic planning... in order to produce a culture of their own, the Jews had to live... separated from any other culture... only such 'kinship of race' would encourage him to be healthy and creative.⁹⁵

Lewis Namier, a former Political Secretary of the ZO in London and the personal secretary of Weizmann during the 1930s wrote the preface to Ruppin's *Jews in the Modern World*, which appeared in 1934, a few months after the Ruppin-Günther meeting. Bloom described how:

Weizmann – who worked closely with Ruppin - read it and had to warn Namier not to be so open in expressing **their common toleration of Nazism** (my emphasis)

Because:

the louts will say, the Jews themselves think that it will be all for the good, etc.⁹⁶

Namier was seen, even by many Zionists, as ‘an intense Jewish anti-Semite.’

He wrote that:

not everyone who feels uncomfortable with regard to us must be called an anti-Semite, nor is there anything necessarily and inherently wicked in anti-Semitism.⁹⁷

In his final book, *The Jew's War of Survival*, Ruppin wrote that the Nazi race laws were:

returning to Judaism those Jews who had been lost to it because of increased assimilation in Germany.⁹⁸

Bloom commented that ‘Ruppin’s attitude towards the Nazis, then, reflects the general reaction of many Zionists, including “liberals” like Weizmann.’⁹⁹ It is true that the leading Zionists had no reason to foresee the Holocaust but nonetheless their reaction to the rise of Hitler was shameful.

Amos Morris-Reich asked why Ruppin didn’t express any reservations about Günther in the privacy of his diary, instead describing it as a ‘pleasant encounter.’¹⁰⁰ Ruppin’s *Sociology of the Jews* ‘incorporated many of Günther’s ideas and theories in the text.’ One of its main sources of inspiration was Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Hitler’s ‘John the Baptist’.¹⁰¹

Ruppin saw Günther’s writings as ‘a treasure chest of material’. Bloom argued that Ruppin’s ‘nationalist-Zionist view and his view of race are closely connected’.¹⁰² Morris-Reich, however, argued that Ruppin’s concern with ‘racial unity’ of the Jews was ‘not to be confused with racial purity’. He argued that Ruppin’s opposition to Jewish assimilation was based on his view of ‘racial uniqueness’ as a ‘component of national uniqueness.’¹⁰³ But that is precisely what makes Zionism racist!

Morris-Reich accepted that there wasn’t simply an identity of interest between Zionism and National Socialism but also an ideological affinity. He argued that Ruppin’s concern was ‘eugenic rather than racial.’ A distinction without a difference. What is the purpose of eugenics if not ‘improving’ the ‘race’?

Ruppin saw a problem:

where Jews live in the midst of peoples whose racial make-up is very different from theirs. This seems to be Ruppın's and Günther's common ground: that a solution to the Jewish problem must include the Jews' removal from Northern Europe.¹⁰⁴

Morris-Reich found these statements, in the light of the Holocaust, as 'insensitive' and 'unfortunate in the extreme'. Nonetheless he argued that 'Ruppın's project was nationalist, whereas Günther's was international.'¹⁰⁵ These are verbal semantics. Clearly Ruppın and Günther shared a lot in common.

Morris-Reich's main objection to Bloom's critique was that he was using Ruppın as an example of the 'essence' of Zionism whereas Ruppın 'never developed a social-Darwinist theory'. But Ruppın went further than espousing a theory. He put Social Darwinism into practice, for example with his treatment of the Yemenite workers.¹⁰⁶

Bloom argued that Ruppın's interaction with the Nazis cannot be dismissed as simply *realpolitik*. Rather it was 'clearly the outcome of a congruent *weltanschauung*'. For Ruppın and many other eugenicists, 'the pre-mass murderer Hitler seemed a refreshing politician.'¹⁰⁷

The encounter between Günther and Ruppın ... must be seen as part of Ruppın's series of 'friendly' meetings with the Nazi Foreign Office and Treasury Office.¹⁰⁸

Bloom suggested that Ruppın's meeting with Günther had practical implications for the plan he was promoting for the emigration of German Jews. They were also preliminary to discussions about the Ha'avara Agreement. Ruppın 'wanted to reassure the Nazis as to the Zionist movement's deep understanding of the therapeutic and eugenic dimension of such an agreement.'¹⁰⁹

Did Zionism Contribute to the Jewish Catastrophe?

Joachim Doron observed that: 'the Jewish self-criticism so widespread among the German Zionist intelligentsia often seemed dangerously similar to the complaints of the German anti-Semites.'¹¹⁰ The Nazi leadership quoted Zionist sources to validate their claims that Jews could not be assimilated.¹¹¹ It was difficult for German Jews to refute Nazi claims that they were aliens 'when a loud and visible group of their own continually published identical indictments... Zionism had become a tool for anti-Semites.'¹¹²

Zionist leaders even used the same language as the anti-Semites. Israel's first Justice Minister, Pinhas Rosenbluth, described Palestine as 'an institute for the fumigation of Jewish vermin'.¹¹³ Josef Sprinzak, the first Speaker of the Knesset, spoke of the new German immigrants as 'a great deal of filth in the Yishuv'.¹¹⁴ Klatzkin held that Jews were:

a people disfigured in both body and soul – in a word, of a horror... some sort of outlandish creature... in any case, not a pure national type... some sort of oddity among the peoples going by the name of Jew.¹¹⁵

Anti-Semitic ideologues and politicians in the 19th century were almost unanimous in their universal endorsement of Zionism.¹¹⁶ They considered Zionism 'a useful vehicle for ridding Germany of its Jewish population and thus found it worthy of support.'¹¹⁷

Heinrich Class, President of the hundred-thousand-strong Pan-German League, who was made an honorary member of the Reichstag on Hitler's assumption of power, wrote, *If I was the Kaiser* which was considered by German anti-Semites as 'trailblazing'.¹¹⁸ Class outlined a programme 'for the complete expulsion of the Jews from German public life', writing that:¹¹⁹

... among the Jews themselves the nationalist movement called Zionism is gaining more and more adherents ... They also declare openly that a true assimilation of the Jewish aliens to the host nations would be impossible... the Zionists confirm what the enemies of the Jews... have always asserted...¹²⁰

Theodor Fritsch, who was 'greatly admired' by Hitler¹²¹ and who wrote *Antisemiten Katechismus*, which by 1944 was in its 49th edition, quoted approvingly from Klatzkin, who believed that 'the liberals have understood better than the anti-Semites how to destroy a nation'.¹²² Other anti-Semitic supporters of Zionism included Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Eugen Dühring.¹²³ Alfred Rosenberg, the Nazi Party's main theoretician, wrote in 1919 that

Zionism must be vigorously supported in order to encourage a significant number of German Jews to leave for Palestine or other destinations.¹²⁴

Rosenberg 'intended to use Zionism as a legal justification for depriving German Jews of their civil rights' and 'eventually the Jewish presence in Germany'.¹²⁵ Donald Niewyk asked whether 'the German Zionists' assertions of racial and national otherness... hasten the day when the Nazis might seek to make Germany *Judenrein*?¹²⁶ Rabbi Jacob Agus asked if:

the Zionist programme and philosophy contribute(d) decisively to the enormous catastrophe of the extermination of 6 million Jews by the Nazis by popularizing the notion that the Jews were forever aliens in Europe?¹²⁷

Claude Montefiore, a founder of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue and President of the Anglo-Jewish Association, accused the Zionist movement of having aided and abetted the rise of the Nazis.¹²⁸

The Union of Jewish War Veterans [RjF] argued that in demanding national minority rights 'Zionism provided anti-Semites with political ammunition.'¹²⁹ Robert Weltsch, the Editor of *Judische Rundschau* wrote that 'If I am a Jew then I cannot be a German.'¹³⁰ Rabbi Joachim Prinz, a prominent German Zionist leader and later President of the American Jewish Committee [AJC] and Vice Chairman of the World Jewish Congress [WJC] described the Nazi assumption of power as the 'beginning of the Jew's return to his Judaism.'

It was little wonder that the CV talked about German Zionism having inflicted 'a stab in the back' to the anti-fascist struggle against Hitler.¹³¹ Weizmann wrote:

that unless some radical measures are taken fairly soon, we Zionists may stand charged, when history comes to be written, with criminal indifference in the face of the greatest trial to which Jewry has been subjected in modern times. ¹³²

Negation of the Diaspora

The myth of Exile, which was punishment for the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, was a Christian idea which became part of the Jewish tradition.¹³³ Bernard Lazare held that 'Next year in Jerusalem', which is recited on Passover and Yom Kippur, simply meant that 'next year we will be free.' It had no political implications. Zion was not a physical location. Exile therefore was a condition that was not salvation.¹³⁴

Israel Shahak was particularly critical of the Zionist myth that there was a seamless Jewish history extending back into time. Shlomo Sand, Professor of History at Tel Aviv University, demonstrated how the Zionist myth that there is some biological-genetic connection between the European settlers who colonised Palestine and the ancient Hebrews, has no scientific basis. Sand's reason for writing his book was because 'the recognised experts in Jewish history are not in the habit of confronting simple questions.'¹³⁵

Fundamental to Zionism was the belief that exile (Galut) had corrupted the Jews. Herzl wrote that:

we Jews have maintained ourselves, even if through no fault of our own, as a foreign body among the various nations. In the ghettos we take on a number of anti-social qualities...¹³⁶

Negation of the Diaspora presupposed that the only genuine Jew was the 'national Jew'. The Diaspora was seen as a historical aberration, a void of two thousand years. It was a history of Jewish victimhood not a history of the Jewish people. According to Ben-Gurion 'we had no more Jewish history... For 1,800 years... we have been excluded from world history which is composed of the history of people.'¹³⁷

Negation of the Diaspora underpinned the attitude of the Zionist leaders to Europe's Jews during the Holocaust. For Israeli novelist and poet, AB Yehoshua, the Jewish diaspora was a 'cancer connected to the main tissue of the Jewish people who use other people's countries like hotels.'¹³⁸ Yoav Gelber quoted one activist, when the first reports of the genocide filtered through, declaring that:

Rejection of the Diaspora, of which I had been aware from my reading of Mendele and Brenner, now turned into personal hatred of the Diaspora! I hate it as a man hates a deformity he is ashamed of...¹³⁹

Zionist hatred of the Jewish diaspora represented an internalisation of anti-Semitism:

The Zionists do not rest content with the Jew's outward liberation; they want to see him liberated from all the ugliness and vileness that have clung to his soul and his spirit as a consequence of the ghetto life that has abided for two thousand years.¹⁴⁰

Nathan Birnbaum, who coined the term 'Zionism' in 1890¹⁴¹ wrote that:

The base spirit of usury that has kept our hand from the labor of the plow and the hammer, the senseless deceit that eagerly anticipates the undoing of others... the pursuit of honor and wealth that stops at nothing, the cowardliness that drives us from the ranks of the fighters and rescues us from the manly duel, our ridiculous and alienating appearance ... derives from a single source: our Semitic stock.¹⁴²

Birnbaum later fell out with Herzl and left the Zionist movement in 1899. He became a leading spokesman for Jewish cultural autonomy, promoting the Yiddish language.¹⁴³ He then became an Orthodox Jew and in 1919 became the first Secretary General of the anti-Zionist Agudath Yisrael.

- [1](#) A.B. Yehoshua, *JC*, 22.1.82.
- [2](#) Yigal Elam, 'Ot', organ of the Israeli Labor Party (Ma'arakh) no 2, Tel-Aviv 1967 (in Hebrew) cited in *Zionism and its Scarecrows*, Khamsin 6, Moshé Machover and Mario Offenberg.
- [3](#) Theodor Herzl, *Der Judenstaat*, p. 8.
- [4](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 57.
- [5](#) Jacob Boas, 'German Jewry's Search for Renewal in the Hitler Era,' D1017.
- [6](#) Stuart Cohen, p. 179 quoting Lucien Wolf.
- [7](#) Netanyahu to French Jews: 'Israel is your home' <https://tinyurl.com/y4u33qy5>
- [8](#) Israel's Lieberman urges Jews to leave France. <https://tinyurl.com/4dyheabw>
- [9](#) 'Israel Opposition Chief Says Pittsburgh Shooting Should Teach Jews To Make Aliyah,' *Forward*, 28.10.18., <https://tinyurl.com/y8y867dg>
- [10](#) Herzl, *The Jewish State*, pp. 14-15.
- [11](#) *JC*. 24 April 1896. See David Vital, *Origins of Zionism* p. 279.
- [12](#) Edwin Black, p. 259, citing Chaim Weizmann, *Palestine Post* 5.7.33.
- [13](#) Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl, p. 231.
- [14](#) *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- [15](#) Alfred Lilienthal, *The Other Side of the Coin*, Devin-Adair, NY, p. 47. Giladi p. 306.
- [16](#) Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl, pp. 83-84.
- [17](#) Joachim Doron, *Classic Zionism* p. 200.
- [18](#) *The Meaning of Jewish History*, by Jacob Bernard Agus, David Daiches, Commentary, April 1964. <https://tinyurl.com/unp7rzb8>
- [19](#) Francis Nicosia, *ZANG*, p. 57.
- [20](#) *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- [21](#) Donald Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany*, pp. 139, 143.
- [22](#) *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- [23](#) Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 26. See also Complete Diaries, p. 180.
- [24](#) Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*. pp. 73, 77.
- [25](#) Shlomo Avineiri, p. 162. *Ktavim*.
- [26](#) Robert Michael, Theological Myth, German anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, 108.
- [27](#) Richard Crossman, *A Nation Reborn*, p. 21, citing Chaim Weizmann.
- [28](#) Leon Pinsker, *Autoemanzipation*, ein Mahnrufan seine Stammesgenossen, von einem russischen, p. 5.
- [29](#) Hava Eshkoli-Wagman, *Yishuv Zionism*, p. 28. Rabbi Binyamin, editor of the religious monthly *Ha-Hed*.
- [30](#) Frederick Engels, *On Anti-Semitism*, 19.4.90; Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Correspondence 1846-1895, London 1934; <https://tinyurl.com/yccvbnkj> Feudal Socialism was described as: 'half lamentation, half lampoon; half an echo of the past, half menace of the future ... (with) a total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history.' *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848.
- [31](#) Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 7, Meridian Books, 1962.
- [32](#) Social Darwinism, 21.8.18., [History.com https://tinyurl.com/yclfzpkc](https://tinyurl.com/yclfzpkc)

- [33](#) Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics and Racism in Germany*, p. 55, Palgrave MacMillan, NY, 2004, <https://tinyurl.com/y9jpokq5>
- [34](#) Ian Black, 'The contested centenary of Britain's "calamitous promise"', *The Guardian*, 17.10.17. <https://tinyurl.com/yce56dch>
- [35](#) Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 227.
- [36](#) Pinchas Lapide, Three Popes and the Jews, p.25. Robert Michael, *The Case of Martin Niemoller*, p. 107.
- [37](#) <https://tinyurl.com/6jadta> Lapide (p. 75) was wrong to suggest that Pope Paul IV invented the Jewish star and ghetto. The Yellow Star originated in the directive of the 4th Lateran Council of 1215 under Innocent III that Jews and Muslims wear distinctive clothing or markers. USHMM, Jewish Badge Origins, <https://tinyurl.com/yd2fd957> In March 1218 Henry III issued a Mandate ordering that Jews wear a distinctive badge in the form of two white tablets, although it was little enforced.
- [38](#) Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion*, p. 64.
- [39](#) Towards the end of his life, Marr repented of his anti-Semitic views. <https://tinyurl.com/4ru9m3ns>
- [40](#) Mike Tyldesley, The German Youth Movement and National Socialism.
- [41](#) Werner Braatz, pp. 571-573.
- [42](#) William Shirer, p. 143, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, London, 1979.
- [43](#) Joachim Doron, *Classic Zionism*, pp. 169-170.
- [44](#) A B Yehoshua, 'Zionism was right', *Jewish Chronicle*. 22.1.82.
- [45](#) Matt Plenn, 'Who Was Shabbetai Zevi?', *Modern Jewish History*. <https://tinyurl.com/yazd3hfk>
- [46](#) Stuart Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, pp. 27, 29, 32, 156.
- [47](#) Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, pp. 90-91.
- [48](#) Ibid.
- [49](#) Richard Levy, *Antisemitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution*.
- [50](#) *Jewish Chronicle*, 8.11.01.
- [51](#) Tony Greenstein, Zionism and Anti-Semitism, Return No. 1, March 1989 and Redefining anti-Semitism - The False Anti-Racism of the Right. Return 5 `12/90.
- [52](#) Stuart Cohen, *English Zionists*, p.62, suggests they won with 'huge majorities'. Cohen, a Conservative, won by 23.8% in 1900, losing in 1906. Geoffrey Alderman, *The Jewish Community* pp. 68, 75, states that Kydd, who lost to Stuart Samuel by 71 votes in 1900 experienced a lower than average swing against him (4%) in 1906. Alderman is correct, though Samuel increased the Liberal majority from 32 in 1895 to 71 in 1900 to 356 in 1906 (only 4,279 voted). <https://tinyurl.com/ybSpmfsm>
- [53](#) Geoffrey Alderman, *The Jewish Community in British Politics*, pp. 68, 75.
- [54](#) Stuart Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, pp. 107, 282-284, 296-297.
- [55](#) Ibid., pp. 252-254.
- [56](#) Ibid., p. 202.
- [57](#) Alderman p. 113. See also pp. 68, 75, 93.
- [58](#) Alderman, p. 96, <https://tinyurl.com/yy19or4z>
- [59](#) Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, p. 66.

- ⁶⁰ David Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, p. 282.
- ⁶¹ Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, pp. 174, 225.
- ⁶² Moshé Machover, 'An Immoral Dilemma: The Trap of Zionist Propaganda', *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. XLVII, No. 4 (Summer 2018), pp. 70-71.
- ⁶³ The Conjoint Foreign Committee operated as the foreign affairs Committee of the BOD.
- ⁶⁴ Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, pp. 304-6, 308-9.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 237-239, 243, 246-247, 261, 294.
- ⁶⁶ Moses Hess, *Rome & Jerusalem*, Philosophical Library, New York, 1958, pp. 10, 25-26. Cologne May 1862.
- ⁶⁷ Stephen Halbrook, *The Class Origins of Zionist Ideology*, pp. 87, 95.
- ⁶⁸ Shlomo Avineiri, *The Making of Modern Anti-Semitism – The Intellectual Origins of a Jewish State*, p. 41.
- ⁶⁹ Robert Wistrich, *Radical Anti-Semitism in France and Germany (1840-1880)*, p. 124.
- ⁷⁰ See *Degeneration*, William Heinemann, London, 1895. <https://tinyurl.com/4327459j>
- ⁷¹ Jason Farrago, *The Guardian* 3.3.14. 'Degenerate Art: The Attack on Modern Art in Nazi Germany, 1937 review – 'What Hitler dismissed as 'filth'' <https://tinyurl.com/hs4ktw5>
- ⁷² Max Nordau, *Speech to the First Zionist Congress – The Zionist Idea*, Arthur Herzberg, pp. 240-1.
- ⁷³ Desmond Stewart, *Herzl*, p. 322.
- ⁷⁴ J Klatzkin *Krisis und Entscheidung im Judentum* (Berlin, 1921) p. 62, cited in Klaus Hermann, *Zionism & Racism*, 1976, Billing & Sons, Guildford, p. 205.
- ⁷⁵ Biography of Arthur. <https://tinyurl.com/23rhybfz>
- ⁷⁶ Arthur Ruppin, 'The Selection of the Fittest,' in *Three Decades of Palestine: Speeches and Papers on the Upbuilding of the Jewish National Home.* (Tel-Aviv 1936) pp. 66–80, cited in Amos Morris-Reich, *Arthur Ruppin's Concept of Race*, p. 7.
- ⁷⁷ Tom Segev, 'The Makings of History / Revisiting Arthur Ruppin,' *Ha'aretz* 8.10.09.
- ⁷⁸ Etan Bloom, 'What "The Father" had in mind?' p. 340.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 344-345.
- ⁸¹ Amos Morris-Reich, *Arthur Ruppin's Concept of Race*, p. 5.
- ⁸² Bloom, 'What "The Father" had in mind?' p. 339
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 333-335.
- ⁸⁴ Adolf Hitler, *Nuremberg Rally*, 14.9.1935, <https://tinyurl.com/5yme7mvw>
- ⁸⁵ Amos Morris-Reich, pp. 7-8 citing *Selection of the Fittest* 1919.
- ⁸⁶ 'The term 'human material' was used constantly by Zionists. Ruppin's demand for 'quality immigration' was repeated in many forums. 'In the selection of the human material lies the structure of the Jewish population of the Land of Israel in the future.' Etan Bloom, 'What "The Father" had in mind?' p. 341 citing Ruppin (Heb.).' *The Selection of the Human Material* (1919).
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- [95](#) *Ibid.*, p. 103 citing Ruppin, *The Jews of Today*, London: G. Bell and Sons, p. 266.
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Chapter 3

Zionism – an Antidote to Socialism

*Is it not... a suspicious fact that those who have no love for the Jews, and those who are pronounced anti-Semites, all seem to welcome the Zionist proposals and aspiration? (Sir Samuel Montagu, *The Dangers of Zionism*)* [1](#)

Ninety-four per cent of Jews in Czarist Russia lived in the Pale of Settlement, confined there by a royal decree first issued by Catherine the Great in 1791.[2](#) After the abolition of serfdom in 1863, and increased industrialisation from the 1870s onwards, there was a process of social differentiation amongst the Jews.

Thousands of Jews were murdered in pogroms between 1881 and 1914.[3](#) In the two weeks following the Czar's Manifesto of October 1905 there were 690 pogroms in which 3,000 Jews were murdered. Czarist Finance Minister Count Serge Witte regretted that he was unable to kill more.[4](#)

Because of the intensity of the anti-Semitic persecution and the pogroms, which were orchestrated by the Czarist regime, Jews were prominent in the revolutionary movement. It is estimated that Jews accounted for some 25-30 % of revolutionary activists in Russia between 1886 and 1889. In the principal area of revolutionary activity, the provinces in the south, some 35-40% of activists were Jewish. General Nikolai Shebeko in his report on subversion from 1878-87 estimated that 80% of socialists in the south of Russia were Jewish.[5](#) Whereas Zionism appealed to the petty bourgeoisie, it was the ideas of Socialism which won the allegiance of the Jewish proletariat because it alone fought anti-Semitism.[6](#)

The Vilna Social Democratic Group, formed around 1890 [7](#) was the forerunner of the Bund, the General Jewish Workers' League in Russia and Poland.[8](#) The Vilna rabbinical seminary had become 'a hot bed of socialist militants' until the Czarist police closed them down.[9](#)

The Bund, which was the largest Jewish party in the Pale, was formed in Vilna on 7-9 October 1897, shortly after the first Zionist Congress.[10](#) Thirteen delegates attended from Minsk, Bialystok, Warsaw, Vitebsk and Vilna. Jewish workers were normally employed by fellow Jews in small tailoring, shoemaking and baking workshops that themselves struggled to survive. By 1900 only 50,000 Jews were employed in factories. 'Zionism was born in the midst of this class war between the Jewish bourgeoisie and proletariat.' [11](#)

The Bund was hostile to Zionism and claimed that the fledgling socialist Zionist groups¹² wore a red mask to hide their real intentions and to conform to the radical zeitgeist.¹³ Socialist Zionism arose as a result of the conflict between Zionism's support for the existing order and the Jewish proletariats' class interests.¹⁴ The Bund regarded Zionism as a nationalist diversion from the class struggle¹⁵ and 'the most evil enemy of the organised Jewish proletariat'.¹⁶

The Bund, which walked out of the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in 1903 over its right to represent all Jewish workers, first organised self-defence against the pogromists in Poland in August 1902 at the same time as the Russian Zionists were holding their legally authorised conference in Minsk.

There was no prohibition on Zionist activities and an official permit was even given for the holding of the 2nd Conference of Russian Zionists.¹⁷

The Kishinev pogrom of 19 and 20 April 1903 triggered off a second wave of pogroms. Nearly 50 Jews were killed and 92 were severely injured. 'No Jewish event of the time would be as extensively documented.' ¹⁸ Reports in the *New York Times* [NYT] and *The Times* ensured that it had an unprecedented impact internationally.¹⁹

The attitude of the Zionist movement was epitomised by Hayim Nahman Bialik, the Zionist national poet, who wrote "In the City of Killing" of the 'disgraceful shame and cowardice' of the Jewish victims of the 1903 Kishinev pogrom. ²⁰

The Czarist authorities refused to intervene except when the Jews defended themselves. The international press and the liberal press in Russia were outraged by stories of rape, mutilation and the murder of children.²¹ The Bund organised self-defence units here and elsewhere. Borochoy's claim that Poale Zion had organised self-defence groups at Passover 1901 in Ekaterinoslav was disputed, citing plans 'but nothing more.' ²²

The Governor of Bessarabia, whose capital was Kishinev, was replaced by Prince Serge Urusov, a 'sincere liberal' who was a 'severe critic of autocracy'. Urusov's study of the massacre confirmed that it had been instigated by Interior Minister Count Vyacheslav von Plehve.²³

Herzl's response to the pogrom was to warn the leaders of Europe that if the Zionist project were to fail, 'hundreds of thousands of our adherents would at one swoop change over to the revolutionary parties.'²⁴

In August 1903, barely four months after the Kishinev pogrom, Herzl visited Russia, meeting with Plehve and Witte. Herzl was concerned that Zionism should retain its legal status. As he began explaining the merits of Zionism Plehve interrupted him: 'You don't have to justify the movement to me. *Vous prêchez un converti.*' [You are preaching to a convert].²⁵

Herzl asked Plehve: 'Help me to reach land sooner and the revolt will end. And so will the defection to the Socialists.'²⁶ Plehve approved the publication of a Zionist daily, *Der Fraind*.

Herzl promised that the revolutionaries would stop their struggle in return for a charter for Palestine in 15 years. The Bund were outraged.²⁷ The sixth Zionist Congress in 1903 remained silent about the pogroms just as 30 years later in Prague, it would remain silent about the Hitler regime. Kishinev created a crisis for the fledgling Labour Zionist groups, who realised that they could not ignore the struggle against anti-Semitism.²⁸

Herzl wrote to the Kaiser describing how:

our movement... has everywhere to fight an embittered battle with the revolutionary parties which rightly sense an adversary in it. We are in need of encouragement even though it has to be a carefully kept secret.²⁹

In an interview with Lucien Wolf of the BOD, Plehve spoke favourably of Zionism as an encouragement to Jewish emigration, although 'he began to fear that Political Zionism was a chimera'. For 'non-emigrants' he thought that 'Zionist ideas... might be useful as an antidote to Socialist doctrines.'³⁰ Thirty-one years later Ben-Gurion similarly described Zionism as a 'bulwark against assimilation and communism.'³¹

The myth of Zionist socialism rested on the belief that the kibbutzim were socialist. In reality the kibbutzim were the result of an alliance between the Zionist labour movement and the Zionist financial institutions. The socialism of the pioneers did not prevent them from entering into an alliance with the Jewish bourgeoisie.³²

The Kvitza and Kibbutzim 'emerged directly from the interaction between Ruppin and the young immigrants of the Second Aliyah.'³³ Collective colonisation was the most efficient and cost effective means of colonising Palestine. They were not a means of changing society. They were 'tools in forging national sovereignty.'³⁴ They fooled westerners like Hannah Arendt who described them as 'the most promising of all social experiments made in the 20th century.'³⁵

The internal social structure of the kibbutzim reflected their political role. Personal space was eliminated in favour of collectivism. They were a Zionist Sparta intended to produce fighters without personal attachments of affection to each other or their children. 'Everything was the property of the collective including the individual's thoughts.'³⁶

The kibbutzim were Jewish-only stockade and watchtower settlements, marking out the borders of a future Jewish State. They provided the organisational backbone of Haganah, the pre-state army and Palmach, the Zionist shock-troops. Although never more than 5% of Israel's population, the kibbutzim produced a disproportionately high number of Israel's officer corps.

Borochovism – 'Marxist' Zionism

The 'Marxist' Zionists of Poale Zion [PZ], were followers of Ber Borochov, who was expelled from the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in May 1901, for supporting Zionism.³⁷ PZ groups formed in various locations, beginning in Minsk in 1897 and Ekaterinoslav in 1901. A number of parties, such as the Zionist Socialist Labor Party, were formed under the banner of PZ.³⁸

Borochov argued that the social structure of Jews living outside Palestine resembled an inverted pyramid – too many rich Jews at the top and too few poor Jews at the bottom.

The class struggle can take place only where the worker toils,... As long as the worker does not occupy a definite position, he can wage no struggle.³⁹

Borochov argued that the Jewish class struggle in Russia was 'essentially hopeless' and had to be postponed until there was a Jewish bourgeoisie.⁴⁰ This was Labor Zionism's dialectical contradiction. It sought to create a Jewish bourgeoisie in order to wage a struggle against it! Borochov's answer was emigration to Palestine: 'Jewish migration must be transformed from immigration into colonization.'⁴¹ It was precisely at this time that Jewish workers were becoming proletarianised. There was no reason other than religious mysticism for Jews emigrating to Palestine if all they wanted to do was escape anti-Semitism.⁴²

As the pogroms intensified, Labor Zionist parties were drawn into the fight against anti-Semitism. In Poland Poale Zion split into Right and Left Poale Zion groups at its February/March 1919 conference, with LPZ emerging as much the stronger.⁴³ This was the forerunner of the split at the World Union of

Poale Zion's fifth world congress in Vienna in 1920. LPZ supported the Bolshevik revolution and attended the second and third congresses of the Communist International as observers. LPZ opposed the decision by PZ to rejoin the World Zionist Organisation [WZO], viewing it as bourgeois.⁴⁴

In Poland LPZ was stronger than the right whereas in Palestine the exact opposite was the case. Because of the rhythms of colonisation Palestine PZ gravitated to the right whereas Poale Zion's diaspora sections were pulled to the left as a result of the class struggle and the fight against anti-Semitism.

In Russia the success of the revolutionaries in overthrowing the Czarist regime in February 1917 lessened the attraction of Zionism. At a stroke all anti-Semitic legislation was abolished by the Petrograd Soviet. As a front-page headline in the main party newspaper *Pravda* put it in 1918: 'To be against the Jews is to be for the Tsar!' On 22 June 1917 the First Congress of Soviets passed unanimously a resolution on 'The Struggle Against Antisemitism'. At their conference in Petrograd in June 1917 the Russian Zionists omitted all mention of British sponsorship of the Zionist settlement in Palestine.⁴⁵

According to the Labor Zionists, the Jewish and Palestinian workers would unite against the Jewish bourgeoisie at the very same time that they were calling for a Boycott of Arab Labour! We can see the results in Israel (2021-2022) where the ILP and Meretz (Mapam) entered into a coalition government with the far-right.

Labour Zionism and Socialism

Class warfare played no part in Labor Zionism.⁴⁶ It sought to unite the Jewish working class with the Jewish bourgeoisie, not to unite the Jewish and Arab working classes. Labor Zionism believed in 'constructivist' socialism and the building of the future Jewish state.

In 1920 the two Palestine Labor Zionist parties, Hapoel Hatzair and Ahdut Ha'avoda formed Histadrut. Golda Meir described Histadrut as a 'big labor union that wasn't just a trade union organisation. It was a great colonizing agency.'⁴⁷ Pinhas Lavon, its Secretary-General, went further and denied that Histadrut was even a trade union.⁴⁸ Rather it was a 'state in preparation.'⁴⁹

Socialism was redefined as 'a tool for the advancement of national objectives.'⁵⁰ Collective organisation was seen as socialist in itself. Socialist

principles were abandoned when they came into conflict with colonisation. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, later Israel's second President, wrote:

whenever we come across a contradiction between national and socialist principles, the contradiction should be resolved by relinquishing the socialist principle in favour of the national activity. We shall not accept the contrary attempt to solve the contradiction by dispensing with the national interest in favour of the socialist idea.⁵¹

Nothing was more anathema to Ben-Gurion than the idea of Labor Zionism becoming 'an instrument of social revolution among the Arabs'. Ze'ev Sternhell described Labor Zionism as 'nationalist socialism'. He would have used the term 'national socialism' but it 'has been contaminated by association with the Nazis.'⁵² Ben-Gurion wrote that:

Nothing is further from the mind of Jewish labour than to engineer disputes, with all the material and political loss in their train.⁵³

To Berl Katznelson equality 'was only a whip with which to scourge the concept of Jewish labor.'⁵⁴ Sternhell wrote of Katznelson that:

what shook this spiritual shepherd to the depths of his soul was not the civil war in Spain or the rise of Nazism but an exchange of populations between two kibbutzim...⁵⁵

In 1906 Ben-Gurion had urged the Congress of Palestine PZ in Jaffa to oppose those who wished to organise rather than exclude Arab labour.⁵⁶ Ben-Gurion described Moshe Smilansky of the Farmers Federation as someone with a 'Zionist conscience uncorrupted by class doctrines.'⁵⁷ As long as the owner of an enterprise 'accepted the sacred principle' of Jewish Labour 'he could count on the full collaboration of the Histadrut.'⁵⁸ Speaking of 'the evil of mixed labour' Ben-Gurion described the employment of Arabs as 'class-hatred of intelligent Jewish labour.'⁵⁹

The Union of Railway, Postal and Telegraph Workers was a bastion of the left with a mixed Arab-Jewish membership. Histadrut incorporated the union in order to separate Arab from Jewish workers and create a separate Arab section.⁶⁰

Arab workers objected to Histadrut's Zionism, especially its policy of Jewish Labour. In government employment, where exclusively Jewish labour was not possible, Histadrut campaigned for higher wages for Jewish workers. Ernest Bevin, leader of the largest British trade union, the Transport & General Workers' Union, was emphatic: 'No, we would be absolutely against two wages.'⁶¹

At a meeting in Haifa in 1924, union activist Elias Asad described how Arab workers:

saw on the membership card the words 'Federation of Jewish Workers' and they cannot understand what purpose this serves. I ask all the comrades to remove the word 'Jewish,' and I am sure that if they agree there will be a strong bond between us and all the Arabs will join.⁶²

The Labor Zionist parties campaigned for a Boycott of Arab Labour and Produce and the Conquest of Land.⁶³ They sought to create a hermetically sealed Jewish economy, with its own settler working class. Labor Zionism represented racial autarchy. In 1944:

the mere rumor that a cafe in the exclusively Jewish town of Tel Aviv had taken on a few Arab workers provoked an angry gathering of thousands of demonstrators... Every member of Histadrut had to pay two compulsory levies: for 'Jewish Labor' and 'Jewish Produce'.⁶⁴

Ben-Gurion coined the slogan '*from class to nation*' and redefined the class struggle as a war against Arab workers. ⁶⁵ Labor Zionism consciously undermined Palestinian trade unionism.

Jewish class struggle in Palestine was for the most part a fight against Arab workers. To be anti-capitalist in Palestine almost always meant to be practically anti-Arab'.⁶⁶

In 1930, after Hapoel Hatzair had been convinced that Ahdut Ha'avoda was as opposed to socialism as they were, they agreed to merge and form Mapai, the Workers' Party of the Land of Israel.⁶⁷ David HaCohen, a former Managing Director of Sole Boneh, Histadrut's building company, described his difficulties explaining to other socialists the dilemmas of socialist Zionism:

I had to fight my friends on the issue of Jewish socialism, to defend the fact that I would not accept Arabs in my Trade Union, the Histadrut; to defend preaching to housewives that they should not buy at Arab stores; to defend the fact that we stood guard at orchards to prevent Arab workers from getting jobs there... to pour kerosene on Arab tomatoes; to attack Jewish housewives in the markets and smash Arab eggs they had bought... to buy dozens of dunums from an Arab is permitted but to sell God forbid one Jewish dunum to an Arab is prohibited; to take Rothschild the incarnation of capitalism as a socialist and to name him the 'benefactor' – to do all that was not easy.⁶⁸

In April 1924 the Palestine Communist Party adopted an anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist outlook. It was expelled from Histadrut. Berl Katznelson said: 'We don't want national strike-breakers in our midst'.⁶⁹ Social strike-breakers were fine though.

The 4th Congress of the Communist International in 1922 condemned, referring to Histadrut and others, "The pseudo-socialist colonialist tendencies of some categories of well-paid European workers in the colonies (which) must be firmly and stubbornly opposed."⁷⁰

Mapai formed the Government of Israel from 1948 to 1977. It was a firmly anticommunist and pro-imperialist party. Mapai instituted the system of

apartheid land discrimination via the Jewish National Fund [JNF]. It also put Israel's Arab citizens under military rule from 1948 to 1966.⁷¹

Mapai was a militaristic party and after a dry run in the Suez War of 1956, conquered the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights in 1967. It was Mapai that proposed the Allon Plan for settlement of the Jordan Valley and the confiscation of the 'strategic' parts of the West Bank.

In Palestine Mapai and Mapam implemented a policy of 'transfer,' i.e. the expulsion of some three-quarters of a million Palestinians. This was not a new idea. Jabotinsky had already remarked how 'Hitler, as odious as he is to us, has given this idea a good name in the world.'⁷² Mapam, the United Workers Party, described itself as 'Marxist' but in practice it was no different from mainstream Labor Zionism. 'Their socialism did not extend to their non-Jewish fellow men.'⁷³

Thousands of Palestinians were massacred in order to encourage their flight.⁷⁴ In November 1948, Eliezer Peri, the editor of Mapam's newspaper *Al Hamishmar*, received a letter describing a massacre at al-Dawayima. Benny Morris estimated that there were hundreds dead.⁷⁵ Agriculture Minister Aharon Zisling referred to a letter he had received from Eliezer Kaplan, declaring: 'I couldn't sleep all night ... Jews too have committed Nazi acts.'⁷⁶ Zisling agreed that publicly Israel must admit nothing; but the matter must be investigated. 'The children they killed by breaking their heads with sticks. There was not a house without dead.'⁷⁷

Mapam's Political Committee was briefed on 11 November 1948 by the recently ousted Chief of Staff of the Haganah, Yisrael Galili, about the killing of civilians during Operations Yoav and Hiram. Aharon Cohen led a call for an independent inquiry.⁷⁸ The problem was that the commanders of these operations were senior Mapam members, Yitzhak Sadeh and Moshe Carmel.

Yosef Nahmani, a senior officer of Haganah, was stunned by the cruelty of Israeli troops. He described how in Safsaf, the villagers raised the white flag but 60-70 men and women were massacred and asked: 'Where did they learn cruel conduct such as that of the Nazis?' According to one officer, 'The most eager were those who had come from the [concentration] camps...'⁷⁹

Revisionist Zionism, of which Likud is the heir, was led by Jabotinsky in the prestate period. Likud administrations have been a seamless continuation from their Labor Zionist predecessors.⁸⁰ Both Labor and Likud subscribe to the idea of Israel as a Jewish Democratic State and both agree that the

contradiction between the Jewish and Democratic can only be resolved in favour of the former. Labour and Likud are different currents from the same poisoned stream.⁸¹

People often see Zionism as having a left and a right. Even Fourth International supporter Gilbert Achcar wrote that ‘There is Zionism and there is ‘Zionism’. Achchar criticised the equation of Zionism and racism for its ‘totalizing nature... we can hardly treat all Zionists ... as birds of the same racist feather.’⁸²

Until the 1980s Histadrut was Israel’s second largest employer. It refused to employ Arabs in virtually all its factories (arms, electronics, aviation etc.) on ‘security grounds.’⁸³ Only Solel Boneh, which helped build the settlements, was willing to employ Arabs. This was tantamount to a colour bar.⁸⁴ Military service was made a condition of most employment⁸⁵ and Israel’s Arabs didn’t serve in the army.⁸⁶ Histadrut deliberately refused to invest in industry in Arab villages and towns.

Britain’s Jewish working class

In Britain some 150,000 Jewish refugees entered between 1881 and 1914. ‘The Anglo-Jewish leadership... was dismayed and terrified by the mass immigration.’⁸⁷ Chief Rabbi Herman Adler assured Charles Williams, the Secretary of the Central Unemployed Organisation Committee that the Anglo-Jewish leaders were using ‘every possible influence to prevent immigrants coming over here from Russia and Poland.’⁸⁸ It was the prospect of mass Jewish immigration which later caused bourgeois anti-Zionists like Neville Laski to make their peace with Zionism.

The Jewish establishment attacked the Jewish workers, not hesitating to enlist the help of the State.⁸⁹ On 26 January 1894, 500 Jewish unemployed invaded the Great Synagogue seeking an audience with Adler. Over a hundred attempted a sit-in and were dispersed by truncheon-wielding police.⁹⁰

The militancy of the newly formed Jewish trade unions led to an alliance with British workers. Jews participated heavily in the Communist Party. Jewish socialist and anarchist groups also flourished. The relationship with the British trade union movement was not an easy one. The TUC passed resolutions in 1892, 1894 and 1895 calling for immigration controls and anti-alien

legislation.²¹ By 1896 there were 13 Jewish trade unions, rising to 32 by 1902.²²

On 2 September 1889, 6,000 Jewish tailors walked out and 120 workshops were idle in a victorious strike lasting three weeks.²³ In May 1912, with the better paid West End tailors already on strike, there was the second great Jewish tailors' strike in the East End, which ended in total victory including an agreement for a closed shop. On 8 May over 8,000 Jewish workers packed the Assembly rooms in Whitechapel and another 3,000 stood outside. It was anarchist '(Rudolf) Rocker's moving speech which proved decisive in continuing the strike to total victory.'²⁴

One result of Jewish trade unionism was the reversal of support for immigration controls by sections of the trade union movement. In 1903 Manchester Trades Council became the first such body to oppose 'anti-Alien' legislation.

Miners, railwaymen and dockers all went on strike in 1912. When the Jewish tailors' strike had been won the East End dockers were still out, suffering extreme hardship. The anarchist *Arbeter Fraynd* called on the Jewish tailors to help the dockers and a committee was set up which called for families to feed and accommodate the dockers' children. Some 300 children were taken into Jewish homes. This led to the establishment of friendly relations between Jewish and non-Jewish workers which impacted on the anti-fascist struggle in the 1930s:

The dockland slogan, 'No Jews allowed down Wapping' might have persisted but it was the dockers of Wapping and St George's who constituted the militant vanguard of the movement which, in 1936, forcibly prevented the Mosleyite incursion into East London.²⁵

Very few PZ societies survived in Jewish working-class areas prior to the First World War.²⁶ Attempts to secure the backing of Jewish trade unions and socialist groups for Zionism were a dismal failure and the formation by PZ of the 'Workers' League for Jewish Emancipation' early in the war was soon abandoned. The entire strength of PZ societies dwindled to less than 700.²⁷

Zionism was irrelevant to Jewish workers. In 1886 the *Arbeter Fraynd* published 'a series of biting attacks on the "Golden Calf" of Zionism.' Zionism and socialism were 'mutually antagonistic.'²⁸ Alec, a fictional character in Simon Blumenfeld novel *Jew Boy* remarked, 'I don't see why I should change one set of exploiters for another because they are Jewish.'²⁹

The Jewish working-class fought Mosley's Blackshirts in the East End alongside the Irish Catholic dockers, many of whom had previously sympathised with the fascists. Fishman described how at the Battle of Cable Street:

We were all side by side. I was moved to tears to see bearded Jews and Irish Catholic dockers standing up to stop Mosley. I shall never forget that for as long as I live, how working-class people could stand together to oppose the evil of racism.[100](#)

Charlie Goodman, a veteran of the Battle of Cable Street, noted how, 'The fascists were stopped despite the appeals published in the *Jewish Chronicle* from the Board of Deputies - shut your doors, close your windows, stay away...'[101](#) The *JC* published an 'Urgent Warning' to Jews to keep away from the fascist march. [102](#) Warnings had been issued from synagogue pulpits and hundreds of posters carrying the message, 'Don't confront the fascists' were plastered on walls. All to no avail. The anti-fascist mobilisation had been organised by the Communist Party, Independent Labour Party and Jewish People's Council. According to the *JC*, 'the Jews who assembled were vastly outnumbered by the non-Jews.' Grudgingly the *JC* accepted that East Enders were 'in no mood for counsels of moderation and restraint... determined, once and for all, to read the invaders and enemies of their peace a lesson they would remember.' But the *JC* believed that was 'at the cost of the principles which we and others had advocated...'[103](#)

The fight against fascism had radicalised the Jewish community and in 1945 Phil Piratin was elected as Communist MP for Mile End with an estimated 50% of his 5,000 vote coming from Jewish voters.[104](#)

Even East End Jewish businessmen gave money to the Communist Party to help combat the fascist menace.[105](#) During the 1930s Zionism was in a state of collapse in the East End. A correspondent to the *Young Zionist* in December 1932 wrote that 'the tendency in the best part of our Jewish working-class ... is to join the Communist Party,' and that Zionism 'has made no headway amongst young working-class Jews.'[106](#)

Joe Jacobs, a key activist in the Communist Party, wrote that 'The Jews in East London were not yet in favour of Zionism ... Many Jews rejected Zionism entirely.' Their opposition to Zionism was made easier because they had originated from Eastern Europe where the Bund had fought a bitter fight against Zionist class collaboration.[107](#) To Mick Mendel, a prominent communist leader and trade unionist, 'Zionism was not a solution - not even an inferior one - but an escape.'[108](#)

Zionism and Jewish Working-Class Identity

In Eastern Europe in the 19th century, Jews found themselves ‘wedged between the anvil of decaying feudalism and the hammer of rotting capitalism.’¹⁰⁹ It was precisely at this time, when Jews were losing their distinct socio-economic role, that anti-Semitism increased.

Of the more than two million Jews who fled the Russian pogroms from the middle of the 19th century to 1914, at most 30,000 went to Palestine.¹¹⁰ The vast majority went to the United States.¹¹¹ :

Just so long as Judaism was incorporated in the feudal system, the ‘dream of Zion’ was nothing but a dream... The Jewish tavern owner or ‘farmer’ of 16th-century Poland thought as little of ‘returning’ to Palestine as does the Jewish millionaire in America today.¹¹²

Up till 1945 the majority of British Jews were working-class and they were hostile to Zionism. As Jewish tailor, I. Stone, said at the great meeting of the Hebrew Socialist Union of 26 August 1876:

The unity of Israel has become a great lie since the underlying class struggle exists also amongst Jews... Therefore Jewish workers must unite among themselves against the other spurious unity – that with the masters!¹¹³

Historically Jewish identity has been shaped by its interaction with non-Jewish society. The best answer to the question, ‘What is Jewish identity?’ is ‘What we do is what we are.’¹¹⁴ There have been many Jewish identities over the centuries: traders, skilled craftsmen, money lenders, a militant working-class, socialists and revolutionaries. Today there is no specific socio-economic function that is peculiar to Jews. That is why there is no ‘Jewish Question’.

Mike Marqusee told how it was ‘in resistance to anti-Semitism’ that his grandfather ‘found a core, a purpose to his Jewishness’.¹¹⁵ The Jewish identity of Marqusee’s grandfather is now unrecognisable. It has changed ‘from a highly sophisticated ethical tradition into a state ideology that rationalizes racism and lawlessness by dehumanizing “goyim.”’¹¹⁶

Post-1945, British Jewry has migrated into the upper-middle class.¹¹⁷ London Jewry is ‘arguably more bourgeois now than at any time since the mid-nineteenth century’.¹¹⁸ The Jewish proletariat has virtually disappeared. By 1961, over 40% of Anglo-Jewry was to be found in the upper two social classes compared to less than 20% of the general population.¹¹⁹

The rise of Western Jewry to unparalleled affluence and high status has led to the near-disappearance of a Jewish proletariat of any size; indeed, the Jews may become the first ethnic group in history without a working class of any size.¹²⁰

These socio-economic changes have been reflected politically in support for Zionism. This in turn has resulted in Zionism and Israel defining what it is to be Jewish for the majority of Jews. Jewish identity is no longer about the struggle against racism and oppression.

Geoffrey Alderman argued that support for Israel within the 'central Orthodox' had 'acquired a centrality rivaling, and perhaps even surpassing, that of the synagogue.'¹²¹ It was even suggested that the destruction of Israel would destroy the Jewish religion in the diaspora.¹²²

Today's identification by most Jews with Israel is almost certainly the last Jewish identity. It is a negative identity, based on state worship, devoid of any of the positive qualities traditionally associated with Jews, such as solidarity with the oppressed and welcoming the stranger.

Zionist Jewish identity plunders the Bible for legitimacy. It is Joshua Bin Nun, who slaughtered even children and infants, who is a Zionist hero not the Prophet Isaiah whose injunction to 'Learn to do what is right, promote justice and give the oppressed reason to celebrate!' is not part of the Zionist catechism.¹²³ The welcome of strangers has no place in Zionist theology.¹²⁴ Israel sees non-Jewish refugees as diluting the purity of the Jewish *volk*.

The lack of any social or economic basis to diaspora Jewry has led to its numerical decline.¹²⁵ Zionism and Israel are insufficient to counter the attractions of secular society. Zionism in the West appeals to a small band of nationalist zealots suspended between Scylla and Charybdis.

Secular Jewry is on the road to complete assimilation since there is little to keep them as Jews. 58% of American Jews, and 71% of non-Orthodox Jews are marrying non-Jews.¹²⁶ Only their seclusion has enabled the Orthodox to buck the trend.

Israel is destined to become the home of a large majority of the world's Jews.¹²⁷ Religion in Israel defines one's national status and the privileges consequent upon it. That is why Palestinian applications to convert to Judaism are rejected 'because of their ethnic origin'.¹²⁸



THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

BARAK: WE'D BETTER GET HIM A PSYCHIATRIST

PM's son posts cartoon with alleged anti-Semitic origin to slam parents' critics

Yair Netanyahu takes to Facebook to suggest George Soros involved in corruption allegations against his mother and father

By TOI STAFF

September 9, 2017, 7:47 pm | 15



Daily Stormer neo-Nazi paper named after Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer*, styled itself the #1 Yair Netanyahu Fansite;
Yair Netanyahu's anti-Semitic cartoon showing George Soros as a puppet master;



Medal struck to commemorate the series of articles in Goebbel's *Der Angriff* marking the trip of Baron von Mildenstein of the SS to Palestine with Kurt Tuchler of the German Zionist Executive and their wives.



Palestinians fleeing as a result of ethnic cleansing in 1948. It was the rise of Hitler and the consequent emigration of Jews that gave the Zionist settlers a critical mass that enabled them to drive out the Palestinians.



Headlines from the articles that Mildenstein wrote in *Der Angriff*.

The Jewish Western Bulletin

PUBLISHED BY

The Vancouver Jewish Administrative Council

VANCOUVER, B.C., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1933

Mogen Dovid and Swastika To Fly Side by Side

HAMBURG — The Blue and White Zionist flag with the Mogen Dovid, the star of David, will fly side by side with the German swastika flag, when two German boats will begin to operate, within a short time, on Palestinian coastal transport.

The Atlantic Shipping Company is sending two motorships to Palestine loaded with the belongings of German Jews who have emigrated to Palestine. As the ships are registered in Germany they are bound to carry the official German flags. But upon their arrival in Palestine, where they will be used for local service, they will in addition fly the Zionist flag, probably



in the hope of securing Jewish business and of counteracting the hatred of the swastika flag.

An article in a Canadian Jewish paper on a German boat which was going to fly the Nazi and Zionist flags side by side.



A cartoon accompanying Mildenstein's articles.



an anti-Semitic poster from Hungary's general election of April 2018 showing George Soros, a childhood survivor of the Hungarian Holocaust. The poster was part of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's campaign to portray Soros as the 'puppet master' responsible for all the ills of Hungarian society.



Orbán and Netanyahu demonstrate their bromance on Orbán's visit to Israel by playing with a rubik cube.

Loathed by Jews, Germany's far-right AfD loves the Jewish state

Candidates for nationalist Alternative for Germany, derided as anti-Semitic, overwhelmingly profess to hold pro-Israel positions, poll shows

By RAPIHAEL AHREN | September 24, 2017, 11:58 pm | 28



Germany's neo-Nazi anti-refugee *Alternative for Germany* party, loves the 'Jewish' state whilst not loving Germany's Jews

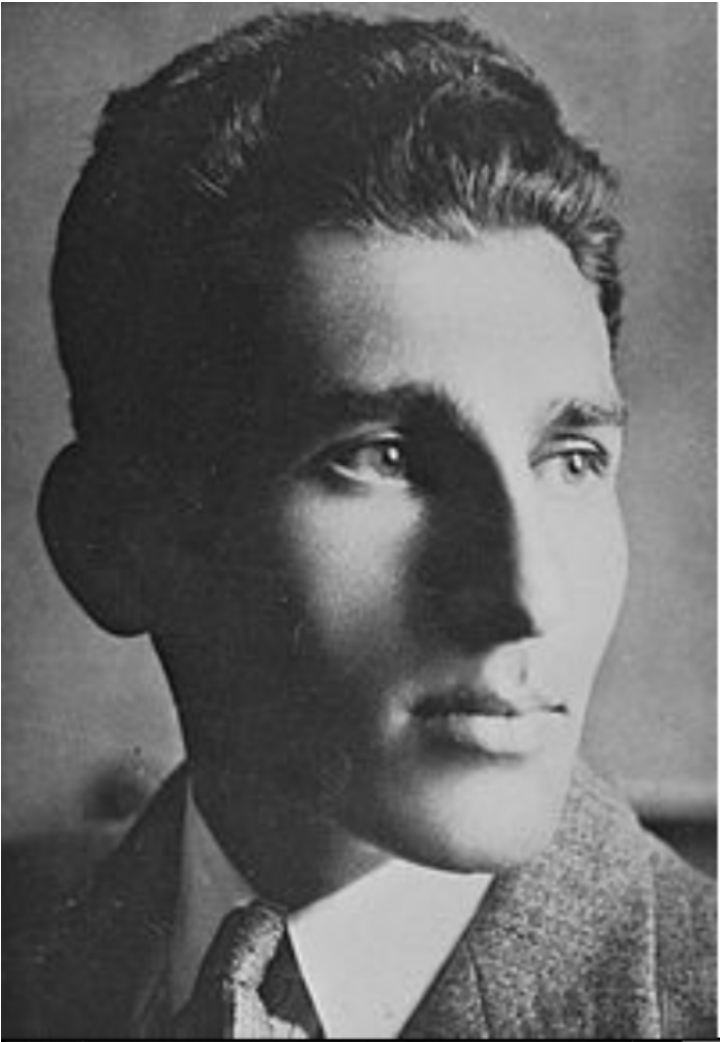
Rights Groups Demand Israel Stop Arming neo-Nazis in Ukraine

Human rights activists petition the court to cease Israeli arms exports to Ukraine since some of these weapons reach neo-Nazi elements in Ukraine's security forces



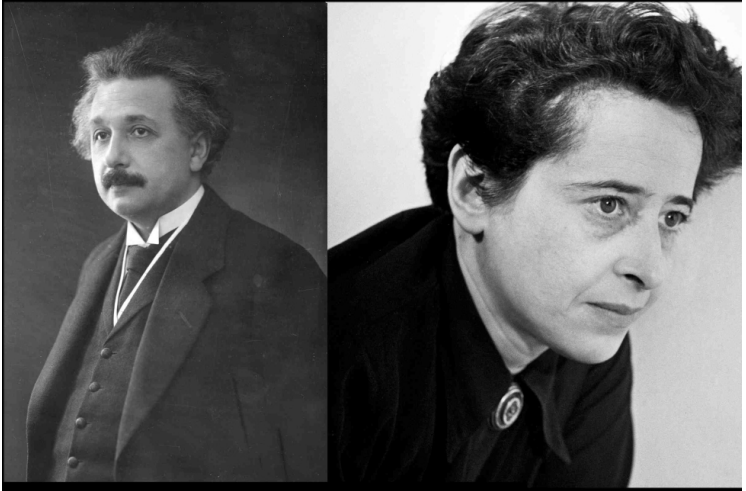
An Azov militiaman with a Tavor rifle. Credit: Azov YouTube channel screenshot

Israeli human rights groups petition Tel Aviv District Court to prevent the sale of arms to Ukraine's neo-Nazi Azov Battalion. In response the Israeli state asked the court to slap a 'gag order' on proceedings and that they take place behind closed doors. The court naturally agreed to the State's request.



Abraham Stern, leader of the Stern Gang, a Zionist terror group which in 1941 twice made proposals for a formal alliance with Nazi Germany. One of the triumvirate in its command was Yitzhak Shamir, a future Israeli Prime Minister.

Today in Israel there are numerous streets named after him and even a town, Kochav Yair (after his nickname 'Yair'.



Albert Einstein and Hannah Arendt, both of whom signed a letter to the New York Times in 1948 protesting about the visit of Menachem Begin, a future Prime Minister and then the leader of Herut, which they described as a Nazi-type party. Under the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of 'anti-Semitism' both Arendt and Einstein would be classified as 'anti-Semites'.



Alan MacLeod
@AlanRMacLeod



Anders Breivik, the Norwegian mass murderer, giving a Nazi salute in court. Breivik was an ardent supporter of Zionism and the 'Jewish' state whilst reserving his venom for Jewish anti-Zionists.

Britain's most notorious fascist, Tommy Robinson, is welcomed and takes pride of place at a pro-Israel demonstration in London today.

Says all you need to know about the situation.



3:19 PM · May 23, 2021

British fascist and neo-Nazi Tommy Robinson joining a pro-Israel demonstration outside Israel's Embassy in London in May 2021.



An Arab baby was rejected by a nursery in Moshav Merhavia because Jewish parents objected to their children mixing with an Arab baby—Ha'aretz 25 December 2008.

THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Settlement fires school's Israeli Arab cleaning staff after threats from parents

Rights groups warn of legal action after Karnei Shomron succumbs to pressure; one parent writes: 'The lives of our children come first, we are racists and we love the Jewish race'

By **TOI STAFF**

16 February 2019, 10:09 pm |



Arab cleaning staff fired from a settlement because they aren't Jewish. Under the IHRA misdefinition of 'anti-Semitism' to call Israel a racist state is anti-Semitic.

HAARETZ Friday, May 20, 2016.
Iyyar 12, 5775 Time in Israel: 5:43 AM

Israel Is Waiting for Its Holocaust Survivors to Die

There are three different days committed to remembering the Holocaust, but during the rest of the year, the Israeli government only thinks of Holocaust survivors as a financial burden.

Amos Rubin | Feb 06, 2013 4:12 AM

Article on the Israel's attitude to Holocaust survivors as a burden on Israel's social security budget.



Graffiti daubed on the walls in Hebron. Under the IHRA any comparison between Israel or Zionism with the Nazis is 'anti-Semitic', even if it is true

Timerman award angers journalists

From JOSE SMILG
Buenos Aires

Most Argentinians are united in protesting against the award of the Maria Moors Cabot prize for journalism by Columbia University in New York to Mr Jacobo Timerman, the founder and former editor of the Buenos Aires daily newspaper, "La Opinion."

Mr Timerman was expelled by Argentina in September, 1979, after 29 months' detention, and is now an Israeli citizen.

He has aroused anger in Argentina

by his criticism of the country's human rights record and by the publication of his book "Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number," describing his detention and torture.

Some former winners of the prize have asked Columbia University to delete their names from the list of winners and others have removed the plaque and medal presented with the award from display.

Two of the most prominent protesters were Mr Maximo Gainza Paz, the editor of "La Prensa," who has always been friendly to Judaism

and Israel and has voiced oppo to some policies of the Mi Government; and Mr Kraiselburd, the chairman of American Press Associat freedom of press commission, edits "El Diario" in La Plata.

Other protesters included Bartalome Mitre, the editor of Nacion," and Mrs Diana de Mitre the editor of "La Nueva Provinc Bahía Blanca.

The report by *Jewish Chronicle* correspondent in Argentina, Jose Smilg, could have been a press release from Argentina's neo-Nazi Junta. His description of Timerman's criticism of the Junta's human rights record and his description of the torture he experienced as a prisoner, as having 'aroused anger in Argentina', implied that most Argentinians supported the Junta. The Junta's overthrow demonstrated that this was a lie.



A Junta took power in Argentina (1976-1983) under Gen. Videla (centre). It was the only post war neo-Nazi regime. It tortured to death 3000 Jews for being Jewish. When the USA stopped supplying arms to Argentina Israel stepped in. NOTHING was heard about anti-Semitism then

The three leaders of the Junta, including General Videla (centre)

- ¹ Brian Klug, *Anti-Zionism in London's Jewish East End* p. 11, Balfour Project, <https://tinyurl.com/mnhps3xl>
- ² Isaac Levitats, p. 1. According to the 1897 census.
- ³ <https://tinyurl.com/y3oz284e> Up to 2,500 were killed in Odessa alone in 1905. Between 1917 and 1922 at least 100,000 Jews were murdered in pogroms by the forces of Symon Petliura, leader of the Ukrainian People's Republic and other Ukrainian nationalist groups <https://tinyurl.com/y2u7139y>. This didn't stop Ze'ev Jabotinsky signing in 1921 an agreement with Maxim Slavinsky, Petliura's representative, during the 12th Zionist Congress in Carlsbad, enabling Jewish gendarmes to fight alongside Petliura's army in an invasion of the Ukraine. Colin Shindler, pp. 42-8, *Triumph of Military Zionism*. On 25 May 1926 Petliura was assassinated by Sholem Schwartzbard, a Jewish anarchist in Paris, in revenge for the murder of his family by Petliura's forces. See Jabotinsky's 'Embarrassing Offer', *Ha'aretz* 19.7.09. Shlomo Avineiri <https://tinyurl.com/y3v76wre>. See also 'The Avenger: The Jewish Watchmaker Who Killed a Ukrainian Despot', <https://tinyurl.com/w4xq826>, Ushi Derman.
- ⁴ In an interview with Herzl, Witte related how he told the late Czar Alexander III that he had no objection to drowning six or seven million Jews in the Black Sea, if it were possible. Diaries, p. 1530.
- ⁵ Erich Haberer, *Jews and Revolution in 19th Century Russia*, pp. 253-7. This is an overestimate. But still impressive!
- ⁶ Isaac Levitats, p. 184.
- ⁷ Nora Levin, *While Messiah Tarried: Jewish Socialist Movements, 1871-1917*, p. 229.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 259.
- ⁹ William Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals*, p. 99; Levin p. 231.
- ¹⁰ Levin, p. 258.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* Henry Tobias, p. xv, *The Jewish Bund in Russia – From Its Origins to 1905*, Stanford University Press, 1972. Stephen Halbrook, p. 103.
- ¹² Levin, p. 392. Borochov organised one of the first socialist Zionist groups in Ekaterinoslav in 1900.
- ¹³ Laqueur, *History of Zionism* p.273.
- ¹⁴ Lucas, p. 35, *Modern History of Israel*.
- ¹⁵ Henry Tobias, p. 172,
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251, Report to the 2nd International in 1904.
- ¹⁷ *The Letters & Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series A, Vol. 2, November 1902-August 1903, p. 284. fn. 9.
- ¹⁸ Steven J Zipperstein, *Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History*, Liveright, 2018, <https://tinyurl.com/y4xtpwjs>
- ¹⁹ See 'Jewish Massacre Denounced'. NYT April 28 1903.
- ²⁰ Amos Elon, *Israel: Founders & Sons*, Weidenfeld, 1971, p. 209. 'Before the Holocaust, Jewish Suffering Had One Name: Kishinev,' Anthony Julius, *NYT*, 24.7.18. <https://tinyurl.com/y7jkleld>
- ²¹ Levin, p. 305.
- ²² *Ibid.*, pp. 395, fn. 40, 530.

- 23 Sergey Dmitriyevich Urusov, <https://tinyurl.com/4wahwhap> Levin, p. 161.
- 24 Herzl, *Complete Diaries* p. 799.
- 25 R. Patai (ed.), *Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, p. 1525.
- 26 Herzl, *Complete Diaries*, p. 1526
- 27 Tobias, p. 252.
- 28 Ibid., p. 250.
- 29 Herzl, *Complete Diaries*, p. 596.
- 30 *The Times* 6.2.04, 'Mr Lucien Wolf's Interview with M. de Plehve' reprinted pp.11-12 JC 12.2.04, see also Chaim Weizmann, *Letters and Papers*, Volume 3. p. 216., fn. 195.
- 31 JTA, Latest Cable Dispatches, 9.12.1935, <https://tinyurl.com/y269wb72>.
- 32 Lucas, p. 56.
- 33 Bloom, 'What "The Father" had in mind,' p. 177.
- 34 Ze'ev Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, p. 325.
- 35 Hannah Arendt, *The Jew As Pariah*, p. 185.
- 36 Bloom, 'What "The Father" had in mind,' p. 346.
- 37 Barry Trachtenberg, *The Revolutionary Roots of Modern Yiddish, 1903-1917*, Syracuse UP, 2008, p. 11.
- 38 Poale Zion, the Free Dictionary. <https://tinyurl.com/w2ye938v>
- 39 Ber Borochov, *The National Question and the Class Struggle*; Arthur Hertzberg, 'The Zionist Idea', p. 358. See David Green, 'This day in Jewish history/A great Zionist mind dies young' *Ha'aretz* 17.12.12. <https://tinyurl.com/y6bdg7qp>
- 40 Levin, p. 266.
- 41 Ber Borochov, *Our Platform*; Hertzberg p. 364.
- 42 Borochov, in a polemic with the Territorialists, spoke of 'the national advantage of the Land of Israel, as an object of special endearment'. *The Question of Zion and Territory*, <https://tinyurl.com/y4bt4twr>
- 43 LPZ was a Yiddish party. Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History? Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive*, p.28, Indiana University Press, 2007 wrote: 'Being a socialist Zionist party it was torn between the struggle in the here and now and in Palestine. The Party rejected the suggestion that the Yishuv was "better" than the Diaspora or that the Labour movement in Palestine had any right to dictate to the Jewish workers in Poland.' Its most famous member was Emmanuel Ringelblum, who compiled and hid the Oneg Shabbat files in Warsaw which described conditions for Jews in the ghetto. The Party steadily lost support in the inter-war period. It reached its peak in the late 1920s and declined thereafter as the Bund became stronger.
- 44 Zachary Lockman, *The Left in Israel – Zionism vs. Socialism*, p. 5, Poale Zion, Factions, 1920 split and aftermath. <https://tinyurl.com/aw2njfe9>
- 45 Leonard Stein, p. 437.
- 46 Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, p. 25.
- 47 *Electronic Intifada*, 9.3.09. <https://tinyurl.com/uxpee9z4> citing Uri Davies, *Israel Utopia Incorporated*, p.142. *The Observer*, 24.1.71.
- 48 Moed, Histadrut Department of Culture and Education,' 1963, p. 3, quoted by Arie Bober (ed.), *The Other Israel: The Radical Case Against Zionism*, p. 125.
- 49 Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, p. 317.

- [50](#) Ibid., p. 177.
- [51](#) Achduth No 16, Tel Aviv 1921 cited in Machover/Offenburg, *Khamsin* 6, pp. 49/50.
- [52](#) Sternhell, pp. 6-7.
- [53](#) Ben-Gurion *Rebirth and Destiny*, p. 79.
- [54](#) Sternhell, *The Founding Myths*, p.157.
- [55](#) Ibid., p. 267.
- [56](#) Mario Offenburg op. cit., pp 146-8. cited in Weinstock op. cit. p. 87.
- [57](#) Ben-Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny*, p. 57.
- [58](#) Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, p. 289.
- [59](#) Ben-Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny*, p. 74.
- [60](#) Gabriel Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism*, Verso, 2008, pp. 71-74.
- [61](#) Josef Gorni, *The British Labour Movement & Zionism 1917-48*, p. 95, 1983.
- [62](#) Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Chapter 3: The Railway Workers of Palestine (I): The Struggle for Arab-Jewish Unity, 1919-1925 'Struggling for Unity.'*
- [63](#) Zachary Lockman, *The Left in Israel – Zionism vs. Socialism*, p. 5.
- [64](#) Nathan Weinstock, *Zionism: False Messiah*, Ink Links, 1979, p. 184.
- [65](#) Lucas, p. 48.
- [66](#) Arendt, *The Jew As Pariah*, p. 203.
- [67](#) Sternhell, p. 78.
- [68](#) David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, p.185, citing *Ha'aretz* 15.11.69.
- [69](#) Mario Offenburg, *Kommunismus in Palaestina Nation und Kalassen der anti-Kolonialen Revolution Meisenheim am Glan* 1975 (PhD Thesis, West Berlin, 1975) p.187. See also A. Flores, 'Recent Studies on the History of the Palestine CP,' *Khamsin* No 7, pp. 41-51.
- [70](#) Johan Franzén, *Communism versus Zionism: The Comintern, Yishuvism, and the Palestine Communist Party*, p. 8., *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2.
- [71](#) See Koenig Report. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koenig_Memorandum
- [72](#) Norman Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, xiv, <https://tinyurl.com/yxpxjSee3>,
- [73](#) Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, p. 25.
- [74](#) Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. See [Chapter 6](#) for 'The Massacre at Tantura' (p.133) and Chapter 7: 'The Escalation of the Cleansing Operations June-September 1948', pp. 146-79.
- [75](#) 'Survival of the Fittest,' *Ha'aretz* 8.1.04. <https://tinyurl.com/mzwu3xp> see also 'Welcome To al-Dawayima, District of Hebron' <https://tinyurl.com/ySyda3ss>
- [76](#) Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestine Refugee Problem Revisited*, 2004, p. 488.
- [77](#) Ibid., p. 470.
- [78](#) Benny Morris, 'Falsifying the Record: A Fresh Look at Zionist Documentation of 1948,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 24:3. (Spring, 1995), pp. 44-62.
- [79](#) Idith Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, pp. 171-2.
- [80](#) Tony Greenstein, 'Begin & Sharon have done nothing that Labour hasn't done before them,' *Tribune*, 20.7.84. Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, p. 6.
- [81](#) Greenstein, *Tribune*, 20.7.84.
- [82](#) Gilbert Achcar, *The Arabs and the Holocaust*, London: Saqi Books, 2010, p. 274.

- [83](#) Emile Farjoun, *Khamsin* 10, p. 31-5.
- [84](#) Sawt el-Amel citing Sikkuy Report 2004-2005.
- [85](#) This is indirect discrimination, whereby an ostensibly neutral provision, practice or criteria impacts on a particular group disproportionately.
- [86](#) Emmanuel Farjoun, Class Divisions in Israeli Society, *Khamsin* no. 10, 1983, pp. 31-5.
- [87](#) Geoffrey Alderman, *The Jewish Community*, p. 52.
- [88](#) Fishman, p. 215.. See *The Times* 13.11.1893.
- [89](#) Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals 1875-1914*, p. 197. At a meeting which Eleanor Marx was due to address, the hall was cancelled on the instigation of Herman Adler and Samuel Montagu. The meeting was held outside as part of a massive demonstration.
- [90](#) *Ibid.*, p. 205.
- [91](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 86, 216, though in 1895 it met with much opposition.
- [92](#) *Ibid.*, p. 276.
- [93](#) *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- [94](#) *Ibid.*, p. 295-300. See also *1912 – a year of strikes in the East End of London* <https://tinyurl.com/yahhsvaf> and *The Jewish Community and the Port* <https://tinyurl.com/ychl5gz7>.
- [95](#) Fishman, p. 300.
- [96](#) Stuart Cohen, English Zionists and British Jews, pp, 125, 167.
- [97](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 250-1.
- [98](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 56-60.
- [99](#) Klug, Anti-Zionism in London's Jewish East End, 1890-1948, p. 6.
- [100](#) *East London Advertiser* 4.10.06. reprinted in *The Guardian*, Audrey Gillan, 30.9.06., 'Day the East End said "No pasaran" to Blackshirts' <https://tinyurl.com/2p82awt9>.
- [101](#) *JC* 24.10.86.
- [102](#) *JC*. 2.10.36.
- [103](#) *JC* 9.10.36.
- [104](#) Jason Lever, *The Life and Times of Solomon Lever, 1895-1959*, [Chapter 16](#).
- [105](#) Geoffrey Alderman, *London Jewry and London Politics, 1889-1986*, London: Routledge 1989, p. 96.
- [106](#) David Cesarani, East End Jewry between the wars. Alderman, *London Jewry*, pp. 96-7 cited by Klug, Anti-Zionism in London's Jewish East End, p. 7.
- [107](#) Joe Jacobs, *Out of the Ghetto*, pp. 208-209.
- [108](#) Klug, Anti-Zionism in London's Jewish East End, p. 8.
- [109](#) Abram Leon, p. 226.
- [110](#) History of the Jews in Russia, <https://tinyurl.com/pgksSea> Shlomo Sand, *How I Stopped Being a Jew*, p. 37, estimated that between the 1880s and 1939 at least three million were spurred by the pogroms and anti-Semitism into emigrating. Sternhell estimated that only one per cent chose to come to Palestine prior to the passing of restrictive immigration laws in the United States.
- [111](#) Louis Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia – the Struggle for Emancipation*, p. 72.
- [112](#) Leon, p. 247.
- [113](#) Fishman, p. 115.

- [114](#) Ambalavaner Sivanandan, 'Culture and Identity', *Liberator*, NY, Vol. 10:6, 1970.
- [115](#) Review of Mike Marqusee's 'If I am not for myself:', Tony Greenstein, *Zionism and secularisation of the Jewish ghetto* <https://tinyurl.com/t7pat32e> WW 730, 16.7.08. pp.118, 121.
- [116](#) Chas Freeman, former US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, *Greater Israel and the Prospects for Peace in the Middle East*, <https://tinyurl.com/yy44rwkh> 6.6.19.
- [117](#) William Rubinstein, p. 51.
- [118](#) *JC* 28.3.86. 'Two Cheers for the GLC'.
- [119](#) Alderman, p. 137.
- [120](#) William Rubinstein, p. 51.
- [121](#) *JC* 28. 3. 86. 'Two Cheers for the GLC', Alderman.
- [122](#) Rubinstein op. cit. p. 129, citing N. Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks*, pp. 335, NY 1979.
- [123](#) Book of Isaiah, 1:17. <https://tinyurl.com/y2lsa34k>
- [124](#) There are repeated injunctions to treat the stranger as yourself in the Bible for example 'You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you', and 'You shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:' Leviticus 19:33-34.
- [125](#) From 1948 to 2014 the population of Jewish communities outside Israel dropped from 10.5 to 8.1 million. <https://tinyurl.com/b88rcwp>
- [126](#) 'Poll Shows Major Shift in Identity of U.S. Jews', *NYT*, 1.10.13. <http://tinyurl.com/my87apf>
- [127](#) In 'No self-determination – The overthrow of Zionism is incompatible with a Hebrew nation', *WW*, 1151, 20.4.17. <https://tinyurl.com/y2xbzt8S> I argued that if Israeli Jews constitute a nation it is an oppressor, settler colonial nation with no right to self-determination as they are not oppressed.
- [128](#) 'Palestinian requests to convert to Judaism rejected automatically', <https://tinyurl.com/y7e6nqlv> according to Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, director of the Israeli Government's Conversion Authority, *Jerusalem Post*, 1.4.16.

PART TWO

ZIONISM DURING THE HOLOCAUST

[Hitler] is only the ghost of our own past rising against us. He stands for the extenuation and perpetuation of our own methods... ↓ George Orwell

¹ Notes on the Way. *Time and Tide*, 30 March 1940, The Orwell Foundation, <https://tinyurl.com/wtw7yhry>

Chapter 4

The Holocaust and Zionism

'You have thought as long and hard as anyone about how they did it. Now tell me, why did they do it?' Emil Fackenheim: *'They did it because they wanted to do it.'* ¹ (Raul Hilberg)

From time to time, as with Ken Livingstone's statement that Hitler supported Zionism, the ghosts of Zionism's past come back to haunt it.² Hannah Arendt described how, 'during the first stages of their Jewish policy, the National Socialists thought it proper to adopt a pro-Zionist attitude.'³

The Zionist movement was not unhappy at the coming to power of the Nazis. It represented the defeat of assimilation. Liberal Jews in Weimar Germany, the vast majority, referred to the Zionists as 'vorkish Jews.'⁴ The belief that German Jews were not German is not something that Zionism wishes to discuss today.

The record of the Zionist movement during the Holocaust sits uneasily with mainstream narratives. As time went by, the post-war myth that the Israeli state was 'the world's atonement for complicity in the Holocaust grew.'⁵ German imperialism's Judeocide was the pretext for the creation of a state that began life with the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians. Israel was seen as the heir to the Holocaust dead whereas the Arabs were depicted as the inheritors of the mantle of German fascism.⁶

This myth was integral to the forging of a Western imperialist alliance. It laid the foundations for the multi-billion dollar reparations agreement which Germany agreed to pay the Israeli state.⁷ Germany atoned for the Holocaust by financing Israel as the West's watchdog in the Middle East. Israel's wars of colonial conquest were koshered by the memory of the Jewish dead of Auschwitz.

Nicosia argued that there was no more than a coincidence of interests between Zionism and the Nazis. However, they also shared a racial view of society which eased the way to practical co-operation and collaboration. From Herzl's visit to von Plehve to Jabotinsky's alliance with Petliura,⁸ Zionism has always had a fatal attraction for anti-Semitism and anti-Semites.

Writing Off the Living - Zionist Fatalism

Nicosia and Achcar suggested that the Zionist movement acted as it did because an understanding of National Socialism eluded it until well into the

war.⁹ Yet even if this were true it doesn't explain, still less justify, the relationship between them.

Ben-Gurion had warned the 1934 Histadrut Convention that the 'Hitler's regime puts the entire Jewish people in danger.'¹⁰ *Davar*, the paper of Histadrut, likewise warned that "Germany Jewry is facing destruction." As Hava Eshkoli-Wagman noted, 'The Zionist leadership shared this assessment.'¹¹

Once Operation Barbarossa [OB] had begun the Zionist leadership were in no doubt as to what was happening, despite their outward calm. On 10 May 1942 Nahum Goldmann predicted that between two and three million European Jews would survive Hitler.¹² In July 1942 Weizmann forecast that a quarter of Europe's Jews faced annihilation.¹³

World Jewry had understood the threat that Nazism posed, which was why, when the Nazis came to power, the vast majority of Jews, wherever they lived, began a Boycott of Nazi Germany. The Zionist movement however refused to accept that German Jewry was facing destruction nor did it particularly care.

When Ben-Gurion was asked about Saul Friedlander's criticism that he did not understand the Holocaust, his response spoke to his cynical indifference: 'What is there to understand? They died and that's it'.¹⁴ Ben-Gurion 'had an extraordinary aversion to speaking feelingly about the catastrophe, and he refused repeated entreaties to visit Yad Vashem ...'¹⁵ It was:

a genuine disgust for Jewish life in the diaspora and a sense of distance between the defiant healthy nation of Jews gathering in the Land of Israel and the misshapen, impotent, and craven mass of Jews who had remained in Europe to be slaughtered.¹⁶

The problem was not that the Zionist leadership did not understand the Nazis' intentions but that their priorities lay elsewhere. Ben-Gurion believed that Jewish 'distress' could serve as political leverage and that 'it is in our interests to use Hitler... for the building of our country.' He told the Jewish Agency Executive [JAE] that 'the harsher the affliction, the greater the strength of Zionism.'¹⁷

Ben-Gurion was consistent in his view that the disaster facing German Jewry must be turned to Zionism's advantage. In November 1935 he argued that:

To the disaster of German Jewry we must offer a Zionist response, namely, we must convert the disaster into a source for the upbuilding of Palestine.¹⁸

Ben-Gurion explained his thinking in January 1933 when he warned that ‘Zionism... is not primarily engaged in saving individuals’ and that if there was ‘a conflict of interest between saving individual Jews and the good of the Zionist enterprise, we shall say the enterprise comes first.’¹⁹

Hitler wanted the Jews out of Germany. If they were unable to leave, given the right set of circumstances, such as war, extermination was the inevitable next step.

Zionism’s Welcome for Hitler

Perhaps most shameful of all was the welcome that the ZVfD and the Zionist leaders gave to Hitler’s coming to power. The Zionist leaders thought solely in terms of how the Zionist movement could profit from what was happening. Hence their decision to pursue a trade agreement, Ha’avara, with the Nazi state.

The Zionist leaders saw the Hitler regime as a golden opportunity to prosper.²⁰ Nicosia spoke of the ‘illusory assumption’ that Zionism ‘must have been well served by a Nazi victory’. Hitler’s victory ‘could only bolster Zionist fortunes.’

Nicosia spoke of the tendency to ‘view Zionist interests as distinct from those of the larger Jewish community in the Diaspora.’²¹

So positive was its assessment of the situation that, as early as April 1933, the ZVfD announced its determination to take advantage of the crisis to win over the traditionally assimilationist German Jewry to Zionism.²²

Berl Katznelson, a founder of Mapai and editor of *Davar* as well as Ben-Gurion’s effective deputy, saw the rise of Hitler as ‘an opportunity to build and flourish like none we have ever had or ever will have.’²³ Ben-Gurion was even more optimistic. ‘The Nazis’ victory would become “a fertile force for Zionism.”’²⁴ Prinz admitted that:

It was morally disturbing to seem to be considered as the favoured children of the Nazi Government, particularly when it dissolved the anti-Zionist youth groups, and seemed in other ways to prefer the Zionists. The Nazis asked for a more Zionist behaviour.²⁵

Bloom quoted Emil Ludwig (1881-1948), the world-famous biographer, ‘who expressed the general attitude of the Zionist movement’:

Hitler will be forgotten in a few years, but he will have a beautiful monument in Palestine. You know, the coming of the Nazis was rather a welcome thing. ... Thousands who seemed to be completely lost to Judaism were brought back to the fold by Hitler, and for that I am personally very grateful to him.²⁶

Nahman Bialik volunteered that ‘Hitlerism has perhaps saved German Jewry, which was being assimilated into annihilation.’²⁷ Germany’s remaining Jews were of course annihilated, but not by assimilation.

The German Zionist Federation and the Nazis

In the spring of 1933, Baron Leopold von Mildenstein, a member of the SS, and Kurt Tuchler of the ZVfD Executive and their wives, boarded a train at Berlin to travel to Palestine. Tuchler had tried to persuade Mildenstein to write ‘something positive’ about Palestine in the Nazi press. Mildenstein agreed, provided that he was able to visit Palestine first.²⁸ He stayed for six months and was clearly impressed by the “new Jew”.

On his return, Mildenstein published a series of 12 articles in Joseph Goebbels’ paper, *Der Angriff*, from 26 September to 9 October 1934 under the by-line ‘von Lim’²⁹ Appointed by Heydrich, Mildenstein served as head of Abteilung 112/II, the Jewish department (Judenreferat) of the *Sicherheitsdienst*, [SD] from the summer of 1935 to August 1936.³⁰

On 21 June 1933, the ZVfD sent a memo to Hitler. It was never answered. It read:

Zionism has no illusion about the difficulty of the Jewish condition which consists above all in an abnormal occupational pattern and in the fault of an intellectual and moral posture not rooted in one’s own tradition... an answer to the Jewish question truly satisfying to the national state can be brought about only with the collaboration of the Jewish movement that aims at a social, cultural and moral renewal of Jewry... On the foundation of the new state, which has established the principle of race... fruitful activity for the fatherland is possible. Our acknowledgement of Jewish nationality provides for a clear and sincere relationship to the German people and its national and racial realities. Precisely because we don’t wish to falsify these fundamentals, because we too are against mixed marriages and are for maintaining the purity of the Jewish group... The realisation of Zionism could only be hurt by resentment of Jews abroad against the German development. Boycott propaganda... is in essence fundamentally unZionist, because Zionism wants not to do battle but to convince and to build.³¹

What the ZVfD wrote in their letter to Hitler was consistent with what they had always argued. The Zionists’ 1914 Leipzig Convention declared that Jews had no roots in Germany. German Zionism was opposed to Jews playing any role in German state affairs. Assimilation was its enemy. The ZVfD even proposed a Zionist-Nazi concordat similar to the June 1933 Catholic concordat.³²

The Zionist critique of assimilation... rested on a certain conviction that all efforts to blend with non-Jews must lead unswervingly to deformed Jewish lives.³³

Kurt Blumenfeld, the Secretary of the ZVfD, in a letter to Walter Rathenau, the German foreign minister who was assassinated in 1922, stated that: 'Under no circumstance does a Jew have the right to represent the affairs of another people.'³⁴ Zionist officials were prohibited by the ZVfD from seeking high political office in Germany.³⁵

The SS and Nazi leaders were almost uniformly supportive of the ZVfD against their 'assimilationist' opponents.³⁶ The German Zionists saw the Nazi accession to power as an opportunity to build their movement at the expense of the main German Jewish organisation, the 'assimilationist' CV. Yet despite the Nazis' support, the ZVfD remained the smaller organisation.

From the beginning of the Nazi regime, Zionism 'became a central component of Nazi Jewish policy as the Nazi state sought to reverse Jewish emancipation and assimilation in Germany and to end Jewish life in the Reich...'³⁷ A 'generally 'pro-Zionist' stance had emerged as a result of the Ha'avara strategy in Nazi Jewish policy.'³⁸ On 28 January 1935 Reinhard Heydrich, the 'real engineer of the final solution' ³⁹ issued a directive stating:

the activity of the Zionist-oriented youth organisations that are engaged in the occupational restructuring of the Jews ... lies in the interest of the National Socialist state's leadership.... (they are) not to be treated with that strictness that it is necessary to apply to the members of the so-called German-Jewish organisations (assimilationists).⁴⁰

The result was that the activities of Zionist groups were supervised with 'more benevolence' than comparable activities by non-Zionist Jewish groups. The Gestapo and the SD 'place(d) no restrictions on Zionist organisations.'⁴¹

In May 1935 *Schwarze Korps*, paper of the SS, wrote that:

the Zionists adhere to a strict racial position and by emigrating to Palestine they are helping to build their own Jewish state.... The assimilation-minded Jews deny their race and insist on their loyalty to Germany or claim to be Christians because they have been baptised in order to subvert National Socialist principles.⁴²

In 1936, the *Palestine Post* reported that:

A bold demand that the German Zionist Federation be given recognition by the Government as the only instrument for the exclusive control of German Jewish life was made by the Executive of that body in a proclamation today. All German Jewish organisations, it was declared, should be dominated by the Zionist spirit.⁴³

At their annual meeting in May 1935 the ZVfD demanded a reorganisation of the German Jewish community and parity on the Reich Representation of German Jews [RVt], which incorporated all German Jewish organisations.

Publicly no one attributed the Zionist power bid to the Heydrich directive and to the then current National Socialist policy favouring the Zionists but the connection did not

pass unnoticed.⁴⁴

The December 1935 Gestapo report from Erfurt 'conveyed that the entire community was battling against the Zionists.' Despite their patronage by the Gestapo the Zionists were unable to get their way until much later. It is difficult to know how else to describe this other than voluntary collaboration. In November 1935 Gestapo agents from Königsberg reported that the Zionist issue was dividing the Jewish community.⁴⁵

Zionism had always been a German Jewish taboo. Today when the equation is made between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, one should bear in mind that when Hitler came to power,

German Jewry vehemently rejected Zionism as an enemy from within... Anti-Zionism was one of the few Jewish topics, Reform, Orthodox, cosmopolitan and ghetto Jews could agree on.' ⁴⁶

Bans on all Jewish political meetings were issued by the Gestapo on 31 May 1935. Zionist organisations were exempt.⁴⁷ Non-Zionist youth organisations were banned from 1936 whereas Zionist youth groups were legal up till 1939.⁴⁸ An exception to the rules banning the wearing of uniforms was allowed for the Revisionist Zionist National Youth Herzlia.⁴⁹ The SD argued that the severest measures should be taken against all assimilationist efforts among the Jews and that the strongest support be given to all Zionist organisations.⁵⁰ Only the Zionist movement was permitted to operate in Austria. All Austrian Jewish papers were banned except for the *Zionistische Rundschau*.

The SS had consistently promoted the Zionist movement in Germany and Jewish emigration to Palestine... by the end of 1938, the Zionist option in National Socialist Jewish policy would continue with even greater intensity.⁵¹

An example of the Zionist endorsement of the Nazi goal of racial separation was the editorial in *Judische Rundschau*, eight years before it was made compulsory, endorsing the Yellow Star.⁵²

In Poland the Yellow Star was introduced almost immediately after the German occupation.⁵³ Whereas most Jews bitterly resented Governor-General Frank's edict as a return to the Middle Ages, the Orthodox Zionist Chaim Kaplan relished it. 'The conqueror is turning us into Jews... I shall wear my badge with satisfaction.'⁵⁴

Everywhere the wearing of the Yellow Star was a prelude to deportation and extermination. In Berlin 1,767 Jews refused to wear the badge. They

'realized, perhaps for the first time, that the orders the functionaries were obligated to implement were to their detriment.'⁵⁵

Yet despite the Nazis favouring them, it was all an illusion. The Nazis were prepared to use the Zionists, but they weren't going to be deflected from their objectives. Prinz, explained:

there was no country in the world which tried to solve the Jewish problem as seriously as did Germany... It was our Zionist dream!... Dissimilation? It was our own appeal!⁵⁶

The Jewish Agency and the Allies Announce the Final Solution

On 23 November 1942 the JA finally issued a statement confirming the Final Solution.⁵⁷ It contained nothing about Sobibor, Treblinka, Chelmno or the deportation of the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto.⁵⁸ It referred to the 'appalling reduction' in the ghetto population but not that only 50,000 out of 380,000 remained.⁵⁹

With the arrival in Palestine of a third group of 69 exchange prisoners in November 1942, the JA could no longer ignore what was happening.⁶⁰ On 22 November Eliyahu Dobkin, the head of the JA's immigration department and a member of the JAE and ZE (1937-1946) interviewed the group for two days. He concluded that the Jews living under Nazi occupation were being systematically wiped out. When he told one woman from Radom that he didn't believe that she had seen 1,000 children murdered, he was slapped in the face. '(I) did not ask any more questions.'⁶¹

The announcement evoked 'harsh criticisms' that the JAE had known of the extermination and kept it quiet. Anshell Reis of the Association of Polish Immigrants warned Mapai's Secretariat that 'This won't pass without a public trial.' On 7 December 1942 *Haboker* ran an item:

Sensational announcement by Y Gruenbaum... chairman of the Rescue Committee: We knew about the massacres in August but didn't make them public. ⁶²

Two days later *Ha'aretz* expressed surprise that Yitzhak Gruenbaum had not seen fit to admit or deny the report⁶³ since 'it was in Palestine that the authenticity of the information had been doubted.'⁶⁴

The only example of Ben-Gurion devoting a whole speech to the Holocaust was on 30 November 1942. Ben-Gurion emphasised opening the

gates of Palestine whilst refusing to call on the countries of the world to open their borders. The JA organised three days of mourning.⁶⁵

The Holocaust was seen through a Zionist prism. In almost all his speeches, Ben-Gurion spoke about 'the prospects the Holocaust may open up for Zionism.' Speaking in Rehovot in 1941, Ben-Gurion pointed to the fact that

all the significant steps in the progress of Zionism were always related to the intensification of Jewish distress.

To Ben-Gurion it was the role of Zionism 'to cast the great Jewish tragedy in prodigious moulds of redemption.'⁶⁶ In his view the mourning lacked an 'adequate Zionist character... there was not enough emphasis on Palestine as the new centre of Jewish life.'⁶⁷ On the rare occasions that Ben-Gurion did mention the Holocaust, it was because of its implications for Zionism.

If there is no remnant besides the Jews of America and Soviet Russia, it is possible that there will be no Jewish aliyah after this war...⁶⁸

Ben-Gurion blamed the victims for the Holocaust. On 8 December 1942 at a Mapai meeting he complained that 'they did not want to listen to us'. Ben-Gurion claimed that in their deaths they had sabotaged the Zionist dream.⁶⁹ It was as if they had chosen to die.

On 17 December 1942 Anthony Eden read out a Joint Declaration on behalf of the Allies to the House of Commons confirming the Final Solution.⁷⁰ The British Foreign Office had only agreed to it reluctantly 'fearing public demands for a vigorous rescue campaign.'⁷¹ Members of the House of Commons spontaneously rose to their feet. A public opinion poll in the *News Chronicle* found that 80% favoured action in support of the Jews.⁷²

In a joint communiqué issued in response to the Allied Declaration, the JA and Va'ad Leumi complained that the Declaration had made no mention either of rescue or of opening the gates of Palestine to the survivors. Nothing was said about the United States and Britain accepting Jewish refugees. Nor was any mention made of the fact that this information had been in the hands of the Allies and the Zionists since at least August.

On 27 December 1942 the Agency issued a statement under Yitzhak Ben-Zvi's name, informing the Yishuv, that the Holocaust had come to an end in Poland, at least temporarily. This was based on the Official Gazette of the Generalgouvernement which stated that 53 Jewish ghettos had been set up.⁷³

To the Zionist leaders the Holocaust was a distraction. If saving Jews had been a priority, they would have established a central coordinating body to pull together all the various reports in order that they could identify where the

destruction was taking place and where rescue was possible. The tiny Al-Domi group in Palestine suggested this but they were ignored.⁷⁴

The Rescue Committee of the JA had no resources, base, budget or administration. At first it even lacked a permanent name! ⁷⁵ Nor did it have powers to raise funds. During its two years of existence it met fitfully. Its Chairman, Yitzhak Gruenbaum had many other duties to perform. Dinah Porat asked ‘whether the chairman of the Rescue Committee believed that rescue was at all possible.’⁷⁶

When Gruenbaum was asked, if the United Jewish Appeal could contribute funds for the rescue of Jews in Europe, his response was negative:

And I say again no. In my opinion one should resist this wave which relegates the Zionist activities to secondary importance. And because of that I was called anti-Semitic and was judged to be responsible for the fact that we do not absorb ourselves completely in the rescue activity.⁷⁷

On 12 May 1943 the Bund’s representative in the Polish Government in exile, Shmuel Zygielbojm, committed suicide in protest against the indifference of the West to what was happening. Zygielbojm stated that he couldn’t live with himself knowing that thousands of Jews were dying every day in the gas chambers. The Bund had previously written to Zygielbojm that:

The silence, in which England, America and others pass over the massacre of Polish Jews, is for us a worse blow than the criminal action of Hitler.⁷⁸

Victor Gollancz of the Left Book Club published *Let My People Go*. Its impact was enormous. The first print run of 100,000 sold out immediately. Gollancz was all too aware of the hostility of the government to rescue and he referred to rumours that rescue measures for Jewish children in France had been turned down.⁷⁹ According to Moshe Shertok (Sharett) ‘a tidal wave of public opinion is surging and has still not abated.’⁸⁰

We were told that as long as we were asking for rescue we had everyone’s assent. But the moment we demand that the survivors go to Eretz-Israel we split the British public and hamper the government in wartime. We did not accept this argument.⁸¹

On 7 January 1943 a meeting of sympathetic MPs was held and the National Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror was formed under Eleanor Rathbone MP. Unfortunately it was uneasy about running a public campaign or embarrassing the government. The Committee was unhappy with the high profile of the Emergency Committee to Save the Jews of Europe [ECSJE] in the United States and the creation of the War Refugee Board [WRB] in January 1944 came as a shock to them.⁸²

Rabbi Dr. Solomon Schonfeld, the Chairman of Chief Rabbi Dr Hertz's Religious Emergency Council described the effect of the Zionist movement's hostility to rescue:⁸³

In December of 1942... we in London formed a Council for Rescue from the Nazi Terror which, in turn, initiated a Parliamentary Rescue Committee under the chairmanship of Professor A.V. Hill, M.P., supported by leading members of both Houses. At the time I was executive director of the Chief Rabbi's Religious Emergency Council and applied myself to this task. A motion was placed on the Order Paper in the following terms: '... this House asks H.M. Government... to declare its readiness to find temporary refuge in its own territories or in territories under its control for endangered persons who are able to leave those countries...

'... this motion achieved within two weeks a total of 277 Parliamentary signatures of all parties. This purely humanitarian proposal met with sympathy from government circles, and I should add that H.M. Government did, in fact, issue some hundreds of Mauritius and other immigration permits indeed, in favor of any threatened Jewish family whom we could name. Already while the Parliamentary motion was gathering momentum, voices of dissent were heard from Zionist quarters: 'Why not Palestine?' ...'

At the Parliamentary meeting held on January 27, 1943, ... a spokesman for the Zionists announced that the Jews would oppose the motion on the grounds of its omitting to refer to Palestine. Some voices were raised in support of the Zionist view... and thereafter the motion was dead. Even the promoters exclaimed in desperation: If the Jews cannot agree among themselves, how can we help?

It was useless to argue with a then current Zionist argument: '**Every nation has had its dead in the fight for its homeland the sufferers under Hitler are our dead in our fight**'. But it would be unjust now to permit the miswriting of history so as to cast blame upon Britain(my emphasis)

No one, of course, had consulted the Jews in the extermination camps as to whether they were willing to die for the sake of a Jewish State.

Zionist policy was 'to use the specter of Jewish annihilation in Europe as pressure to open the gates of Palestine.' This resulted in a conflict between Schonfeld and Hertz on the one side and the BOD and WJC on the other, which Schonfeld and Hertz lost. 'The Zionist emphasis was certainly not favourable to the refugee cause.'⁸⁴

The Zionist Group that was openly pro-Nazi

Yitzhak Shamir was Prime Minister of Israel twice. He was also one of the triumvirate who led the Stern Gang [Lehi] after the death of its leader, Abraham [Yair] Stern. The other members of the triumvirate were Israel Eldad and Nathan Yelin-Mor. Having concluded that the British were the main enemy, Lehi sought a military pact with Nazi Germany.⁸⁵

Twice during 1941 Lehi attempted to contact the Nazis with the offer of an alliance. This had been unanimously approved by the Lehi command and Naftali Lubenchik met a senior representative of the German Foreign Ministry, Otto von Hentig and Alfred Roser, a Military Intelligence agent, in Beirut on 11 January 1941. Hentig forwarded the proposal to Ralf von der Marwitz, the German Naval attaché in Turkey, who filed a report conveying an offer to 'actively take part in the war on Germany's side' in return for German support for 'the establishment of the historic Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, bound by a treaty with the German Reich.' It was found in the German embassy in Ankara after the war. Stern proposed recruiting some 40,000 Jews from occupied Europe to invade Palestine with German support to oust the British.⁸⁶

The full text was published in Israel.⁸⁷ If the Nazis accepted the offer, 'Lehi would join the war, fighting on the side of Germany.' The Nazis did not reply. Stern believed that

a community of interests may be established between the attempt to enact a new order in Europe according to the German concept, and the real national aspirations of the Jewish people, which are represented by the NMO. ⁸⁸

Yair sent Nathan Yelin-Mor to Turkey in December 1941 with another offer of an alliance. However, Yelin-Mor was arrested by the British in Aleppo and a few days later Yair was killed by the British. Yair believed that the British were doomed to defeat and in any event the Nazis weren't going to murder the Jews.

He believed that Polish anti-Semitism was worse than that of the Nazis and that 'in the Warsaw Ghetto there existed a nascent Jewish state'.⁸⁹

In October 1983 Shamir was interviewed by *Yedioth Ahronoth*. His explanation was that there was a plan to turn to Italy for help and to make contact with Germany in order to bring about massive Jewish immigration. 'I opposed this, but I did join Lehi after the idea of contacts with the Axis countries was dropped.'⁹⁰ By his own admission he joined a pro-Nazi group. In the wake of the Kasztner trial, the head of Mossad Issar Harel, wanted *Davar* to print the information from Intelligence files on the Lehi's proposals. Moshe Shertok agreed to this.⁹¹

The Zionist Press and the Holocaust

On 6 January 1942 Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov reported the murder of 100,000 Jews in the Ukraine, including 52,000 in Kiev (Babi Yar) and 23,600 at Kamenetz-Podelsk.⁹² *Davar* suggested that this report had said the exact opposite and that the majority of victims were not Jewish.⁹³ This was one of the rare reports of a Soviet document, originally only meant for internal distribution, which spoke about those killed having been Jewish. 'No official public declaration condemning the extermination of the Jews was ever issued.'⁹⁴

On 28 January *Davar* noted that the rate of mortality for Jews in Warsaw was nine times higher than that of non-Jews.⁹⁵ On 17 March Dan Pines, one of *Davar's* editors, suggested that the reports of mass murder of Jews had 'an exaggerated character (which) renders them untrustworthy.'⁹⁶ The Palestinian Jewish press cautioned readers not to be swept away by 'Soviet atrocity propaganda.'⁹⁷

On 16 March *Davar* carried reports, via Hungarian soldiers arriving back from the front, of the massacre of 240,000 Jews in the Ukraine. ⁹⁸ The report was given a black border but appended to it was an editorial comment that reports from 'soldiers returning from the front must naturally be taken with considerable reservation.'⁹⁹

Where *Davar* led, the Zionist press – *Haboker* (General Zionist), *HaTzofe* (Mizrahi) and *HaMashkif* (Revisionist) – followed.¹⁰⁰ *HaTzofe* demanded that correspondents should not 'inflate out of proportion every bad rumour.'¹⁰¹ The message that came through was that the press didn't believe its own reports. *Hamashkif* reduced the number of Jews murdered to 'thousands.'¹⁰² The Hebrew press in Palestine was particularly dismissive of 'unproven and exaggerated rumours' by news agencies and correspondents who competed in atrocity stories.¹⁰³ In an editorial *Davar* stated that:

Some of the numbers concerning the slaughter of tens of thousands which were published recently seemed to be exaggerated ... From this point of view, the Nazi denial may be trustworthy.¹⁰⁴

On 1 September Moshe Frager gave an account of the high birth rate among Warsaw's Jews according to German data. On 5 October 1942 a Nazi report of how 150,000 Polish Jews had been exiled from Poland to Germany, for the purpose of forced labour, elicited the observation that 'This is the first time the Nazis have officially admitted the transfer of Jews from Poland to occupation zones in Russia...' ¹⁰⁵ Yet it was hardly likely that the Nazis were deporting German Jews in order to replace them with Polish Jews. On 16

October P Heilprin reported in *Davar* about how Jewish culture was flourishing in the Warsaw Ghetto with 24 book stores and libraries.

On 8 November *Davar* reported that its information on Poland was being supplied 'according to German statistics, which are faithful in these instances.'¹⁰⁶ Before a report on atrocities could be believed, 'it required confirmation by the information apparatus of the Third Reich.'¹⁰⁷

On 23 March 1943, *Davar* was reprimanded by Yosef Gravitzky, the managing editor of the JA's Palcor news agency, for copying from a Nazi paper, *Ostland*, a 'report' that two million Jews remained in Poland, after the paper had reported one day earlier, on the same page, that no more than two hundred thousand Jews were still alive in Poland.¹⁰⁸

Numerous 'reports' and false information concocted by the Propaganda Ministry found an echo in the Palestinian press. *HaTzofe* published an editorial, 'The high price of blood', four days before the Zygielbojm Report, declaring that 'if accuracy and authentication should prove impossible, it is better not to carry the report'.¹⁰⁹

When Bernard Joseph, the director of the JA political department, was told that the Journalists' Union had requested its colleagues abroad to give widespread prominence to the reports from Europe he urged caution in publishing data 'exaggerating the number of Jewish victims'.

If we announce that millions of Jews have been slaughtered by the Nazis, we will justifiably be asked where the millions of Jews are, for whom we claim that we shall need to provide a home in Eretz Israel after the war ends.¹¹⁰

Shabtai Beit-Zvi commented that 'Probably not even Goebbels in his wildest plans could have elicited the kind of treatment the Hebrew press accorded to information about the Holocaust.'¹¹¹

In the Kasztner trial it was reported by *HaBoker* that Moshe Shertok, when head of the Political Department of the JA had 'deliberately concealed information about the annihilation.' Menachem Begin alleged that 'the Jewish Agency covered up the news of the mass annihilation.'¹¹²

Comparisons between Zionism and Nazism

The Zionist movement hates any comparison with the Nazis. When Ken Livingstone mentioned that Hitler supported Zionism, the reaction was explosive. In a stage-managed confrontation Livingstone was denounced as 'a

disgusting Nazi apologist’ by former Labour MP John Mann despite his pioneering anti-racist work in local government.¹¹³

The concerns of Mann about ‘anti-Semitism’ did not extend to other forms of racism. In 2007 he published an *Anti-Social Behaviour Handbook* which described Travellers and Gypsies as examples of anti-social behaviour, alongside ‘rubbish’ and ‘neighbours from hell.’¹¹⁴ To describe a whole ethnic group as antisocial was exactly what the Nazis had done. Mann seemed to be unaware that Gypsies and Travellers had also been exterminated in the Holocaust. This didn’t stop Boris Johnson appointing Mann as ‘anti-Semitism Czar’ in September 2016.

Following a complaint from Ben Bennett, a 13 year old Gypsy Traveller, that Mann was singling out a whole community for anti-social behaviour, Mann was interviewed by Nottingham Police as part of an investigation into a ‘hate incident.’ Ben described Mann’s treatment of Gypsies and Travellers as ‘the last acceptable form of racism.’¹¹⁵

Mann had previously supported the former MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth, Phil Woolas, who was removed by the High Court in 2010 from his position as MP for lying about his Liberal Democrat opponent.¹¹⁶ Woolas had run a nakedly racist election campaign which sought to ‘make the white folk angry’.¹¹⁷

Livingstone was correct.¹¹⁸ Even Zionist historian David Cesarani wrote about how ‘The efforts of the Gestapo are oriented to promoting Zionism as much as possible and lending support to its efforts to promote emigration.’¹¹⁹ Yf’att Weiss described how Nazi Germany ‘gave free rein to isolationist [i.e. Zionist] Jewish organizations and clearly preferred them to assimilationist German-Jewish entities.’¹²⁰

This hasn’t prevented the IHRA WDA defining as anti-Semitic ‘drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.’¹²¹ Zionists however don’t hesitate to compare their opponents, even Zionist opponents, to the Nazis.¹²²

Former Israeli Foreign Secretary, Abba Eban, when arguing against withdrawal from the Occupied Territories, referred to the 1948 armistice lines as ‘the Auschwitz borders.’¹²³ Norman Podhoretz, the former editor of the AJC paper *Commentary*, accused Jewish critics of the Lebanese War of granting Hitler a ‘posthumous victory’¹²⁴ Deputy Defence Minister Matan Vilnai threatened to give ‘Gaza a taste of the ‘shoah’¹²⁵ Amos Oz, the Israeli

novelist, termed those who indulged in so-called 'price-tag' attacks on Palestinians as Hebrew neo-Nazis.¹²⁶ Menachem Begin portrayed 'Arafat in Beirut as Hitler in his bunker in Berlin' as a reason for bombing Beirut.¹²⁷ The justification for the Lebanon War was that 'the alternative to this is Treblinka.'¹²⁸

In Israel every enemy is a reincarnation of the Nazis. In the lead up to the Six Day War:

the newspapers continually identified Nasser with Hitler. The proposals to defuse the crisis by any means other than war were compared with the Munich agreement.¹²⁹

Ben-Gurion remarked, just before the Eichmann trial that 'when I listen to the speeches of the Egyptian president ... it seems to me that Hitler is talking.'¹³⁰ To Ariel Sharon, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was 'like Hitler, who wanted so much to negotiate with the Allies.'¹³¹

The Nazi period is a seminal event in world history. It is the ultimate in capitalist barbarism. It is hardly surprising that it is the benchmark by which subsequent events are judged. Western rulers don't hesitate to compare anti-war protesters to those who appeased fascism in the 1930s.¹³² When students demonstrated in Paris in May 1968 they chanted 'CRS, SS'¹³³

Zionist concerns about a high Arab birth rate in Israel mirror the Nazis' racial obsessions.¹³⁴ Ideologically Zionism and Nazism drink from the same poisoned well. Comparisons between the Israeli state, where planning policy is based on the 'demographic threat' from Palestinians and Nazi Germany are all too obvious. In East Jerusalem:

the Israeli authorities choke development and building for the Palestinian population, who are perceived as a 'demographic threat' to Israeli control of the city.¹³⁵

Relationships between Jews and Arabs are seen as a threat to the racial purity of the Jewish nation/race. More than half of the Jewish population in Israel believes intermarriage to be national treason.¹³⁶ As a Jewish state, Israeli policies are driven by concerns for the maintenance of a Jewish demographic majority. This is why Israel can never be a democratic state.

In Israel as in Nazi Germany opposition to miscegenation is strong. The Nuremberg Laws outlawed 'inter-racial' sexual relations. In Israel opposition to such relations is a strong social taboo. 75% of Israeli Jews oppose intermarriage.¹³⁷ A particularly egregious case involved an Arab who was gaoled for 18 months for rape. The Jewish woman believed that 'Daniel' was a Jewish man and thus she had been raped by deception.¹³⁸ In Nazi Germany a

common theme was that Jewish men concealed their Jewish identity in order to seduce Aryan women.[139](#)

Lehava, a fascist group which campaigns against miscegenation, physically attacks Arab men suspected of wanting relationships with Jewish women. Despite this it received half of its income from 2005 onwards from Israel's Social Affairs Ministry, via its 'charity' Hemla.[140](#)

Lehava was asked to testify before the Committee on the State of Women and Gender Equality by its Chair, Tzipi Hotovely, because it was 'the most suitable' for preventing mixed marriages.[141](#) Hotovely is currently Israel's Ambassador to London. The general manager of the Education Ministry told the committee that the Ministry will attempt to curb 'assimilation' by 'acting to increase Jewish identity' through 'education for family life.' Lehava's premise, that relationships between Jews and non-Jews is a problem, was accepted without demur by the Committee.[142](#)

A growing number of Israelis identify with the Nazis, from neo-Nazi Russian gangs,[143](#) to a retired judge[144](#) and Orthodox rabbis.[145](#) This is particularly true of Israeli soldiers. Some were called 'Our Nazis' meaning those who like to beat.[146](#) They identified the Palestinians with the Nazis' victims.[147](#) Groups of soldiers called the Auschwitz 10 and Demjanjuku had plotted to kill Arabs.[148](#) One soldier confessed that 'sometimes I feel like a Nazi when I watch my friends in action.'[149](#)

Israelis often see themselves in the role of Nazis. Before the massacre in Jenin, an Israeli officer said that:

it is justified and in fact essential to learn from every possible source.... the commander's obligation is to ... analyse and internalise the lessons of earlier battles – even, however shocking it may sound, even how the German Army fought in the Warsaw Ghetto. [150](#)

In 2002 Fox News reported that Israeli troops were writing identification numbers on the foreheads and forearms of Palestinian detainees awaiting interrogation during an army sweep of a refugee camp. Tommy Lapid MK declared that: 'As a refugee from the holocaust I find such an act insufferable.' Concentration camp inmates had numbers tattooed on their forearms.[151](#) A scheme to place numbers on the ID card of Palestinians in Hebron 'drew comparisons to the Nazi era.'[152](#)

When 41 Israeli Arabs were mowed down with machine guns at Kafr Kassem in 1956, as they returned from work in the fields, one of the killers,

Shalom Ofer, proudly proclaimed that ‘We acted like Germans, automatically, we didn’t think.’¹⁵³

At a demonstration in Tel Aviv in 2016 in support of Elor Azaria, the Israeli soldier who murdered an unconscious Palestinian in Hebron, there was a banner which read ‘Kill them all’. Alongside it was another banner ‘My honour is my loyalty’, the slogan of the SS.¹⁵⁴ The demonstrators filled Rabin Square chanting ‘death to the Arabs.’¹⁵⁵

There is a wider identification with the Nazis in Israeli society. ‘We are no longer Jews today,’ one Israeli wrote. ‘Today we are Nazis.’ He was trying to organise vigilante groups to attack Israeli Palestinians in Holon, Bat Yam and Rishon LeZion during Israel’s 2021 attack on Gaza.¹⁵⁶

The comparison of ‘assimilation’, marrying out or having relationships with non-Jews, to the Holocaust is a common Zionist theme. Avraham Greenbaum of Bar-Ilan University, expressed ‘concern that Jewry’s losses through assimilation were greater than the losses sustained in the Holocaust.’¹⁵⁷ For Zionism the Holocaust was not a human tragedy but a loss to the Jewish race. D.H. Benson observed:

To compare human beings ‘lost’ through assimilation to the way they were lost in the Holocaust is as brazen a trivialization of humanity’s greatest crime as I have ever witnessed. ¹⁵⁸

Assimilation is frequently described as a ‘quiet’ ‘silent’ or ‘bloodless’ holocaust. Norman Lamm, President of the Yeshiva University, wrote that with a diminishing Jewish birth rate and intermarriage exceeding 40 %, ‘Who says that the holocaust is over?’ ¹⁵⁹ British Chief Rabbi, Immanuel Jakobovitz believed that abortion in Israel was comparable to the Holocaust.¹⁶⁰ Lehava’s slogan is ‘Intermarriage is a holocaust for the Jewish People.’¹⁶¹

Marriage between a Jew and non-Jew in Nazi Germany after 1935 was forbidden. The same is true in Israel where a Jew and non-Jew cannot marry. Hannah Arendt observed that:

Israeli citizens, religious and non-religious seem agreed upon the desirability of having a law which prohibits intermarriage ... there certainly was something breathtaking in the naiveté with which the prosecution denounced the infamous Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which had prohibited intermarriage and sexual intercourse between Jews and Germans. ¹⁶²

Far from comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany being anti-Semitic, the exact opposite is the case. Such comparisons constitute a powerful warning against the direction in which Israel is heading. The only question is whether they are true. The comparison between Israel, Zionism and the Nazis

is not new. Jewish critics have long made this comparison. Sir Robert Waley-Cohen, a prominent Jewish leader and non-Zionist, accused the Zionists of:

starting with the kind of aims with which Hitler had started. The Jewish conception of a state was of a body which was disinterested as between the races and religion of its citizens. The conception of a Jewish state, on the other hand, seemed to be based on one religion and one race. [163](#)

Comparing a country to Nazi Germany doesn't mean that they are the same but that they have certain features in common, not least a shared view of the other as sub-human.

Is there not a similarity between Israel's 2011 Admissions Committees Law whose purpose was preventing Arabs moving into 'Jewish' residential areas and Nazi policies to exclude Jews from 'Aryan' parts of German cities? [164](#) It enables hundreds of Jewish communities in Israel, 43% of all residential areas, (subsequently increased) to reject Arab applicants. [165](#)

The JNF was given state recognition under the 1953 JNF Law. Its role is to purchase and administer land on behalf of Jews. The land it owns and controls, 93% of Israel, is held on behalf of the metaphysical Jewish people. Non-Jews cannot access that land. It is inalienable.

Today there are demonstrations in Israel where the main slogan is 'Death to the Arabs.' How is it anti-Semitic to compare this to similar demonstrations in Europe in the 1930s where the slogan was 'Death to the Jews'? [166](#)

It is argued that because Israel has not exterminated the Palestinians, comparisons cannot be drawn with the Nazis. During the period 1933-9, the Nazi policy was expulsion not extermination. The attitude of Zionism towards non-Jews is comparable to the Nazi attitude toward Jews in the pre-Holocaust period. This is especially so in relation to Israel's policy towards African asylum seekers. Netanyahu was explicit:

If we don't stop their entry, the problem that currently stands at 60,000 could grow to 600,000, and that threatens our existence as a Jewish and democratic state... and our national identity. [167](#)

Netanyahu was referring to Israel's Jewish identity. There is no Israeli national identity because there is no Israeli nationality. Netanyahu wasn't opposed to the entry of refugees for economic reasons. On the contrary Israel actively encourages Jewish immigration. Netanyahu was appealing to the fear of a high Arab birth rate eroding Israel's Jewish majority. Nazi Germany had similar racial obsessions.

When Culture Minister Miri Regev described African refugees as 'a cancer in the body of the nation' this was a Nazi-like statement. When she was

criticised she apologised to cancer patients for having compared them to refugees.¹⁶⁸ Deputy Defence Minister Rabbi Eli Ben-Dahan explained that '[Palestinians] are beasts, they are not human.' Dahan also explained the racial hierarchy of souls: 'A Jew always has a much higher soul than a gentile, even if he is a homosexual.'¹⁶⁹ Despite these statements Dahan became a government minister.

Menachem Begin described the Palestinians as 'beasts walking on two legs.'¹⁷⁰ Netanyahu described the purpose of a wall around Israel as being to protect it from 'wild beasts.'¹⁷¹ How is this different from the Nazis' description of Jews as 'human cattle'?

Professor Amos Funkenstein, former head of the Faculty of History at Tel Aviv University, explained why comparisons with the Nazis are valid. Referring to the refusal of soldiers to serve in the Occupied Territories, Funkenstein compared them to soldiers in the German army who refused to serve in concentration or extermination camps.¹⁷² To those who asked how it was possible to compare Israeli soldiers to Nazis, Funkenstein replied:

As a historian I know that every comparison is limited. On the other hand, without comparisons, no historiography is possible. Understanding a historical event is a kind of translation into the language of our time. If we would leave every phenomenon in its peculiarity, we could not make this translation. Every translation is an interpretation and every interpretation is also a comparison.

Funkenstein reminded his critics that the Zionist terror groups, Irgun, Lehi and Haganah, repeatedly attacked the 'Nazi-British occupation'.¹⁷³ Funkenstein compared the lack of rights of the Palestinians under occupation to the status of Jews in Germany in the mid-1930s.¹⁷⁴

Any group of people, given the right set of circumstances, can become racists and commit genocide. Jews are no exception. In so far as Zionism justifies Jewish exceptionalism by reference to the Nazis they can hardly complain that others do likewise.

When Shlomo Shmelzman, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto, wrote a letter to the Israeli press announcing his hunger strike against the Lebanon War, he stated:

In my childhood I have suffered fear, hunger and humiliation when I passed from the Warsaw Ghetto, through labor camps, to Buchenwald. Today, as a citizen of Israel, I cannot accept the systematic destruction of cities, towns, and refugee camps... I hear too many familiar sounds today.... I hear "dirty Arabs" and I remember "dirty Jews.". I hear about "closed areas" and I remember ghettos and camps. I hear "two-legged beasts" and I remember "Untermenschen." Too many things in Israel remind me of too many things from my childhood.¹⁷⁵

Was Shmelzman an anti-Semite? Moshe Zimmerman compared the children of the Hebron settlers to those of the Hitler Youth.¹⁷⁶ Lawrence Weschler, a contributor to *The New Yorker*, compared Gaza to Dachau before the Final Solution.¹⁷⁷ Israeli psychologist Gavriel Solomon wrote that:

The idea of *Judenrein* (Jew-free zone) or *Arabrein* is not new. . . . Some might say 'how can you compare us to Nazis?' I am not talking about the death camps, but about the year 1935. There were no camps yet, but there were racist laws. And we are heading forward toward these kinds of laws.¹⁷⁸

Even some on the left hesitate to compare Zionism to National Socialism. Gilbert Achcar found it a 'terrible comparison' ¹⁷⁹ To Shami Chakrabarti 'it is always incendiary to compare the actions of Jewish people... to those of Hitler or the Nazis.' ¹⁸⁰ But why should one not compare settlers who daub Palestinian walls with the slogan Arabs to the gas chambers with the Nazis? ¹⁸¹

As an ethno-religious state Israel's national identity is based on a racial definition of who is a Jew. Nazi Germany's national identity was likewise based on a racial definition of who was an Aryan. Even the definition of a Jew under the Law of Return is similar to the definition of a Jew under the Nuremberg Laws.

- 1 Emil Fackenheim, 'Holocaust and Weltanschauung: Philosophical Reflections On Why They Did It', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol 3:2, p. 197.
- 2 See 'New Row Over Moshé Machover', *JC*, 9 October 2017, <https://tinyurl.com/y2gy9q9q> regarding Heydrich's support for Zionism.
- 3 Arendt, p. 58.
- 4 Niewyk, p. 139.
- 5 Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, p. 75.
- 6 'Hitler On the Nile,' *NYT*, 25.2.03. <https://tinyurl.com/y57o8xco> Virtually every anti-Western dictator, from Nasser to Saddam Hussein became a new Hitler.
- 7 See Reparations and Restitutions. <https://tinyurl.com/y4qcb4s3>
- 8 Walter Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, p. 441. Prior to the emergence of Hitler, the name Petliura conjured up in the Jewish mind the archetypal anti-Semite.
- 9 Francis Nicosia, *ZANG*, p. 289. See Tony Greenstein, *JHLS* 10.1 (2011): 109–19, p.117, Review of *Arabs and the Holocaust*, Gilbert Achcar, p. 23. Nicosia cites Yoav Gelber's *Zionist policy and the fate of European Jewry 1939-1942* and Dina Porat's *The Blue and Yellow Stars of David*.
- 10 Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 469. Teveth, pp. 848-49.
- 11 *Davar* 1.2.43., Hava Eshkoli-Wagman, *Yishuv Zionism: Its Attitude to Nazism and the Third Reich Reconsidered*, p. 32.
- 12 *S Beit Zvi*, p. 114. CZA, File L22/136.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 113 citing *Davar* 14.7.42.
- 14 Segev, *The Seventh Million* pp. 468-9.
- 15 Ian Lustick, *The Holocaust in Israeli Political Culture*, p. 132.
- 16 ` Lustick, op. cit., p. 135.
- 17 Teveth, p. 850.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 854.
- 19 *Ibid* p. 855, speech to the Mapai Council 1933.
- 20 Tony Greenstein reviews two books by Francis Nicosia. <https://tinyurl.com/ySgrom6b>
- 21 Nicosia, *The Yishuv and the Holocaust*, p. 534.
- 22 Nicosia, *ZANG*, p.146.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 91. Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 18 attributes this quote to a report by Moshé Beilinson, a cofounder of *Davar*, to Katznelson.
- 24 Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 18.
- 25 Joachim Prinz, 'Zionism under the Nazi Government,' *Young Zionist* (London, November 1937), p. 18 cited in Lenni Brenner, *51 Documents*, p. 101.
- 26 Bloom, *Arthur Ruppin and the Production of the Modern Hebrew Culture*, p. 417. See also <https://tinyurl.com/y4bqt3wf>
- 27 *Ibid.*, pp. 415, 417.
- 28 <https://tinyurl.com/yyyfkwc7>
- 29 Jacob Boas, 'A Nazi Travels to Palestine', *History Today*, January 1980, pp. 33-8.
- 30 Joseph Verboski, 'Leopold Von Mildenstein and the Jewish Question', p. 7. Wikipedia <https://tinyurl.com/b3p7xtsr> and Boas, *A Nazi Travels to Palestine*, (p. 38) dated his

appointment to the summer of 1935 before resigning 10 months later.

- [31](#) Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader*, pp. 150-153.
- [32](#) Hava Eshkoli-Wagman, *Yishuv Zionism: Its Attitude to Nazism and the Third Reich Reconsidered*, p. 24.
- [33](#) Niewyk, pp. 125-6.
- [34](#) Weinstock p. 135.
- [35](#) Nicosia, ZANG, p. 55.
- [36](#) Greenstein, *Zionism & the Holocaust*, WW 631, <https://tinyurl.com/bbsxy2zh> 28.6.06.
- [37](#) Nicosia, ZANG, p. 105.
- [38](#) *Ibid*, p. 89.
- [39](#) Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p. 13.
- [40](#) Dawidowicz, *War Against the Jews*, pp. 118, citing Mommsen 'Der Nationalsozialistische Polizeistaat' pp. 78/9 and Nicosia, ZANG, p. 119.
- [41](#) Herbert Strauss, pp. 352-3.
- [42](#) Randolph Braham, *The Politics of Genocide – The Holocaust in Hungary*, p. 484, fn. 94, S.5.35. Dawidowicz, p. 118.
- [43](#) Lenni Brenner, *51 Documents*, 23.12.02. <https://tinyurl.com/y4rk8xhc>
- [44](#) Dawidowicz op. cit. p. 241.
- [45](#) David Bankier, *Jewish Society*, pp. 117-18 citing the Gestapo Erfurt Report of December 1935 and Gestapo Königsberg, Report of November 1935.
- [46](#) Edwin Black, *The Transfer Agreement*, p. 168.
- [47](#) Nicosia, *Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy*, D1264.
- [48](#) Marilyn Moos and Steve Cushion, *Anti-Nazi Germans*, p. 194.
- [49](#) Nicosia, *Anti-Semitism*, pp. 121-2. Klaus Polkehn, *The Secret Contacts*, p. 78.
- [50](#) *Ibid.*, p. 136 citing Wildt, *Die Judenpolitik des SD*, 141-2.
- [51](#) *Ibid.*, p. 137-9.
- [52](#) Edwin Black, 'Wear It with Pride, the Yellow Star,' p. 176, 4.4.33.
- [53](#) <http://history1900s.about.com/od/Holocaust/a/yellowstar.htm>
- [54](#) David Cesarani, *Final Solution* pp. 269-70, 333.
- [55](#) Beate Meyer, p. 110.
- [56](#) Joachim Prinz, 'Zionism under the Nazi Government', *Young Zionist*, London Nov. 1937 p. 18, cited in Lenni Brenner, p. 47.
- [57](#) S Beit Zvi, p. 37.
- [58](#) *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- [59](#) Porat, p. 38.
- [60](#) Shabtai Teveth, *The Burning Ground 1886-1948*, pp. 844-5.
- [61](#) Teveth, p. 845. Ben-Gurion was absent from the meeting. He had 'a light cold'.
- [62](#) S. Beit-Zvi, p. 64.
- [63](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 66.
- [64](#) Porat, p. 53.
- [65](#) <https://tinyurl.com/2a332tk5>

- [66](#) Beit Zvi, p. 115 citing *In the Campaign*, Vol. II, p. 68. Teveth, p. 854, Ben-Gurion speech 25 October 1941.
- [67](#) Porat, p. 54.
- [68](#) Beit Zvi, p. 114 citing *In the Campaign*, Vol. IV, p. 93
- [69](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 98.
- [70](#) Baron, *Myth and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust*, p. 6.
- [71](#) Tony Kushner, *Rules of the Game*, p. 384.
- [72](#) A Broide, *Davar*, 24.4.43., cited in Beit Zvi, p. 273.
- [73](#) Beit Zvi, p. 79. Other reports suggest that it was in January 1943 that Gruenbaum told his colleagues that the Final Solution had ended and that the Jews of Poland had been concentrated in fifty-five ghettos. *HaTzofeh*, December 28, 1942. Porat, p. 42.
- [74](#) Porat, p. 42.
- [75](#) See Shabtai Beit Zvi, Post Ugandan Zionism on Trial.
- [76](#) Porat p. 68-70.
- [77](#) Statement to ZE Council on the Holocaust and On the Reaction. (18.2.1943) published in *Beeyemei Khurban Veshoah*, (In Days of Holocaust and Destruction) Tel Aviv, 1946, pp. 68-9, cited Uri Davies, *Utopia Incorporated*, p. 25; Hecht, p. 50.
- [78](#) Dariusz Stola, *Early News of the Holocaust from Poland*, p. 3.
- [79](#) Which they had, by Herbert Morrison. See Kushner, *Rules of the Game*, p. 385 and Urbach, p.52.
- [80](#) *Davar* 24.4.43. cited in Beit Zvi, p. 273.
- [81](#) CZA file S25/ee1853 cited in Beit Zvi, p. 274.
- [82](#) Kushner, *Rules of the Game*, pp. 387-9, 396.
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- [84](#) Sompolinsky, *The British Government and the Holocaust*, p. 3. Schonfeld saved thousands of Jewish lives during the war, unlike the BOD. Obituary, 17.2.84, *Jewish Chronicle*.
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Chapter 5

The Nazi Holocaust

'As the European holocaust erupted, Ben-Gurion saw it as a decisive opportunity for Zionism... In conditions of peace,... Zionism could not move the masses of world Jewry. The forces unleashed by Hitler in all their horror must be harnessed to the advantage of Zionism. ... By the end of 1942... the struggle for a Jewish state became the primary concern of the movement.' (Noah Lucas) [1](#)

Intentionalism v Functionalism

The Holocaust has provoked many academic debates. Theoretical schools have grown up around the question of functionalism v intentionalism. Was the Holocaust a product of the bureaucratic structure, logic and momentum of the Nazi war machine [2](#) or was it preordained from the outset, an inevitable consequence of Hitler's pathological anti-Semitism? [3](#)

What these debates fail to ask is what it was that caused the Nazis' racism to become genocidal, leading to the industrial extermination of whole categories of people, such as the Jews, Gypsies and Disabled, despite the fact that this was contrary to their economic and military interests. [4](#) Why did Nazi racism turn from random violence and discrimination to genocide?

Zionist historians ignore the question of fascism and imperialism.[5](#) For Yehuda Bauer the 'crucial thing was not German fascism but the criminality shown in the Nazis' pseudo-messianic ideology.' [6](#) This is not so much an explanation as a recourse to the irrational. For others, what distinguished Germany from other anti-Semitic countries was that it was a modern, industrial state.[7](#)

All the evidence is that the extermination of the Jews was only decided upon after all other solutions had been tried and found wanting. Lucy Dawidowicz and Yehuda Bauer, however, argue that the war was primarily a war against the Jews. What they don't explain is why then did the Nazis support, indeed encourage, Jewish emigration? Bauer himself points out that between the outbreak of war and the end of 1941, 71,500 Jews escaped to Europe 'with the full knowledge of officialdom.' This emigration only came to an end with Himmler's order of 31 October 1941.[8](#)

Bauer argued that the local bureaucracy in the ghettos of Lodz and Bialystok 'did everything in their power to prevent the destruction of the

ghetto' and that the order for the deportations came from the centre. In Poland in 1942 the trend was towards improvement when orders came from Berlin to kill the Jews.² Bauer's is a variation of the intentionalist argument.

Raul Hilberg saw the Holocaust as emerging out of the logic of a Nazi bureaucracy; 'slack, chaotic and incoherent' as it was. The momentum of war helped provide the solution to the 'Jewish Question',¹⁰ Hilberg explored how the various bureaucracies co-operated and conflicted with each other, including the Church, which furnished records for the determination of descent and the German railroads which billed the Security Police a one-way fare per kilometre of track.

These bureaucrats 'could destroy a whole people by sitting at their desks.'¹¹ The Holocaust developed 'blow by blow.'¹² It was not simply a product of orders from above but an interplay between the centre and periphery. It was the bureaucratic destruction process that in its step-by-step manner finally led to the annihilation of five million victims.¹³ When German fascism turned eastwards, the search for 'purity of the race' became genocidal as German imperialism sought to define itself in terms of racial and ethnic homogeneity.

As late as 25 May 1940 Himmler, in a memo to Hitler, ruled out physical extermination:

I hope completely to erase the concept of Jews through the possibility of a great emigration of all Jews to a colony in Africa or elsewhere... However cruel and tragic each individual case may be, this method is still the mildest and best if one rejects the Bolshevik method of physical extermination of a people as un-German and impossible.¹⁴

Was the Holocaust the outcome of a War Against the Jews?

Bauer, by positing that anti-Semitism was 'the only motivation' for the Holocaust, separated the extermination of the Jews from all other victims of the Holocaust. He also made it impossible to understand why the Holocaust occurred other than via a circular argument that it was because of an irrational Jew hatred. Bauer refused to see the connections between the Jewish holocaust and that of the Disabled and Gypsies. Sybil Milton remarked that

the validity of the eugenic interpretation does not fit into the arguments of those historians positing anti-Semitism as the central motivation in Nazi policy.¹⁵

Zionism turned its back on all other victims of the Holocaust.

Anti-Semitism in Germany was not only weaker than its counterpart in Eastern Europe but it had begun to decline by 1914. Despite being revived by the Nazis and German nationalists in the wake of defeat in World War 1 and the accompanying stab-in-the-back legend that blamed the Jews for Germany's defeat, anti-Semitism 'never became altogether respectable or truly prevalent.'

[16](#)

Bauer accepted Ian Kershaw and Thomas Merkl's argument that anti-Semitism did not play a large part in the Nazis' election victory. The more than five million extra Nazi votes in the 1930 Reichstag election 'were in no sense anti-Semites.'[17](#) From 1930 to 1933, the Nazi Party officially rejected the rowdy anti-Semitic tendency and stressed its intention of solving the 'Jewish Question' in a 'reasonable' or legal manner.[18](#) David Cesarani suggested Hitler's attacks on Jews 'diminished to vanishing point' though his attacks on Marxism and modernity were seen as coded references to Jews.[19](#) Merkl found that 'a high proportion of Party members were not extreme anti-Semites.' Their anti-Semitism was 'pervasive, but non-murderous, perhaps even "moderate"'. It was an elite in the Nazi Party, some 200 men, who Christopher Browning called the 'true believers', who bore primary responsibility for the Holocaust. The real success of Nazi propaganda lay in the 'depersonalization' of the Jews.[20](#)

When it comes to the rise of the Nazis there is always a danger of rewriting history backwards. Germany had emancipated its Jews in 1871, just 13 years later than Britain. Königsberg (Kaliningrad), Prussia was 'the image of an almost perfect world... a remote island of tolerance and liberalism, hardly ever touched by the dark waves of reaction or anti-Semitism surging through other parts of the Empire.' Anti-Semitism was not a constant of German history. It ebbed and flowed and by 1933 it was on the wane.[21](#)

Milton noted how 'The emphasis on anti-Semitism and the exclusivity of the Jewish fate has, for obvious political reasons, also been the official Israeli interpretation.'[22](#) The extermination of the Jews, the Disabled and Gypsies singled out people because of the mere fact of their existence rather than for what they had done.[23](#)

What was Hitler's Motivation – anti-Semitism or anti-Communism?

The first victims of the Nazi regime were the organisations of the German left and the working class, not the Jews. The trade unions were banned on 2 May 1933, their headquarters occupied and strikes made illegal. In their place the Nazis set up the German Labour Front, headed by Robert Ley, whose job was to police the workers not represent them. Thousands of trade unionists, communists and socialists were thrown into the first concentration camp, Dachau, which was set up shortly after the federal elections of March 5. The persecution of the Jews only began in earnest after the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The repression of the German working class began immediately.

It was Bolshevism that was Hitler's main enemy. The Jews were seen as its biological parents.

Knowledge of the Jews is the only key whereby one may understand the inner nature and therefore the real aims of Social Democracy... and then out of the murk and fog of social phrases rises the grimacing figure of Marxism.²⁴

Bauer argued that 'anti-Semitism was subordinate to their anti-Bolshevism'.²⁵ But in arguing that anti-Semitism was subordinate to anti-Bolshevism, Bauer unwittingly conceded that the Jews were not the Nazis' main target.

Hitler had developed an early hatred of communism, merging it with the Jewish people into a single entity, 'Judeobolshevism'.²⁶ Hitler described how, when he was working on a building site, he was instructed to join a union. When he refused he was ordered to leave 'or else get flung down from the scaffold.' Hitler complained that:

everything was disparaged – the nation, because it was held to be the invention of the 'capitalist' class... the Fatherland because it was held to be the instrument of the bourgeoisie... There was nothing they didn't drag in the mud.²⁷

Of the 5.7 million Russian soldiers who were captured, 3.3 million were murdered, often in the death camps.²⁸ Total Soviet losses are estimated at over 20 million.²⁹ This too was part of the Holocaust.³⁰ The Nazis looked upon Russians as livestock.³¹ Millions would have to starve if the German Army, the Wehrmacht, was going to be fed during the invasion of Russia.³²

Auschwitz was first designated as a suitable site for Russian prisoners-of-war at the beginning of 1940. Within a few months the SS moved in. The first gas chamber was tested on Russian prisoners in the fall of 1941.³³ Auschwitz's first inmates were Poles and its main purpose was the exploitation of their labour. Rudolf Höss, the first commander, recalls being summoned by Himmler in the summer of 1941 and told of Hitler's instruction to exterminate

the Jews and that Auschwitz was to play a key part in this.³⁴ Hitler urged that Auschwitz's construction was to be undertaken 'on a specially accelerated basis.'³⁵ It is estimated that 120,000 non-Jews died in Auschwitz, of whom 60% were Poles.³⁶

Stalinism also engaged in rewriting history when it argued that the Jews suffered no more than other groups at the hands of the Nazis. It enabled the USSR to gloss over the collaboration of Russians with the Nazis. As Samuel Moyn writes of Soviet-Jewish writer Vasily Grossman's account of Treblinka,

the disproportionate victimhood of Jews was not ideologically useful from the perspective of Moscow.... From the perspective of official anti-fascism, 'humanity' had suffered, not one group within it more than the rest.³⁷

It laid the basis for Stalinist anti-Semitism.

Did the anti-Semitism of the average German make the Holocaust possible?

When Hitler came to power it was with the support of western leaders. Churchill said that 'if our country were defeated, I hope we should find a champion as indomitable to restore our courage and lead us back to our place among the nations.'³⁸ Lloyd George was of a like mind:

Whatever one may think of his methods – and they are certainly not those of a parliamentary country, there can be no doubt that he has achieved a marvellous transformation in the spirit of the people, in their attitude towards each other and in their social and economic outlook.

He rightly proclaimed at Nuremberg that in four years his movement has made a new Germany.³⁹

By November 1932 the Nazis had passed the peak of their popular support. It was this that led to pressure on Hindenburg to offer the Presidency to Hitler. The goal of physically destroying the organisations and parties of the German working class appeared to be slipping away.

Bauer believed that it was 'the "moderate" anti-Semitism of the bulk of the German population (that) was absolutely crucial.'⁴⁰ Previously Bauer had written that Germans who murdered Jews or participated in their deportation would have done so had they been Poles or French.

Mass murder of a designated minority can be achieved without the deep-seated hatred of the perpetrating majority. The Germans did not have to hate the Jews in order to kill them.⁴¹

Saul Friedlander suggested that 'the undercurrent of sympathy for the persecuted Jews must have been significant enough' because in June 1935

Goebbels attacked those Germans who 'shamelessly' argued that Jews were human beings too.⁴² Such was the adverse reaction by German civilians to the introduction of the Yellow Star for Jews that the Nazis introduced a law punishing such displays of support with three months in a concentration camp.⁴³

When the Nazis introduced the Nuremberg Laws considerable dissent was reported amongst ordinary German people. In many districts, especially in the western provinces of Prussia, 'most of the population had reservations or expressed outright criticism of the legislation.' For example in the Aachen district it was reported that:

the Jewish legislation is not approved of in ecclesiastical circles, which comes as no surprise considering the well known mentality of the local Catholic population.

In a report on the Konigsberg district, mention was made of how:

in the city of Allenstein, with a predominantly Catholic population, it must be conceded that shopping continued in the Jewish stores... a portion of the Catholic population is friendly to the Jews and shows little understanding for the new racial laws.

When a popular Munich priest, Father Rupert Mayer was imprisoned in 1937 a crowd of 400 protested outside the Gestapo headquarters. The Bishop of Eichstatt, Michael Rackl, declared that 'National Socialism is not compatible with the Catholic *Weltanschauung*'.⁴⁴

There was a marked difference in the reaction of Protestant and Catholic sections of the German population. A Report from the SD in 1937 spoke of how the Jews were getting support from the Catholics, especially 'the rural population which opposes National Socialism.'⁴⁵

Anti-Semitism met its greatest resistance where the Nazis tried to destroy traditional economic relationships between Jews and non-Jews. 'Peasant attitudes were determined almost wholly by material considerations and self-interest.' In one upper Bavarian village, peasants who worried that Hitler Youth posters 'Jews not wanted here' would result in a loss of Jewish customers replaced them with 'Jews very much wanted here!'⁴⁶

The report from the Halle District spoke of the 'lack of proper understanding... an almost complete loss of the racial primal instinct' amongst the 'better-educated classes.'⁴⁷ In 1936 in the depressed textile factories of Augsburg, the Hitler salute 'as good as disappeared.' Anti-Nazi slogans daubed on factory walls were a regular occurrence.⁴⁸

The Department of Warfare Against Jewry (II 112 SD) spoke about how violence against the Jews was having a 'repulsive effect on the enlightened

population.' Otto Dov Kulka reported that 'in some places the police stepped in to halt acts of terror only after the maltreatment of Jews aroused spontaneous popular opposition.' When Jews in Jessnitz were forced to march with signs suspended from their necks denouncing violators of the anti-Jewish boycott 'the result was the creation of a popular mood that was partly responsible for people intervening on behalf of the Jews.'

During Kristallnacht on 9-10 November 1938, a thousand Jewish synagogues were burnt to the ground and nearly a hundred Jews were murdered. Some 30,000 Jews were incarcerated in concentration camps.⁴⁹ In Berlin and Vienna, 'the SD ordered the release from jail of all Jews arrested during the Kristallnacht pogrom who were in any way connected with the Palästinaamt.' The only way Jews who had been imprisoned in concentration camps after Kristallnacht could gain their release was by producing proof of entry to another country.⁵⁰ Of the 300,000 Jews who left Germany between 1933 and 1939, 150,000 left after Kristallnacht.

Expressions of 'sympathy, abhorrence, and shame' were the reaction to Kristallnacht.⁵¹ The SD's annual situation report for 1938 spoke of how:

the actions against Jewry in November have been received very badly.... Out of liberalistic principles many people found it imperative openly to intervene on behalf of the Jews.

The report spoke of clergymen who 'admonished the congregation during services to pray for their Christian brethren from the House of Israel.' A report from Speyer spoke of the arrest of a pastor who stated that 'it was wrong to burn down a house of worship.'⁵²

Reports from Bavaria suggested that the violence and destruction were 'condemned deep into the ranks of the Party.'⁵³ Kershaw gives a number of examples from rural Bavaria including Gaukönigshofen where Catholics made 'a true pilgrimage' to the burnt-out synagogue the Sunday after the pogrom. In Fischbach in Swabia the mayor was able to prevent the destruction of the synagogue and uniquely, four days after Kristallnacht, Jewish services were taking place again.⁵⁴

The constant barrage of propaganda failed to make the Jews the prime target of hatred for most Germans if only because the issue seemed abstract, academic and unrelated to their own problems.⁵⁵

However, the claim made by Pius XII in August 1945 that the majority of Germany's Catholics had 'whole-heartedly opposed Nazism' is not true either.

Pius's motives had more to do with the construction of a western alliance against communism than fact.⁵⁶

The Nuremberg Laws

The Nazis began the attack on Jews with the April 1933 Law for the Restitution of the Professional Civil Service and the July Law for the Revocation of German Citizenship.⁵⁷ This was in parallel with the Law to Prevent Offspring with Hereditary Diseases of July 1933.

On 15 September 1935, the Nuremberg Laws, 'the most murderous legislative instrument known to European history' ⁵⁸ were enacted, depriving German Jews of their citizenship and forbidding sexual relations between Jews and Aryans.⁵⁹ From now on the Jews were subjects. Twelve days later they were amended to include Romanis and Black people. ⁶⁰

The Nuremberg Laws consisted of two separate laws: the Reich Citizenship Law and the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor. The latter law, which prohibited Jews from flying the German flag, 'expressly permitted them to display the Zionist blue-white-blue flag' ⁶¹ The Nuremberg Laws were equally applicable to the Gypsies,⁶² the introduction to which stated that:

if the Jews had a state of their own in which the bulk of their people were at home, the Jewish question could already be considered solved today... The ardent Zionists of all people have objected least of all to the basic ideas of the Nuremberg Laws, because they know that these laws are the only correct solution for the Jewish people too...⁶³

George Kareski, a banker and President of the German State Revisionist Zionists, was interviewed in *Der Angriff* under the heading 'Nuremberg Laws fulfil Ancient Demands'. The Nazis tried to foist Kareski, a Gestapo agent, upon Germany's Jews. As *The Palestine Post* noted:

The position is now such that no Jew can speak in Germany if Mr Kareski objects, and that anyone who offends him is liable to severe penalties for an attitude of animosity towards the State. This is what the Gestapo told the representatives to the State of German Jews....⁶⁴

As Nathan Weinstock noted:

The Nazi propaganda vehicle gleefully introduced the interview with the remark that the Ghetto Regulations enforced in Germany found favour among some sections of Jewish opinion.⁶⁵

The religious press in Palestine welcomed the Nuremberg Laws, viewing Nazi Germany 'as a force substantiating Zionist and religious theses.' The religious Orthodox monthly *Ha-Hed* took comfort in the fact that Jews would

return to Judaism.⁶⁶ Zionist Executive [ZE] President, Menahem Ussishkin, was effusive:

There is something positive in their [German Jewry] tragedy... and that is that Hitler oppressed them as a race and not as a religion. Had he done the latter, half the Jews in Germany would simply have converted to Christianity.⁶⁷

For most Jews the preservation of life came first. For Zionism, the preservation of the Jewish nation/race was more important. Reinhard Heydrich, who became the head of the Reich Security Main Office,⁶⁸ [RSHA] explained that the Nazis were:

in agreement with the great spiritual movement within Jewry itself, Zionism, whose position is based on the recognition of the unity of Jewry... and the rejection of all ideas of mixing in.⁶⁹

The Zionists 'applauded the recognition of Jews as a racial minority and the establishment of separate spheres along religious and racial lines.'⁷⁰ Joachim Prinz explained that:

(The Jews) have been drawn out of the last recesses of christening and mixed marriages. We are not unhappy about it... The theory of assimilation has collapsed. We are no longer hidden in secret recesses. We want to replace assimilation by something new: the declaration of belonging to the Jewish nation and the Jewish race. A state, built according to the principles of purity of the nation and race can only be honoured and respected by a Jew who declares his belonging to his own kind.⁷¹

Cesarani observed that 'Zionists saw the pressure towards segregation as fulfillment of their assertion that Jews were a separate nation with no place in Germany...'⁷² In their hatred of Jewish 'assimilation' the Zionist movement had ended up welcoming the Nuremberg Laws. The Hanover branch of the RjF charged that because of their demand for national minority rights, 'Zionism was to blame for the discriminatory legislation.'⁷³

Years later, in an interview with Lenni Brenner, Prinz acknowledged that:

we were mistaken.... We thought now, listen, there's a German government now, based upon a German nationalism. Well, let's sit down together and talk to them. But it never happened.

When asked whether there was a 'Jewish problem' in New Jersey, where he lived, Prinz responded that 'No, no. America is a completely different thing...'⁷⁴

Prinz emigrated to the United States and later admitted that none of this Zionist ideology about the inevitability of anti-Semitism made any sense in a different environment.

The Nuremberg Laws were the product of Nazi not Zionist thinking. However the RjF were correct when they said that Zionism had provided the

anti-Semites with political ammunition [75](#)

The Mischlinge and the Privileged Jews

Although the Nuremberg law definition of who was Jewish was based on 'race', it faced an insurmountable difficulty – race doesn't exist. The definition of who was a Jew had to be based on past adherence to the Jewish religion, going back to 1870. [76](#) A Jew was someone with three or four Jewish grandparents or someone who was a practising Jew. Someone with one or two Jewish grandparents was classified as a 'Mischlinge' of the second or first degree respectively. Membership of the Jewish community meant being classified as a full Jew regardless. Bernhard Lösener, head of the Jewish Department in the Interior Ministry had, with the *Mischlinge*, created a third race.

According to the census of 16 June 1933 there were about 210,000 Mischlinge of the first degree and 80,000 of the second degree in Germany. About 80% were Protestants and the other 20% were either Catholic or of no religion. [77](#) These were the persecuted non-Jews. In 1939, 72,000 first degree Mischlinge and 39,000 second degree Mischlinge were still living in Germany. [78](#)

Being a convert to Christianity or married to an 'Aryan' partner was a key factor in the survival of thousands of European Jews. In Greater Germany alone, in 1939, there were about 30,000 intermarried couples who were divided up into 'Privileged' and 'non-Privileged' couples, of whom three-quarters were the former. Where there were children, the Jewish partner was privileged unless the children were brought up as Jewish. Where the woman was Jewish and childless she was also privileged. Most did not bring up their children as Jewish. The category of Privileged Jews was extended to Jews married to Mischlinge of the second degree on 1 September 1941. Between 1941 and 1944, German Jews in mixed marriages, both Privileged and non-Privileged, were generally exempt from deportation. On 18 December 1943 Himmler ordered the deportation of Jews in mixed marriages, with two exceptions. However the deportations did not occur because 'it was felt that their deportation might jeopardize the whole destruction process.' [79](#)

Despite pressure from party puritans, who wanted second degree Mischlinge to be considered Aryans and first degree Mischlinge to be treated as Jews, this never happened. When the RSHA were preparing to deport all

first degree Mischlinge, Lösener wrote to Himmler in September 1942 to prevent this occurring. The Mischlinge gave the Nazis flexibility in case senior government officials or Nazis were found to be Jewish. Ministerialrat Leo Killy of the Fuhrer Chancellery was a second-degree Mischlinge who had married a first-degree Mischlinge and sought to be classified as an Aryan. Hitler gave the status of first-degree Mischlinge to 340 Jews.⁸⁰ The Mischlinge were subject to the draft.⁸¹ But whereas the Mischlinge of the old Reich survived, those in the occupied eastern territories were considered full Jews and murdered.⁸²

A Mischlinge of the first degree was not allowed to marry a German without permission. Although extra-marital affairs with Germans were not forbidden, an SS circular stipulated that they would be punished if they did. Up to 1942 61 Jews were convicted of *Rassenchande* ('racial pollution'). Hitler however ordered that no woman could be convicted of *Rassenchande*.⁸³

In Poland Privileged Jews and both categories of Mischlinge were ghettoised,⁸⁴ despite the protests of Lösener. Lösener, an 'avid supporter of the Zionist option',⁸⁵ and the principal author of the Nuremberg Laws, wished his definition to apply everywhere. A conference on the question by the Ministry for Eastern Occupied Territories decided, in January 1942, on a new and stricter definition. A Jew was anyone with a Jewish parent or of whom there was the slightest indication that s/he adhered to the Jewish religion.⁸⁶

The Deportation of German Jewry

By 1939 only 16% of German Jewry were employed and half of them were badly-paid workers.⁸⁷ Yet because of the war, from 1940 onwards there was a constant demand for Jewish labour replacements in the Reich. On 14 March 1941, the Labour Ministry advertised in a circular for 73,123 Warthegau Jews, which Hitler cancelled.

On September 1941, Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann pressed Hitler to deport Germany's Jews, as a consequence of the bombing of Hamburg.⁸⁸ At a Final Solution conference of the RSHA on 10 October 1941, Heydrich alluded to Hitler's desire to make Germany *Judenrein* by the end of the year.⁸⁹

The first deportations of Jews were 1,300 from Stettin and Schneidemühl in Pomerania to Lublin in February and March 1940 and 7,500 from Baden and Saarpfalz in the autumn of 1940 to Unoccupied France.⁹⁰ From 18

October to December 1941 there began the first major deportations of German Jews to Nazi ghettos – Minsk, Riga, Kaunas (Kovno) and Lodz.⁹¹

In October 1941 the Jews of Hamburg were deported. As they were taken to the train station Lucille Eichengreen, a 17-year-old Jewish girl, described how the non-Jewish population watched them ‘stony faced. It made me feel afraid.’ Most of the nearly 60,000 Jews from the ‘Old Reich’ deported between October 1941 and February 1942 did not die immediately. Hitler intended that they should replace the Jews of the Soviet Union who had been massacred.⁹² The final rounding up of the Jews in Berlin was done entirely by the Jewish Police.⁹³

The first German Jews to be systematically murdered were the 5,000 who were deported to Kaunas.⁹⁴ They were shot by Karl Jager’s Einsatzkommando 3 between 15 and 23 November 1941. Prior to that 5,000 had been murdered by the Lithuanian Activist Front [LAF].⁹⁵

The first 1,000 German Jews deported to Riga on 27 November arrived on 30 November. Himmler told Heydrich, on 30 November at 1.30 p.m. after a conversation with Hitler: ‘Jewish transport from Berlin, no liquidation.’⁹⁶ However the Jews had already been shot earlier that day at Rumbula, together with about 24,000 Jews from the Riga ghetto.⁹⁷ Subsequent deportations of German Jews were placed in the Riga ghetto.⁹⁸

David Irving used Himmler’s note of his phone call to Heydrich as the basis of his argument that Hitler knew nothing of the Holocaust. Hitler’s instructions were probably the result of foreign journalists’ inquiries about the fate of the Berlin deportees and ‘the uproar among German occupation and military officials in Riga’ over the previous massacres of German Jews.⁹⁹

The Generalkommissar of Minsk, Wilhelm Kube, protested about the treatment of German Jews:

I am certainly tough and ready to help solve the Jewish question, but human beings who come from our own cultural sphere are something other than the native bestial hordes.¹⁰⁰

Kube insisted on maintaining German Jews as headquarter staff and ‘even had the nerve to suggest that nobody would come to any harm if he listened to Jewish music.’ As one of the ‘old fighters’ he developed scruples about exterminating German Jews despite being an extreme anti-Semite.

Hilberg described this as ‘one of the strangest episodes in the history of the Nazi regime.’ Gerald Reitlinger was also fascinated by it.¹⁰¹ Anti-Semitism did not have the roots within German society that is often suggested.¹⁰²

By June 1942 only 54,000 Jews were left in Berlin.¹⁰³ Goebbels noted in his diary on 30 September 1942, 'The Fuhrer has once again expressed his resolve to remove the Jews from Berlin at all costs.' By mid-June 1943 most of the remaining Jews in Berlin had been deported.¹⁰⁴ Yet on 6-7 April 1944, Hitler resolved to contact Himmler and get him to supply 100,000 Jews because of the labour shortage.¹⁰⁵ When victory seemed imminent, extermination was pursued. When the military situation reversed, there were concessions to economic considerations. Even Hitler could display a 'great deal of ideological flexibility.'¹⁰⁶

In Frankfurt less than 600 Jews out of 10,500 survived the war. Mass deportations of the 51,000 Viennese Jews began in the spring of 1941.¹⁰⁷ By 1 November 1944 registered Jews in Germany totalled just 12,930, most of whom were Privileged Jews or Mischlinge. By the end of 1944, there were just 6,500 Jews in the Reich-Protectorate area.¹⁰⁸ The number of Jews left in Austria by the end of 1944 was 5,799, most of whom were Privileged.

Despite the fact that the leaders of the Reichsvereinigung [RV], the Nazi-imposed Jewish Council, were becoming aware in 1942-43 of what 'resettlement' in the East meant, they continued organising the transports.¹⁰⁹ As death notices began arriving back and rumours of mass shootings spread, Jews chose to go into hiding. RV staff were 'under orders to inform their functionaries... who in turn informed the Gestapo.'¹¹⁰

The Gestapo's 'Factory Operation' of 10 March 1943 rounded up and deported the last Jewish armament workers. Many went into hiding but 'they could not hope for any assistance from the RV which assiduously maintained its card files on the whereabouts of Jews in Berlin. They even "requested" permission from the RSHA to update them.'

In the Berlin Jewish Community, the registry had been maintained for many years so conscientiously and with such zeal that it proved 'ultimately harmful' for those registered.¹¹¹

Paul Eppstein, one of the leaders of the RV, had proposed to the Nazis that a special levy be imposed on deportees to pay for the cost of equipping them. The Gestapo agreed and used it to pay for the deportations.¹¹² Some 1,400 Jews reportedly survived the war by hiding out in Berlin. There were also some 6,700 living legally in the city, most of whom were married to Aryans.¹¹³ Sturmbannfuhrer Stock, who took over in Vienna from Alois Brunner at the end of November 1942, organised a major *Aktion* in February 1943. The Gestapo and community employees, in a joint effort, looked for the relatives of

arrested persons to 'bring families together.' Only a few thousand Jews hid undiscovered in the Reich-Protectorate area until liberation.¹¹⁴ The RV 'had now developed into an effective tool of the Gestapo.'¹¹⁵

In February and March 1943 the only successful protest against the deportations took place when mainly non-Jewish wives demonstrated outside the Gestapo headquarters in Rosenstrasse, Berlin against the deportation of their husbands. The roundup of Jews in mixed marriages and Mischlinge had begun on 23 February. The protest grew to several hundred and on 6 March Goebbels gave the order that those arrested were to be released. It was estimated that there were some 35,000 such Jews in Germany, the majority of whom had emigrated by 1939. By 1933 the rate of inter-marriage among German Jews had reached 44%.¹¹⁶

The Final Solution and Wannsee – Was the Holocaust Inevitable?

Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union of 22 June 1941, marked the beginning of the Final Solution. Both Jews and communists were targeted by the Einsatzgruppen, yet 'the German state has preferred to elide all questions from the Nazi period into that of Auschwitz...' ¹¹⁷ There is a debate as to whether an order for the Einsatzgruppen to exterminate the Jews had yet been given.¹¹⁸ At the Nuremberg Trials, Erwin Schultz, commander of EKS stated that Otto Rasch, commander of Einsatzgruppe C passed on orders that all Jews should be shot.¹¹⁹

On 31 July 1941 Hermann Goering signed a written order to Heydrich, which Adolf Eichmann had drafted, to make preparations for 'a complete solution of the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe.' The 'decisive phase' was from 22 June to late September 1941 when Nazi policy crossed the threshold from persecution of the Jews to their annihilation.¹²⁰

It was in the summer of 1941 that Himmler, claiming to transmit an order from Hitler, gave Odilo Globocnik, the Higher SS and Police leader in Lublin, the task of establishing the *Aktion Reinhard* extermination camps – Sobibor, Treblinka and Belzec.¹²¹

There is a widespread misconception that the Final Solution began with the Wannsee conference in Berlin, which was postponed from 9 December

1941 until 20 January 1942, probably because of the attack on Pearl Harbour. The Wannsee conference effectively served to coordinate and extend the Final Solution to the West.¹²² About half of the time at Wannsee was spent discussing the Mischlinge, without reaching any firm conclusions.

‘The most remarkable thing about the meeting at Wannsee,’ wrote Eberhard Jäckel, ‘is that we do not know why it took place.’¹²³ It was described as being ‘no more than a luncheon party, convened for twelve o’clock and finished the same afternoon.’¹²⁴

It is arguable that the Final Solution in the East, Germany’s India,¹²⁵ had been decided upon as soon as Poland was invaded. At Nuremberg Erwin Lahousen of German Counterintelligence testified that, ‘As early as September, 1939, Hitler had decided the murder of Polish Jews.’ The Final Solution was a product of fascism, war imperialism and the quest for *lebensraum*.¹²⁶ It was:

an economically driven plan of mass population resettlement and extermination to benefit ethnic Germans, which included the state-sponsored starvation of tens of millions of Slavs.¹²⁷

The Aktion Reinhard Extermination Camps

The first extermination camp, Chelmno, began operating on 8 December 1941 when 8,000 Jews and Gypsies were murdered, after the deportation of 20,000 Jews from Berlin to Lodz.¹²⁸ By the spring of 1942 the Polish Home Army [AK], had complete information about Chelmno. Three gas vans were dispatched to the woods of Kulmhof, the area was closed off and the first death camp came into existence.¹²⁹ Just three Jews survived.

Belzec started operations on 17 March 1942, stopping at the end of 1942.¹³⁰ When the Nazis cleared Lublin Ghetto, the AK traced the transports to Belzec. In July 1942 they received reports from railroad workers that hundreds of thousands of Jews had disappeared in the Treblinka area. Chelmno ceased operations on 11 April 1943, reopening from 23 June 1944 to January 1945. Treblinka continued until the summer of 1943 and Sobibor until the autumn of 1943. Thereafter Auschwitz-Birkenau was the sole extermination camp.¹³¹

The Madagascar Plan

In a meeting at the Air Ministry on 12 November 1938 to co-ordinate Jewish policy, Goering explained to the participants, including Heydrich and Frick, that he had received a letter from Hitler followed up by a phone call making it clear that the deportation of the Jews to Madagascar was ‘the way of settling accounts with the Jews... there was no plan of mass murder at the time.’ [132](#) Expulsion was only officially abandoned on 10 February 1942, shortly after Wannsee.[133](#)

The Madagascar Plan only became concrete when Franz Rademacher, a Jewish expert in the German Foreign Office, put it forward in June 1940 when Hitler approved it only to disavow it as a result of the failure of the Battle of Britain at the end of October 1940.[134](#) The Plan had originally been drawn up by Eichmann.[135](#)

Reitlinger suggested that the Madagascar Plan was ‘a cloak to hide the real plans for the Final Solution’.[136](#) Helen Fein argued that it was a ‘smokescreen and a strategic tactic’.[137](#) Dawidowicz believed that National Socialist ideology ‘precludes the idea of a Jewish reservation as the last stage of the Final Solution.’ [138](#) Eberhard Jackel didn’t believe that Hitler took Madagascar seriously. Browning argued that Jewish policy was not the centerpiece of Nazi racial policy and that Madagascar was part of a wider demographic racial project.

With Hans Frank, Governor-General of the Generalgouvernement [GG], opposed to the influx of Jews from the Warthegau, the failure of the Madagascar Plan ‘lower(ed) the threshold to systematic mass murder. Thus the Madagascar Plan was an important psychological step toward the Final Solution.’ [139](#) Kershaw argued along very similar lines.[140](#)

Operation Barbarossa

At the end of January 1941 Himmler spoke with senior SS officers about the 30 million people who must disappear in the East and of plans for the Jews. The Einsatzgruppen killing squads, which numbered no more than 3,000 men, were divided into four units, A-D, operated at the rear of the Wehrmacht.

The Einsatzgruppen systematically murdered tens of thousands of Russian and Ukrainian Jews in the open from the start of OB. Beginning at first with men, they soon progressed to murdering whole families and extended this to

Gypsies.¹⁴¹ On 17 June 1941 Heydrich briefed the heads of the killing squads on the policy of eliminating Jews in the Soviet territories.¹⁴²

On 29-30 September 1941, over 33,000 Jews were murdered at Babi Yar, a ravine in Kiev. The massacre had been planned in concert with local army units.¹⁴³ During the German occupation, it is estimated that up to 150,000 people – including communists, Ukrainian nationalists and Roma, were killed at Babi Yar.¹⁴⁴

The Einsatzgruppen were accompanied by police and army units.¹⁴⁵ Einsatzgruppe C reported that ‘the attitude of the Wehrmacht to the Jews is downright heartening.’ At Radomysl and Kremenchug they received requests from the Wehrmacht to dispose of Jews and communists. The Einsatzgruppen Situation Reports at the time of the invasion mention the murder of Soviet commissars and Jews together.¹⁴⁶ Report number 51 of 29 December 1942 listed a total of 386,033 victims executed, of whom 363,211 were Jews.¹⁴⁷

In some towns the army itself initiated anti-Jewish actions as part of the ‘anti-partisan’ war or they directly participated in the killings. When the Russians advanced, thousands of Jews from labour camps, such as in Krakow, were sent to Auschwitz and the army hunted down escapees, shooting them or handing them over to the SS.¹⁴⁸ Although there was no resistance when the Jews in the labour camps were deported there were a number of escapes. When Janiszow in the Lublin district was attacked by communist partisans, 133 of its 295 inmates escaped.¹⁴⁹

The Einsatzgruppen had originally been sent to Poland to eliminate the intelligentsia.¹⁵⁰ In his order of 21 September 1939 Heydrich had outlined a plan to push Polish Jews into the Soviet Union.¹⁵¹ It was in this context that between October 1939 and April 1940 there was an attempt to set up a Jewish reservation in Lublin near Nisko. After the deportation of a few thousand Jews, from Austria primarily, the deportations were stopped.¹⁵²

Henry Mason argues that Hitler only proceeded with total annihilation as a result of the unexpected cooperation of the army.¹⁵³ This is in contrast to what happened in Poland where the army had been ‘a fervent critic of the SS outrages against the Jews... with an outspokenness unparalleled in its history.’ General Blaskowitz, the army commander in Poland, strongly protested the police and SS actions against Jews in November 1939.¹⁵⁴

The Final Solution

The Nazis never admitted to the Holocaust. Terms such as ‘special measures’ and ‘resettlement’ were devised as euphemisms for extermination.¹⁵⁵ Occasionally the Nazi leaders let the truth slip. Justice Minister Otto George Thierack wrote to Martin Bormann on 13 October 1942 saying that he intended to turn criminal jurisdiction over to the SS because ‘the administration of justice can make only a small contribution to the extermination of these peoples.’¹⁵⁶ Victor Brack, the leading organiser of the Euthanasia programme, admitted it had been an open secret in senior party circles.¹⁵⁷

Eichmann was told by Heydrich in late summer 1941 that ‘I have just come from the Reichsführer: the Führer has now ordered the physical annihilation of the Jews.’ Radio reports from the field of operations contained exact numerical reports of executions.¹⁵⁸ On 16 December 1941 Hans Frank told leaders of the GG of the need to ‘exterminate the Jews wherever we find them.’¹⁵⁹

Almost certainly there was no written order to destroy European Jewry.¹⁶⁰ There didn’t need to be. The word of the Führer had the force of law: *Führerworte haben Gesetzeskraft*.¹⁶¹ When one judge, Lothar Kreyszig, complained to Justice Minister Franz Gürtner about the immunity of the SD and Gestapo he was told that ‘the will of the Führer is the source of law’.¹⁶²

Hitler had always been open about what would happen in the event of war.¹⁶³ In talks with István Csáky, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, on 16 January 1939, Hitler ‘was sure of only one thing, the Jews would have to disappear from Germany to the last man.’¹⁶⁴ On 30 January 1939 Hitler made his ‘prophecy speech’ to the Reichstag:

Today I will once more be a prophet. If the international Jewish financiers inside and outside Europe should again succeed in plunging the nations into a world war, the result will not be the Bolshevisation of the earth and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation (vernichtung) of the Jewish race throughout Europe.¹⁶⁵

... I have often been a prophet in my life and was generally laughed at. During my struggle for power, the Jews primarily received with laughter my prophecies that I would someday ... achieve a solution of the Jewish problem. I suppose that meanwhile the then surrounding laughter of Jewry in Germany is now choking in their throats.¹⁶⁶

Hitler repeated the speech on at least eight occasions.¹⁶⁷ Goebbels recorded that Hitler’s prophecy was coming to pass with ‘tremendous certainty and inevitability’.¹⁶⁸ Hitler had:

once more expressed his determination to clean up the Jews in Europe pitilessly. There must be no squeamish sentimentality... The Jews have deserved the catastrophe.

Their destruction will go hand in hand with the destruction of our enemies. [169](#)

The Nazis largely abandoned their previous method of extermination, shooting, because of the psychological effect they were having on the killers. SS Obergruppenfuehrer Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski told Himmler that: 'These men were now finished for the rest of their lives: they would either be neurotics or savages...'.[170](#) The SS established a mental institution in the East for men suffering the effects of murdering women and children by November 1941.[171](#) Helmut James von Moltke met a nurse who worked in this hospital.[172](#)

After the war, Bach-Zelewski, who led the anti-Partisan war, explained to his American interrogators that '(the) death camp was something that the Russians could not accomplish: it reflected the German gift for organization. Bureaucrats created it.'[173](#)

Himmler, who had personally taken part in the execution of members of the Polish intelligentsia,[174](#) in a speech in Poznań, on 4 October 1943, praised the Nazis as 'the only people in the world' to have taken a 'decent attitude' toward animals and who would be equally decent towards 'human animals'. This was recorded and played at the Nuremberg trials. Himmler spoke of: 'an unwritten and never to be written page of glory'.[175](#) Himmler turned to self-pity as a means of assuaging the SS conscience. The Jews had forced the SS to kill them.[176](#)

Himmler spoke of how 'every one of us was horrified, and yet every one of us knew that we would do it again if it were ordered and if it were necessary. I am referring... to the evacuation of the Jews, to the extermination of the Jewish people.'[177](#)

In a second speech at Poznań on 6 October 1943 Himmler explained why Jewish children had to be killed: 'I did not assume to have the right to exterminate the men... and have the avengers personified in the children to become adults for our children and grandchildren.'[178](#)

Gypsies and the Other Victims of the Holocaust

Nazi economic and foreign policy was based on *lebensraum*, the conquest of 'empty spaces' in Eastern Europe.[179](#) On 5 November 1937, Hitler addressed the German High Command, emphasising that he rejected attacking Britain or France but that he intended to wage wars of plunder in Eastern Europe. The record of the conference was known as the 'Hossbach Protocol'. The

Incorporated Territories (Danzig-West, Prussia and Wartheland) were to be cleared of Jews, Poles and Gypsies. In practice, because Germans were reluctant colonists, it was easy for Poles to become ethnic Germans. Jews and Gypsies were expelled into the GG.¹⁸⁰

The Gypsies were, like the Jews, a caste or people-class, specialising in service trades who had left India and migrated westwards.¹⁸¹ In 1938 Himmler gave an order for 'combating the Gypsy plague.' Throughout Europe, the Gypsies were hunted down. Some 22-23,000 Gypsies were transferred to a 'family camp', Zigeunerlager at Auschwitz. Einsatzgruppe D systematically killed Gypsies in the Crimean Peninsula. Between April and September 1942, about 25,000 Gypsies were transferred to Transnistria in Romania. Gypsy deaths were proportionately the equivalent of the Jews.¹⁸² Up to 600,000 Gypsies were exterminated.¹⁸³

Several defendants at Nuremberg confirmed their belief in a 'Fuhrer order' to liquidate Jews, Communists and Gypsies.¹⁸⁴ Otto Ohlendorf, commander of Einsatzgruppe D testified that they had killed Gypsies on the same grounds as Jews.

Dr Wolfgang Abel, who became head of the Department of Race Science at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Anthropology recommended in 1941 the extermination of Russian POWs.¹⁸⁵

Zionist historians argue that the Holocaust was exclusively Jewish. In a debate with Sybil Milton, Chief Historian of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum [USHMM],¹⁸⁶ Yehuda Bauer argued that 'Roma were not Jews, therefore there was no need to murder all of them.'¹⁸⁷ Bauer was asserting as fact what he was trying to prove, namely that the Nazis' primary war aim was killing Jews rather than a wider racial and eugenic one.¹⁸⁸ To Bauer the Jews were:

the quintessential enemy of Aryan humanity and anti-Semitism 'was one of the two ideological reasons motivating the Nazi elite' into waging war.¹⁸⁹

Guenter Lewy argued that the murder of 4,400 Gypsies from Burgenland, Austria was not part of any master plan to annihilate all Gypsies whilst accepting that in OB Gypsies were targeted 'like Jews and Communists – to be destroyed.'¹⁹⁰

Zionist historians argue that what made the Holocaust unique was the motivation of the murderers. The Nazis were 'a political elite that had come to power with pseudo-messianic concepts of saving humanity from the Jews.'¹⁹¹

The suggestion that Nazism was messianic implied that the Holocaust was a religious phenomenon defying explanation.

The explanation was irrational and it also ignored the anti-communism of the Nazis, which was anything but messianic. Lewy and Bauer argued that what determined Nazi policy towards the Gypsies was their 'asocial conduct... irrespective of race'.¹⁹² Sybil Milton's response was withering:

Defining an entire ethnic group as anti-social and criminal is a classic example of racism. I do not know why Mr. Bauer does not understand this.¹⁹³

Lewy's explanation as to why the extermination of Gypsies was not part of the Holocaust was that 'objective effect is not the same as subjective intent.'¹⁹⁴

Although the Nazis exterminated the Gypsies in the same gas chambers as Jews they did not intend to wipe out all Gypsies.

If the elimination of Jews everywhere was the Nazis' goal, then their expulsion, which was their policy up till 1941, would have made the task more difficult. The Nazis also envisaged the death by hunger of 30 million in Russia.¹⁹⁵ The Jews who came under Nazi control could hardly expect to be treated differently.¹⁹⁶

What mattered was what happened, not what was in the mind of the murderers, which is something we can never know. Sybil Milton's definition of the Holocaust was not subject to special pleading and exceptionalism:

The holocaust, can be defined as the mass murder of human beings because they belonged to a biologically defined group. Heredity determined the selection of the victims.¹⁹⁷

Brenda and James Lutz argued that the Gypsies were exterminated 'for racial reasons'¹⁹⁸ whereas according to Lewy there was no 'overall plan' for their extermination.¹⁹⁹ But no one has found an overall plan for the murder of the Jews either. Why should different criteria apply to the Gypsies?

Between 1933 and 1939 the demand arose from German police and local authorities that the 'Gypsy problem' be solved by incarcerating them in concentration camps. More than 2,000 Gypsies between 1938 and 1939 were placed in camps. In December 1938 a decree 'On Combating the Gypsy Nuisance' was issued and in May 1938 Himmler formed the Reich Central Office for Combating the Gypsy Nuisance within *Kripo*. It was defined as a 'question of race'.²⁰⁰

From the beginning the Nazis hunted down and sterilised the mixed race children of German women. During the invasion of France the Wehrmacht separated out Black from White POWs. At least 3,000 Tirailleurs Sénégalais

were murdered during May and June 1940. The participation of Black colonial troops in France's occupation of the Rhineland had been termed the 'Black Horror on the Rhine.' The African troops had been 'stigmatised as sex-crazed perverts'.²⁰¹

The Nazi concept of 'alien blood' was applied equally to Jews, Gypsies and Blacks. 'The entire health care system was mobilized in pursuit of the purification of the population.'²⁰²

The eugenic and racial measures against Jews, Gypsies, Blacks and the handicapped were worked out by the same government agencies and personnel.²⁰³

Lewy argued that a holocaust 'stands for the attempted physical destruction of an entire people.' But if that is true then there was no Jewish holocaust either. The Nazis made little effort to annihilate the Jews of Bulgaria and Romania. They accepted the survival of the Jews of Denmark, even warning them of a roundup in advance. The majority of German/ Austrian Jews were expelled not annihilated.

In areas of greatest Nazi dominance Gypsies were almost as likely to suffer extermination as Jews.²⁰⁴ It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that those who argue that the Holocaust only applies to Jews are doing so for reasons of Zionist ideology not historical accuracy.

On 20 April 1942 Himmler wrote in his diary, after a phone conversation with Heydrich, 'No annihilation of the Gypsies.'²⁰⁵ It is true that an ordinance was issued by *Kripo* on 13 October 1942 allowing 'racially pure' Gypsies a certain freedom of movement, because it was held that they were related to Aryans. However Arthur Nebe, the head of *Kripo* said that nothing much would come of Himmler's 'fanciful plan.' As Lewy accepts, Nebe was right.²⁰⁶ Both Bormann and Justice Minister Thierack considered Himmler's views 'an eccentric idiosyncrasy' and 'did their best to undermine it.' The 12th amendment to the Nuremberg Laws, of 25 April 1943, accorded Gypsies the same legal status as Jews. Lewy accepted that 'the new rule made no distinction between different kinds of Gypsies.'²⁰⁷

The Disabled and the 'Euthanasia' [T4] Programme

In autumn 1939 Hitler signed a secret order, backdated to 1 September, approving the 'euthanasia program' in which mentally and physically handicapped patients were murdered.²⁰⁸ According to Hitler, they were

granted a 'mercy death' although there was nothing merciful about their deaths.

On 3 August 1941 Bishop Galen of Münster denounced the so-called Euthanasia programme (T4). For two years rumours had been circulating about the murder of the Disabled. The preparation of thousands of falsified death certificates took up most of the working day of the doctors who operated the six German Killing Centres: Brandenburg, Grafeneck, Bernburg, Sonnenstein, Hartheim and Hadamar. The Nazis were forced to put an end to T4, named after its headquarters at Tiergartenstrasse 4, although a 'wild euthanasia' continued in the concentration camps [209](#) along with a 'less conspicuous' infant euthanasia.[210](#) Galen, who was a strong supporter of the Nazi war effort, was 'an example of a high-ranking German clergyman who offered selective opposition to certain Nazi policies.' [211](#).

The plight of the Disabled was first raised by Pastor Paul Braune, Director of the Hoffnungstal Institution. In February 1940 rumours reached the Inner Mission, a Protestant social welfare organisation, about the murder of psychiatric patients. On 30 March they reported that the Church's Grafeneck facility had been taken over by the Interior Ministry the previous October and designated a state hospital.[212](#)

On 16 July Braune sent a memo, 'The Planned Transfer of Residents from Healing and Care Facilities' to the Reich Chancellery.' [213](#) He concluded that patients were being transferred from local asylums to the Killing Centres. On or around 12 July he met with Justice Minister Franz Gürtner to tell him what was happening. Gürtner knew nothing about what had been happening. One month later Braune was arrested by the Gestapo on the direct orders of Heydrich.[214](#)

The murder of the Disabled marked an essential step on the road to the Holocaust. The same gas vans used to kill the mentally ill made the journey from Germany to Chelmno. Henry Friedlander argued that the Holocaust began in January 1940 with the first gassings at Brandenburg.[215](#)

The beginning of the Jewish holocaust can be traced to the letter of 15 April 1940 from Dr Herbert Linden of the Reich Ministry of the Interior, that all local authorities provide information on mentally ill Jewish patients.[216](#) A decision had been taken that Disabled Jews would be murdered. Friedlander speculates that Hitler was consulted.[217](#)

Many T4 employees were transferred to the East after Hitler was forced to call a halt to the Euthanasia Programme in Germany. However they continued to be paid from T4 headquarters.²¹⁸ Christian Wirth, who had been the chief of staff at Hartheim became commandant of Chelmno and Belzec as well as inspector of Sobibor, Treblinka and Belzec extermination camps.²¹⁹ Another key individual was Franz Stangl, who became commandant of Treblinka and Sobibor.

The gas van had first been used in Soldau extermination camp in the Warthegau by a 'special unit' to murder 1,558 mentally handicapped patients between May and June 1940.²²⁰ During 1940 and the first eight months of 1941, at least 70,000 German adults and 5,000 children were murdered.

The Eichmann Trial chose to ignore the connection between the Euthanasia programme and the Holocaust.²²¹ It was found that 'it has not been proved before us that the accused knew that the Gypsies were being transported to destruction.' This was despite the fact that Eichmann had admitted during the police examination that he knew of it.²²²

The Eichmann Trial verdict did not see the extermination of millions of people as a crime against humanity.²²³ It was a crime against the Jewish people only.

The Economics of the Final Solution

The most puzzling question concerns the economics of the Final Solution. Reliance on Jewish skills and expertise was considered to be 'a potential obstacle.'²²⁴ Himmler emphasised that 'the argument of war production, which nowadays in Germany is the favorite reason for opposing anything at all, I do not recognize in the first place.'²²⁵

Nonetheless the ghettos became integral to the Nazi war economy and this caused considerable friction between the SS and the Wehrmacht.²²⁶ Their dissolution and the deportation of their Jews 'led to serious conflicts, especially with the Wehrmacht, which was interested in keeping 'its' Jewish workers in the ghetto workshops.'²²⁷ There was also an unsuccessful attempt, on 19 August 1941 at Belaya-Tserkov to prevent the murder of young children and infants by the Wehrmacht.²²⁸

On 25 July 1942 in Przemysl, a Lieutenant Battel took his army unit and closed the bridge over the San River to stop Jews being deported to Belzec.

2,500 Jews had their deportation stayed and 240 were installed in the basement of the local Army HQ.²²⁹ Przemysl had been the subject of expulsions over the San River by Einsatzgruppe z.b.V. under Obergruppenfuhrer Udo von Woyrsch at the beginning of the invasion. On 19 September trainees from the SiPO Border Police School at Pretzch gathered 102 men in the marketplace before taking them to a killing site. This and the murder of another 500 Jewish men caused unrest among the German soldiers because ‘instead of fighting at the front, young [SS] men were proving their courage against defenseless civilians.’ In one case German troops roughed up SS personnel.²³⁰

Heinrich Lohse, Reichskommissar, asked the Ministry for the East whether all Jews in the Ostland were to be liquidated without regard to economic interests. The reply was that ‘in dealing with this problem, economic interests are to be disregarded.’²³¹

Armament Inspector Hans Leykauf was so worried at the consequences of extermination that he commissioned a report for the Army’s Economic Department. The report asked, ‘Who in all the world is then supposed to produce something of value here?’ For over seven months the SS delayed any more shootings.²³² Economically the Final Solution was a parasitical non-productive form of capitalism, consisting of primitive plunder.

Fritz Sauckel, the Nazi Labour Plenipotentiary, shipped Poles and Ukrainians as slave labour to Germany and the army hoped to replace them with Jews. At the same time the SS and Order Police were killing hundreds of thousands of Jews. There was a clear conflict between the annihilation of the Jews with the economic exploitation of the conquered territories.

There was a struggle by the army to preserve the Lodz ghetto, which largely succeeded until August 1944.²³³ Himmler ruled that the July 1942 agreement between Oscar Schindler and Higher SS Police Leader Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger that Jewish workers were to be held in SS labour camps for the purposes of armaments production was not to be repeated.²³⁴

The International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC]

About the ICRC, little good can be said. They refused to provide any protection for Jews since they accepted the Nazi designation of them as

stateless criminals.²³⁵ According to ICRC President Max Huber they could not be seen to be ‘intruding into the domestic policy’ of the Nazis.²³⁶

There were discussions throughout August 1942 about the murder of Jewish civilians yet at the ICRC executive of 14 October 1942 the pro-Nazi former foreign minister of Switzerland, Philip Etter, ‘opposed even the anodyne Huber draft’ calling for the humane treatment of civilians, not even Jews, ‘arguing that it could be interpreted as a violation of neutrality.’ Etter’s view prevailed.²³⁷

In the Netherlands the Dutch Red Cross made no effort to communicate with deported Jews although they did send an ambulance to the Eastern front ‘to comfort the Dutch Waffen-SS volunteers.’²³⁸

The attitude of the ICRC only changed at the very end of the war in Hungary. Louis de Jong condemned the ICRC for its ‘almost total lack of concern for the Jews’ disasters.’²³⁹

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- [1](#) Lucas, pp. 187/8.
 - [2](#) According to one Nazi official, 'The Jewish Question must be resolved in the course of the war, for only so can it be solved without a worldwide outcry.' Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, p. 83.
 - [3](#) This is a false debate. Without anti-Semitism the extermination of the Jews clearly would not have occurred but anti-Semitism does not by itself explain the Holocaust. There have been many anti-Semitic states which didn't exterminate their Jewish inhabitants. What made the crucial difference was fascism and war imperialism.
 - [4](#) Cesarani argued that it was a myth that the deportation of Jews contradicted military objectives and that when 'the shortage of labour in the Reich became acute, the Jews were perceived as a valuable resource.' *The Final Solution*, p. xxxiii
 - [5](#) For example Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, 1996.
 - [6](#) Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 115.
 - [7](#) A.D. Moses, *Structure and Agency in the Holocaust: Daniel J Goldhagen and His Critics*, p. 202.
 - [8](#) Michael Marrus, *History of the Holocaust*, p. 126. Henry Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust* p. 97, dates the order to October 23 1941.
 - [9](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, pp. 90-1.
 - [10](#) Jonathan Steinberg, *German Civil Administration*, p. 624.
 - [11](#) Raul Hilberg, pp. 1061, 1098.
 - [12](#) Mason, *Review: Implementing the Final Solution*, p. 550.
 - [13](#) Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 46.
 - [14](#) Memo, Himmler to Hitler, May 1940; Browning, *Nazi Resettlement Policy*, p. 510. See also Bauer, *Who Was Responsible and When*, pp. 142-3.
 - [15](#) Sybil Milton, *The Context of the Holocaust*, pp. 269, 270, 276.
 - [16](#) Hilberg, *The Goldhagen Phenomenon*, p.723. The University of Chicago Press.
 - [17](#) Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Dissent in Nazi Germany*, p. 230.
 - [18](#) Peter Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*, pp. 18-19. Francis Nicosia, *ZANG*, p. 74, wrote, 'It is generally accepted that anti-Semitism was not the primary reason for Nazi political success after 1930, and there seems to be general agreement that anti-Semitic propaganda played a secondary role in Nazi electoral victories before Hitler's appointment as chancellor.' Meir Michaelis, *Mussolini & the Jews*, p. 49, suggested that Hitler had toned down his anti-Jewish attacks since 1928 and cites General Ludendorff denouncing Hitler as a traitor to the nationalist cause.
 - [19](#) Cesarani, *The Final Solution*, pp. 16, 22.
 - [20](#) Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, p. 360.
 - [21](#) Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, *The Jewish Community in Königsberg, 1871–1914*.
 - [22](#) Milton, *Gypsies and the Holocaust*, p. 377.
 - [23](#) Correspondence: "Gypsies and the Holocaust" p. 516.
 - [24](#) Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, pp. 38-9.
 - [25](#) Bauer, *Who was Responsible and When*, pp. 130-1.
 - [26](#) John Roth, *Review: Arno Mayer's Holocaust Revisions*, p. 217. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler spoke of the 'Jewish doctrine of Marxism' p. 46.

- 27 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, pp. 32-3.
- 28 Laurence Rees, *Auschwitz*, p. 99. Between 13 and 18 million Russian civilians died as well as three million Poles and up to 18 million civilians.
- 29 Jurgen Matthaus, *Controlled Escalation*, p. 219.
- 30 Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 92.
- 31 Karel Berkhoff, pp. 1-2.
- 32 Steinberg, *German Civil Administration in the Occupied Soviet Union, 1941-4*, p. 630.
- 33 Rudolf Hoess, *Commandant of Auschwitz*, London: Phoenix Press 2001, pp. 46-7.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 183.
- 35 *Ibid.*, pp. 206, 211.
- 36 Hilberg, p. 959, citing Franciszek Piper *Die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz* (Oswiecim, 1993).
- 37 Chil Rajchman, *Treblinka – A Survivor’s Memory*, pp. 7-8, London, 2011,.
- 38 *Evening Standard*, 17.9.1937. <https://tinyurl.com/uvuza9m>
- 39 *Daily Express*, 17.9.36.
- 40 Yehuda Bauer, *Is the Holocaust Explicable?* p. 152.
- 41 Finkelstein & Bauer, ‘Daniel Goldhagen’s Hitler’s Willing Executioners – An Exchange of Views,’ p. 124, *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, (July-October 1998).
- 42 Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 2009, p. 40.
- 43 Finkelstein p. 64 citing David Bankier, *The Germans and the Final Solution*, pp. 124-30 who described ‘not unusual episodes such as Germans giving up their seats in trams to elderly Jews.’
- 44 Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Dissent*, pp. 201-3.
- 45 Cesarani, *The Final Solution* p. 129.
- 46 Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Dissent in Nazi Germany*, pp. 240, 243, 244.
- 47 Otto Dov Kulka, ‘Public Opinion’ in Nazi Germany and the ‘Jewish Question’, pp.125-6.
- 48 Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Dissent*, pp. 84, 105, fn 13, 105.
- 49 Estimates of Jews killed and the number of synagogues burnt out vary wildly. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* <https://tinyurl.com/hkpsnok> estimates that 91 Jews were killed and 267 synagogues burned. The Jewish Virtual Library <https://tinyurl.com/4dash> estimates that more than 1,000 and possibly as many as 2,000 synagogues were destroyed. Richard Evans estimated that hundreds of Jews died when account was taken of post-arrest maltreatment and suicides. <https://tinyurl.com/n9jgapb>
- 50 Nicosia, *Anti-Semitism*, p. 140, *Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy*, D1277.
- 51 Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, p. 267.
- 52 Otto Kulka, ‘Public Opinion’ in Nazi Germany and the ‘Jewish Question’, pp. 141-2.
- 53 Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, p. 265.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 266.
- 55 *Ibid.*, p. 274.
- 56 Michael Phayer, *Pope Pius XII, the Holocaust and the Cold War*, p. 234.
- 57 *Nazi Laws Which Stripped Jewish Germans of Citizenship, and the Laws Restoring it*, <https://tinyurl.com/3ehm9tzt>
- 58 Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution* London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998, p.7.

- [59](#) Hilberg, pp. 68-9, 2003. In fact most deprivations of citizenship took place under the 'Eleventh Decree to the Law on the Citizenship of the Reich', 25 November 1941.
- [60](#) Nuremberg Laws, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuremberg_Laws.
- [61](#) Hilberg, p. 177.
- [62](#) Michael Zimmerman, The National Socialist "Solution to the Gypsy Question", p. 414.
- [63](#) Moshé Machover and Mario Offenber, 'Zionism and its scarecrows' *Khamsin* 6, p.38, citing *Die Nurnberger Gesetze*, 5. Auflage, Berlin 1939, pp. 13-14. See also Nicosia, *TRPQ* p. 53 and *ZANG*, p. 108, which cite an article by Bernard Lohsener, who helped to draft the Nuremberg Laws, in *Reichsverwaltungsblatt* 23.11.35.
- [64](#) Weinstock p. 149, citing *The Palestine Post* 3.1.36.
- [65](#) *Ibid.* Wiener Library Archives, AJCo Bulletin 24.1.36. *The Palestine Post*, 3.1.36.
- [66](#) Hava Eshkoli-Wagman, p. 33.
- [67](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*, pp. 50-1.
- [68](#) The RSHA was formed by Himmler on 27th September 1939. It combined the Nazi Party's Security Service *Sicherheitsdienst* [SD] with the German State's Police service, *Sicherheitspolizei* [SiPo], together with the Criminal Police [Cripo] and the Gestapo [Secret Police]. It was headed by Reinhard Heydrich.
- [69](#) Schwarze Korps, 26 September 1935, cited in Nicosia, *ZANG*, p. 119
- [70](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution* p. 109.
- [71](#) Joachim Prinz, 'Wir Juden' Berlin 1934, p.154, cited in *Khamsin* No 6, 'Zionism and its scarecrows', Machover/Offenber, pp. 37-8,1978. For an interview by Lenni Brenner with Prinz see <https://tinyurl.com/yxqvmaq5>
- [72](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 102.
- [73](#) Bankier, *Jewish Society*, p.115.
- [74](#) Brenner, *51 Documents*, p. 106, see also pp. 109-10.
- [75](#) David Bankier, *Jewish Society*, p. 115.
- [76](#) Hilberg, p. 65.
- [77](#) Franklin Oberlaender, The Family Dynamics of German Protestants of Jewish Descent, pp. 361 fn. 3, 374.
- [78](#) Mischlinge, Shoah Resource Centre, <https://tinyurl.com/yzvkyner>
- [79](#) Hilberg, p. 447.
- [80](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 440-1 citing affidavit by Lösener 24.2.48, NG-1944-A.
- [81](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 75, 88.
- [82](#) Steinberg, German Civil Administration in the Occupied Soviet Union, 1941-4, p. 646.
- [83](#) Hilberg, pp. 159-60,163.
- [84](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 168-170, 229.
- [85](#) Francis Nicosia, Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy, D1263.
- [86](#) Hilberg, p. 382, thus demonstrating that the 'racial' definition of a Jew was based upon religious practice.
- [87](#) William Hagen, p. 367.
- [88](#) Browning, *Origins of the Final Solution*, p. 326.
- [89](#) Hilberg, pp. 461, 932.
- [90](#) Arendt, p. 155; Browning, *Resettlement Policy*, p. 508; Kershaw, *Improvised Genocide?* p. 55.

- <https://tinyurl.com/c5hk4jt> <https://tinyurl.com/yxusaq2>
- <https://tinyurl.com/yhu57b4r>
- German Jews Deported, <https://tinyurl.com/yhu57b4r>
- Arendt, p. 117.
- Mason, Implementing the Final Solution, p. 548
- Cesarani, *Final Solution* p. 364. Matthaus, p. 230, gave a figure of 3,800.
- Browning, *Origins of the Final Solution*, p. 305; Hilberg, p. 304.
- Bundesarchiv, (BA) NS 1911438. Cited in Gerlach, *The Wannsee Conference*, p. 765.
- Browning, Origins of the Final Solution, pp. 393-8.
- Charles Sydnor, Review: *Hitler's War*, p. 183.
- Browning, Origins of the Final Solution, p.394.
- Wilhelm Kube nearly ended up in a concentration camp for his perceived insults to the SS. Although he had no concerns over the mass shootings of the 'proletarianised Eastern Jewish rabble' he was 'outraged that German Jews arrived in Minsk for "special treatment." Arendt, p. 96.
- Hilberg, pp. 367, 398.
- The Simon Wiesenthal Centre put the numbers of Jews who escaped from Germany and Austria at 355,000. Hilberg, p. 477, 480.
- Barbara Lovenheim, p. 97.
- Ulrich Herbert, pp. 179, 189.
- Ibid., pp. 192-3.
- Doron Rabinovici *Eichmann's Jews – the Jewish Administration of Holocaust Vienna 1938-1945*, pp. 1005. Hilberg, p. 475, erroneously dates the beginning of the deportations to October 1941.
- Hilberg, p. 487.
- Beate Meyer, p.115.
- Ibid., p.167.
- Ibid., p. 131, 173.
- Hilberg, p. 486.
- Lovenheim, pp. 14, 97, 197-8. This included 800 from the Jewish hospital.
- Hilberg, p. 482. See Lovenheim, *Survival in the shadows*'.
- Meyer, A Fatal Balancing Act – The Dilemma of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, p. 135.
- Nathan Stoltzfus, Resistance of the Heart – Inter-marriage and the Rosenstrasse Protest in Nazi Germany.
- Yitzhak Laor, p. 26.
- Ronald Headland, *The Einsatzgruppen*, pp. 407-8 argued that the "“relatively” slow start" to the killing of Jews until the end of July 1941 when relatively few women or children had been killed, is not evidence that their extermination had not been ordered. Kershaw, *Improvvised Genocide?* pp. 60-1, suggested that there was only 'a gradual escalation of killing' in the first weeks until Himmler clarified the situation in August.
- Yaacov Lozowick, Rollbahn Mord: *The Early Activities of Einsatzgruppe 'C'*, p. 234.
- Jurgen Matthaus, Controlled Escalation: Himmler's Men in the Summer of 1941, p.218.

- [121](#) Mason, *Implementing the Final Solution*, pp. 548, 560. It has been suggested that it was Globocnik who suggested to Himmler the idea of extermination camps and who, on 13 October 1941, received approval. <https://tinyurl.com/s5nwwtp>
- [122](#) Mason, *Imponderables*, p. 98, citing Uwe Adam, *Judenpolitik im Dritten Reich*, pp. 305-15.
- [123](#) Cited in Christian Gerlach, *The Wannsee Conference*, p. 859.
- [124](#) Vertaling van “Wannsee” in Nederlands, <https://tinyurl.com/yyf47spo>
- [125](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 92.
- [126](#) Browning argued that terms such as *Lebensraum* and *Endlösung* ‘were not rigidly programmatic excluding all but one interpretation’ and ‘Jewish policy was not always the centre of Nazi racial policy.’ *Nazi Resettlement Policy and the Search for a Solution to the Jewish Question 1939-1941*, p. 501.
- [127](#) A.D. Moses, *Structure and Agency in the Holocaust: Daniel J Goldhagen and His Critics*, p. 207.
- [128](#) <https://tinyurl.com/yyqg9ufn> accessed 1.10.13.
- [129](#) Hilberg, p. 929.
- [130](#) <https://tinyurl.com/yyyuzaqz>, Hilberg estimates 434,508 died there. Robin O’Neill argues that the truer figure was 800,000.
- [131](#) Hilberg, p. 1043.
- [132](#) Bauer, *Who was Responsible and When?*, pp. 132-133.
- [133](#) The Nazis and the Madagascar Plan, *Jewish Virtual Library*. <https://tinyurl.com/4x23m>
- [134](#) Browning, *Nazi Resettlement Policy*, pp. 509, 511.
- [135](#) Browning, *A Final Hitler Decision for the ‘Final Solution’? The Riegner Telegram Reconsidered*, p.7.
- [136](#) Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p. 79.
- [137](#) Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 24.
- [138](#) Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews 1933-45*, p. 156.
- [139](#) Browning, *Nazi Resettlement Policy*, pp. 511-12, argued that on the basis of the Madagascar Plan, Himmler cancelled the expulsion of Jews from the Warthegau into the General Gouvernement in June 1940. Himmler’s plans had been the cause of a major rift with Hans Frank. By mid-September, however, the Plan had faded.
- [140](#) Kershaw, *Improvised Genocide?* p. 65.
- [141](#) Zimmerman, *The National Socialist “Solution of the Gypsy Question”*, p. 418.
- [142](#) Richard Breitman, *Himmler and The Terrible Secret*, p. 434.
- [143](#) Lozowick & Mord: *The Early Activities of Einsatzgruppe ‘C’*, p. 227
- [144](#) See ‘The Einsatzgruppen: Babi Yar.’ <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/babi-yar>
- [145](#) Yehoshua Buchler, *Kommandostab Reichsfuhrer-SS*, pp. 12, 20.
- [146](#) Lozowick & Mord: *The Early Activities of Einsatzgruppe ‘C’*, p. 226.
- [147](#) Charles Sydnor, *Review of Hitler’s War*, pp. 182-3.
- [148](#) Hilberg, pp. 277, 298, 309, 335, 569. Only rarely was a killing operation postponed because of the situation at the front but the army commanders had the right to issue such an order.
- [149](#) Hilberg, pp. 567-8.
- [150](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 97.

- [151](#) Bauer, Who was responsible? p. 141.
- [152](#) Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, pp. 89-94. 189 out of 1,176 Jews returned to Vienna from Nisko in April 1940. Browning argues that the failure of the Nisko Project should be seen in the context of the programme to resettle the *Volksdeutsche* in the Incorporated Territories and the conflict between Himmler and Hans Frank, the Governor General of the General Gouvernement who was having to cope with up to a million Poles, Jews and Gypsies who were being 'resettled'. 'Nazi Resettlement Policy and the Search for a Solution to the Jewish Question' 1939-1941, pp. 504-5, *German Studies Review*, Vol. 9:3 (October 1986)
- [153](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 100.
- [154](#) *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- [155](#) Korherr, SS Inspector for Statistics was reprimanded by Himmler for using the term 'Final Solution' in a report he submitted on 23.3.43. assessing the number of victims. Dr Wetzel wrote to the Reich governor of the occupied territories on 25.10.41. that Jews from Germany incapable of work might be eliminated with Brack's instrumentation (gas). He also wrote in the *Generalplan Ost* (27.4.42) that if the Poles were liquidated as were the Jews, this would lose the Germans sympathy everywhere. (ND, N.G. 2325) Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p.15, 1980.
- [156](#) Hilberg, p. 1077.
- [157](#) Arendt, p. 84.
- [158](#) Hilberg, p. 418.
- [159](#) Kershaw, *Improvised Genocide?* p. 64.
- [160](#) Bauer suggests that Goring's written order to Heydrich of 31.7.41. was a form of Hitler order. 'Who was responsible and when? Some well known documents revisited.' pp. 145-7. This is based on an assumption that Hitler had been consulted beforehand. Kershaw suggests this is doubtful. *Improvised Genocide?* p. 61.
- [161](#) *The Jew As Pariah*, p. 267. A reply by Hannah Arendt to Walter Laqueur.
- [162](#) Franz Gürtner, History Learning Site. <https://tinyurl.com/y8dzrjdu>
- [163](#) David Irving's argument that Hitler knew nothing of the Holocaust and that it was all the work of his underlings is insupportable. See transcript of *Irving -v- Penguin Books*, 11.4.00, after Irving was accused of being a Holocaust denier. <https://tinyurl.com/mlzeb>. See Charles Sydnor, *Review of Hitler's War*.
- [164](#) Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, Arrow Books, 2004, p.209.
- [165](#) Reitlinger, *The Final Solution* p. 24, p. 593 fn. 44.
- [166](#) Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader*, pp. 32-3, New Jersey: Behrman House, 1976.
- [167](#) Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth, Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, pp. 243-4. They were 30.1.41. and 30.1.42, 24.2.42, 30.9.42. and 9.11. 42., 24.2.43., 21.3. 43. and in an address to Generals and officers on 26.5.44. Slightly different dates (15.2.42, 8.11.42.) are given in 'Hitler Predicted Holocaust As Early as January 30, 1939', <https://tinyurl.com/2p9h36zp>
- [168](#) Browning p. 391, citing *Das Reich* May 9th 1943, see also Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, *The Holocaust in Nazi Rhetoric*, pp. 108-113.
- [169](#) Bernard Wasserstein p. 137, *Diary of Joseph Goebbels*, 14 February 1942.
- [170](#) Breitman, *Himmler and the 'Terrible Secret' among the Executioners*, pp. 446-7. Chief SS physician Ernst Grawitz 'reported that von dem Bach was suffering especially from reliving the shooting of Jews that he himself had conducted, and other difficult experiences in the

- East' Grawitz to Himmler, 4 March 1942, cited by Raul Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, pp. 337-8. See Reitlinger p. 222.
- [171](#) Helmuth James von Moltke, *Letters to Freya*. ed. and tr. Beata Ruhm von Oppen (New York: 1990) pp. 183 and 183 n. 2; Hilberg, pp. 343, 1080.
- [172](#) Breitman, Himmler and the 'Terrible Secret', p. 444.
- [173](#) *Ibid.*, p. 445-6.
- [174](#) *Ibid.*, p. 433.
- [175](#) Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader*, pp. 131-3; Hilberg, p. 1084; Browning p. 391-2.
- [176](#) Arendt, p. 106.
- [177](#) Hilberg, p. 1090.
- [178](#) *Ibid.*, p. 294. T175, Roll 85.
- [179](#) Arendt, p. 217.
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- [198](#) Brenda Lutz and James Lutz, *Gypsies as Victims of the Holocaust*, p. 355.
- [199](#) Lewy, Gypsies and Jews Under the Nazis, p. 398.
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- [201](#) Raffael Scheck, Hitler's African Victims: The German Army Massacres of Black French Soldiers, pp. 60,98.
- [202](#) William E. Seidelman, Medical Selection: Auschwitz Antecedents and Effluent, p. 440.
- [203](#) Milton, The Context of the Holocaust, p. 271.
- [204](#) Lutz & Lutz, Gypsies as Victims of the Holocaust, pp. 346, 354.

- [205](#) Lewy, Himmler and the 'Racially Pure Gypsies', p. 204.
- [206](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 204, 206.
- [207](#) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- [208](#) Named after its headquarters at Tiergartenstrasse 4, Berlin. LeRoy Walters cites an estimate of 300,000 who died, though Suzanne Evans (p. 40) suggests it was as many as 750,000.
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- [216](#) *Ibid.*, p. 272.
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- [218](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 102.
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- [225](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1079. Himmler to Uebelhoer, 10.10.41. Otto Brautigam, Ministry for Eastern Occupied Territories, wrote on 18.12.41 that 'economic questions should not be considered in the solution of the Jewish question.' Hilberg, p. 371. See also Wasserstein, p. 135.
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- [229](#) Laurence Rees, p. 204.
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- [233](#) *Ibid.*, p. 551.
- [234](#) *Ibid.*, p. 553.
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- [236](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 325-8.
- [237](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, pp. 62-3.
- [238](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, p. 338.

[239](#) Louis de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, pp. 862-4 cited by Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 105.

Chapter 6

Ha'avara and the Boycott of Nazi Germany

'Surely, Jewish Palestine... needed money to finance its development, but this brazen pragmatism went against the political philosophy of a majority of world Jewry. There developed a growing perception that instead of supporting and strengthening the boycott, Palestine was, in fact, sabotaging it.' (Elie Wiesel)¹

It is a myth that Hitler opposed Zionism. Hitler understood early on that there was a distinction between the Jews and Zionism. He wrote of how 'a great movement called Zionism arose among them.' Hitler supported Zionism in principle, but his anti-Semitism dictated that the Jews must be engaged in political chicanery.²

They [the Zionists] have not the slightest intention of building up a Jewish State in Palestine so as to live in it. What they really are aiming at is to establish a central organization for their international swindling and cheating.³

When a heckler called for human rights, as early as 1920, Hitler retorted, 'Let him [the Jew] look for his human rights where he belongs in his own state of Palestine.'⁴

Hitler was a pragmatist who was content to bide his time, adept at reconciling his own virulent anti-Semitism to the needs of the Nazi state. When he achieved power Hitler did not let fixed ideological positions become obstacles to his ultimate goals, which included a Jew-free Reich. In a directive to an inter-ministerial conference on Palestine on 29 July 1937, Hitler directed that Jewish emigration should be directed 'first and foremost' to Palestine because this would create 'only one trouble in the world.'⁵ When the German Foreign Office, the Auslandsorganisation (the Nazi Party's overseas organisation), and the new German consul in Jerusalem, Walter Doehle, lobbied for an end to Ha'avara, it was Hitler who resolved that it should continue ⁶ and that Zionism 'should be utilized to its fullest extent in the emigration process.'⁷

The Boycott of Nazi Germany

The movement to boycott Nazi Germany began shortly after the German elections in March 1933. On 18 March the American Jewish War Veterans, responding to increased Nazi violence against Germany's Jews, unanimously adopted a resolution supporting a boycott.⁸ This caused the Nazis to panic and on 25 March 1933 Goering summoned the leaders of the three major German

Jewish organisations: Julius Brodnitz [CV], Max Naumann [Union of National German Jews] and Heinrich Stahl [President, Berlin Jewish Community] to a meeting.⁹ They were ordered to go to London and New York in order to put an end to the stories about the persecution of Germany's Jews and have the boycott called off.¹⁰ The ZVfD had not been invited to the meeting because Zionism in Germany was a 'fringe movement'.¹¹ They nonetheless secured an invitation.

Goering's immediate concern was to have a Boycott rally in New York's Madison Square Gardens on 27 March called off. 55,000 would attend this rally.¹² The three leaders maintained that they were helpless to prevent a boycott of Nazi Germany. However:

Blumenfeld stepped forward on behalf of the Zionists, declaring that the German Zionist Federation was uniquely capable of conferring with Jewish leaders in other countries... Once uttered, the words forever changed the relationship between the Nazis and the Zionists. ¹³

Goering told the German Cabinet that at the meeting, the Jewish and Zionist groups had feuded but that the Zionists had agreed to use their influence to put a stop to the stories of atrocities.¹⁴

Rabbi Asriel Hildesheimer, a leader of German Orthodoxy, went to Warsaw to persuade Jewish businessmen to lift the boycott. He was bodily removed from the synagogue and told to go home.¹⁵ Blumenfeld reported to the Nazi authorities on his efforts to prevent mass rallies in Poland.¹⁶

Despite their leaders' pusillanimity, Germany's Jews were doing all they could to bring the Nazi persecution to wider public attention. Hundreds of word-of-mouth reports and letters – some mere scraps of paper smuggled out of Germany – argued forcibly for the truth. One message delivered to the leader of American Zionism, Stephen Wise, said simply, 'Do not believe the denials, nor the Jewish denials.'¹⁷ According to Moshe Beilinson, a spokesman for the Labor Zionist movement, all Germany's Jews, including the Zionists, supported the boycott.¹⁸ Nonetheless Beilinson warned against supporting the boycott because:

there is no fate worse than that of Russian Jewry, which is not allowed to travel to Palestine... Today this possibility exists [in Germany]... ¹⁹

In other words the situation of Jews in Germany was better than that in the Soviet Union because Russian Jews were not able to emigrate to Palestine!

The Boycott was extremely popular internationally. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, promised support which

could, if it materialised, make the boycott almost completely effective. The American Jewish masses were determined to go ahead with the boycott campaign regardless of the opposition of the Jewish establishment and the Zionist leaders.²⁰

In the East End of London the Boycott 'spread like a bush fire. After businesses closed on Friday 24 March thousands of Jews marched from the East End to the German Embassy.'²¹

The AJC and B'nai B'rith, however, 'saw their mission as obstructing anti-Nazi protest in America and Europe, especially an economic boycott.'²² On 19 March their European equivalents held a conference in Paris which decided that a boycott was 'not only premature but likely to be useless and even harmful.'²³ The Jewish bourgeoisie feared the boycott movement more than Hitler.

Cyrus Adler of the AJC stated that 'we have been and are doing all in our power to allay agitation.'²⁴ Adler received a letter on 3 April 1933 from a friend, a German Jewish refugee in Paris, detailing the murders and atrocities against German Jews. The letter pleaded with him 'not (to) take the slightest notice of assurances... whether they come from Jewish or non-Jewish sources...' Germany's Jews could not openly support a boycott 'because they would pay for such information with their lives.' He called for a boycott of all German goods. Adler was unmoved.

On 1 April the International League Against Anti-Semitism declared a permanent boycott. On 3 April 70,000 Greek Jews gathered in a mass protest and in Panama 15 leading Jewish firms cancelled all German orders. On 4 April there were Jewish protests in Bombay. In Polish Upper Silesia, which Hitler annexed in 1939, anti-German boycott violence was so extensive that the German Foreign Ministry threatened to complain to the League of Nations. In Britain the police in London and Manchester threatened to prosecute storeowners displaying boycott posters.²⁵

In the first few days of April thousands of orders for German goods in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem were cancelled. In response the 'socialist' Zionists of Mapai launched a campaign against the boycott. On Kol Yisrael, on 18 May they broadcast that 'Screaming slogans calling for a boycott... are a crime.' Referring to a recent arson attack on the German consulate they said, 'We have no quarrel with the representatives of the German government in Palestine.'²⁶ It was amongst the kibbutzniks that opposition to Boycott was greatest.²⁷

Professor Moshe Zimmerman, a Professor of German History at Tel Aviv University, spoke of 'the practical dissociation of the institutions of the Zionist movement and the Yishuv from the militant opposition to Nazism.' [28](#)

On 1 April 1933 SA storm troopers picketed Jewish shops. The reaction of the capitalist representatives in the German Cabinet was one of horror.

On several occasions between April and July Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath expressed concern over the boycott movement... (there was) considerable fear in Berlin about its potential for severely disrupting the government's economic policies.[29](#)

Neurath resigned, retracting his resignation only after receiving assurances that the siege would be short-lived.[30](#) On 31 March German stocks suffered badly with Die Trust falling 10% and Siemens 12%. In talks with US Ambassador William Dodd on 31 March, Neurath requested a statement from the US Government opposing the boycott and hinted that the siege of Jewish shops the following day might be rescinded.[31](#) Hitler agreed to a pause late on 1 April.

The reaction of the population to the blockade of Jewish shops was hostile. Jewish shop owners reported that many protestors chose to shop specifically at Jewish-owned stores to express their rejection of national socialism. 'A female Jewish physician also reported numerous gestures of affection from her patients.'[32](#) A boycott of Nazi Germany strengthened the pressure on the Nazis and increased the disaffection of the German people. This was confirmed by Dodd.[33](#)

Berl Locker of the ZO Executive admitted that the anti-Nazi Boycott campaign had caused the anti-Jewish boycott to be limited to one day [34](#) whilst confessing that he and his friends 'have attempted to energetically counter the so-called *Gruelpropaganda* [atrocious stories].'[35](#)

In Poland the Boycott was popular and the Jews of Vilna and Warsaw launched their own campaign. The Nazis were 'astonished', given the record of Polish anti-Semitism, that the advent of the Nazis had given birth to a widely supported Boycott movement. German exports to Poland plunged from 173 million zloty in 1932 to 146 million in 1933 and 108 million in 1934.[36](#)

By mid-April England had supplanted Germany as the largest exporter to Denmark and Norway. Sales to Finland were drastically down. German exports were 10% down in April. German industrialists submitted a memorandum to the Government 'drawing attention to the heavy withdrawal of orders for German goods.'

Orders from abroad 'showed an alarming decrease' and official trade statistics showed that the export surplus of the first quarter showed a decrease from £28.4m in 1932 to £11.8m in 1933, a drop of over 50%.³⁷ In June the export surplus was down by 68% compared to May.

For the entire first half of 1933 exports were down 51%. 'That six month loss would have been greater except that the anti-Nazi boycott had not really commenced until late March.'³⁸ Exports to France decreased by 25%. Egypt had an almost complete Boycott. Exports were also down 22 % to America compared with 1932 levels.³⁹

In Holland and France similar movements were developing. During May 1933 the Boycott movement spread further and wider. In Gibraltar a thousand Jewish merchants vowed to boycott German merchandise. The German Foreign Office was flooded with letters from German firms expressing alarm over the intensity of anti-German feelings abroad.⁴⁰ Bosch had lost the whole of its South American market.⁴¹

On 6 May, IG Farben, the German chemical company, confessed to 'an extraordinary slump' because of the Boycott. On 8 May German Economics Minister Hjalmar Schacht threatened to stop paying interest on American loans and then to default entirely on its foreign debt.⁴²

On 10 May a massive demonstration was held in New York, beginning in Madison Square Gardens.⁴³ Over 100,000 Jews and trade unionists took part. The Roosevelt Administration argued that Hitler represented the 'element of moderation' in the Nazi Party and that a boycott campaign would undermine his position!⁴⁴

On 12 May the prestigious Leipzig fur auction was held. It was a complete failure as \$3m of furs were withdrawn from sale. Such was the devastation facing their industry that in June the fur industry was authorised to proclaim: 'Jews in the fur trade are welcome in Leipzig.'⁴⁵ The *Daily Herald* estimated that the fur boycott alone would cost Germany \$100 million annually.

The German diamond industry, which employed 5,000 workers, faced total collapse as Antwerp's mostly Jewish diamond merchants refused to deal with Germany.⁴⁶

Goering stipulated that those who disseminated atrocity propaganda faced the death penalty. Nonetheless he soon drew the conclusion that the only way to stop the atrocity propaganda was to stop the atrocities.⁴⁷ The Boycott forced the Third Reich to vigilantly restrain anti-Jewish violence.⁴⁸ Goering was

desperate. 'Germany simply could not afford further export reductions' and without exports 'there would be economic death.'⁴⁹

Shipping and transatlantic passenger travel were major foreign currency earners but the boycott virtually bankrupted the industry. ⁵⁰ Foreign endowments to German universities declined by 95%. The wine industry faced catastrophe. The directors of the Dresden Bank resorted to asking for help from foreign banks. The Societe Generale replied, pointing out that Jews had been driven from their professions and that they preferred to trade elsewhere.⁵¹ *The Investor's Review* wrote that it was 'alarming' that the Reichsbank, formerly 'the greatest financial institution on the continent, should have to come begging to London' for a comparatively small loan of 40-50m RM. 'It can only mean that the great credit channels here... must have dried up as far as it is concerned.'⁵²

In Britain 'raucous mass demonstrations started in Manchester and swept through Newcastle, Leeds, Birmingham and Glasgow. The protests culminated in an overflow rally on 16 May at London's Queen Hall.' When news spread that goods labelled 'Made in Germany' were found in the warehouse of Isaac Angel, a toy importer in Stepney, a thousand angry protestors surrounded the store and mounted police had to be called in. Later the goods were returned whence they came.⁵³ Even the Archbishop of Liverpool urged Catholics to join the Boycott!

Reich leaders realized that boycott agitation was accelerating, especially in Great Britain. Placards proclaiming BOYCOTT GERMAN GOODS spread infectiously throughout London, and were now in the windows of the most exclusive West End shops.⁵⁴

By June 1933 the spectre of collapse was hovering over the Third Reich. The Reichsbank had only RM 280m in gold and foreign-exchange reserves, less than half that of 1932.⁵⁵

On 20 July in London a 'monster' demonstration in support of the Boycott took place. Over 50,000 people took part. Both the TUC and the Labour Party supported it. The TUC instructed its affiliates to support the Boycott.⁵⁶ Three of the speakers were from the BOD, although not representing it, because 'that body has taken no part in the demonstration and indeed has used strenuous efforts to prevent it.'⁵⁷

A letter from Max Morris, a future President of the National Union of Teachers, attacked the BOD's 'mockery of democracy' writing that 'at no point

in our history has there been evidenced such widespread discontent at our so-called leadership' over their opposition to the Boycott.⁵⁸

The Jewish Bourgeoisie & the Zionists Opposed the Boycott

In Britain as in the USA, the biggest obstacle to a successful boycott movement was the bourgeois Jewish leadership.⁵⁹ At a meeting of the World Alliance for Combating Anti-Semitism on 28 March 1933 Mr Mendel Wood, reporting on their meeting with representatives of the ZO, said that he was 'disgusted' at the decision of the ZE not to support a boycott which was:

the only weapon that they had and it had already proved a great success. Until recently Goering would not deign to reply but the boycott had elicited from him a denial of atrocities. It had made the Nazis call a halt to physical violence. Their duty was to strengthen the boycott by any means.

A resolution was then moved confirming their decision to institute a boycott of Germany. It 'declared that the Board of Deputies doesn't represent Anglo-Jewry'. 2000 East End Jews and non-Jews held a mass meeting organised by the Anti-War Council at the Mile End Baths. Even the Union of Young Israel Societies had resolved to support the boycott.⁶⁰

On 23 July Neville Laski, President of the Board of Deputies, announced that he would be attending the Zionist Congress as an observer. It would be the first time that the President of the BOD had attended: 'He was sure that the Jewish community would recognise the significance of such a step.' The anti-Zionist Jewish establishment had committed itself to a Zionist solution of the German Jewish crisis.⁶¹ The BOD voted 110-27 against the boycott campaign.

This was a reprieve for the Third Reich, a letup in the anti-German offensive... (it) could not have come at a more decisive moment.⁶²

The Investor's Review of 5 August 1933 reported that 'authoritative opinion is that Hitlerism will come to a sanguinary end before the New Year.'⁶³ Cesarani suggested that those who doubted the viability of the regime 'were not engaged in wishful thinking' and that it was beset by enemies coupled with a chronic balance of payments deficit.⁶⁴

Robert Ley, leader of the Nazis' Labour Front, warned that Germany was a 'besieged fortress' on the verge of collapse 'due to the cold war Jews abroad are conducting to destroy the Reich by boycotting German goods.'⁶⁵ At the Nazis'

annual Nuremberg conference in September Goebbels pleaded: 'Was it to the interests of other nations to bring Europe to chaos by a world boycott of Germany just because the Jewish minority wished it?'⁶⁶

Correspondence between Heinrich Wolff, the German consul in Palestine, and the Foreign Ministry showed that destroying the boycott was the main reason for the Nazis' agreeing to Ha'avara.⁶⁷ In June 1933 Wolff reported that 'It is important to break the boycott first and foremost in Palestine, and the effect will inevitably be felt on the main front, in the United States.'⁶⁸ On 30 March 1935 Dr Franz Reichert, the Gestapo's representative in Palestine, repeated the message.⁶⁹

The Zionist movement in Palestine waged war on the Boycott. On 2 July, the Conference of Institutions, including Histadrut, the Manufacturer's Association and other Zionist groups, met to discuss how best to co-ordinate opposition to the Boycott.⁷⁰

The Zionist movement found itself in a profound conflict between transfer and boycott and, in the broad sense, between the needs of the Yishuv and the sentiments of the Jewish people.⁷¹

Samuel Untermyer, an American Jewish lawyer who had organised the Boycott campaign returned to the United States on 6 August determined to quell the opposition of Wise to the Boycott. 'You cannot put out a fire... by just looking on.' Untermyer spoke of Wise as, 'the kingpin of mischief-makers' whose support for the Boycott depended on the audience he was addressing. On 14 August Wise was sufficiently stung by Untermyer's criticism to declare his support for the Boycott when addressing the Prague Jewish community.⁷²

Despite being uncoordinated the Boycott was having a dramatic effect on the German economy. People instinctively avoided purchasing German goods, coupled with which American dockers were refusing to handle German goods.

After Kristallnacht the momentum was even stronger for a boycott campaign. Until then a large proportion of American people had remained aloof from the campaign. 'For the first time the boycott movement gained many adherents among retailers, distributors and importers.' In Holland one of the largest Dutch trading companies, Stockies en Zoonen in Amsterdam, which represented Krupps, Ford and BMW, ended all its contracts with German companies. Only the Zionists remained committed to trading with Nazi Germany.⁷³

The Peel Commission's recommendation in 1937 to partition Palestine and create a Jewish state resulted in a debate within the Nazi government

between those who supported Ha'avara and those who opposed it. Hitler came down decisively in support of continued Jewish emigration to Palestine and Ha'avara in July 1937 and January 1938.⁷⁴ Both the Gestapo and SD collaborated with the underground Zionist organisations in organising illegal immigration to Palestine.⁷⁵

Ha'avara Destroys the International Boycott of Nazi Germany

On 9 June 1933 the ZVfD, the JA and the Palestine Land Development Company began negotiations with the Nazi government to secure a trade agreement. The Yishuv's leaders had opposed the Boycott because 'Zionist priorities... awarded precedence to the realization of Zionist goals and the building of Palestine over the struggle to preserve Jewish civil rights in the Diaspora.' ⁷⁶ Dov Hoz, a leading Labor Zionist, observed, 'In these negotiations, we are reaping the fruit of the boycott we oppose.' ⁷⁷ But for the Boycott there would have been no Ha'avara.⁷⁸

On 16 June the Revisionist paper *Hazit HaAm* issued what was seen as a death threat to the JA's Political Director, Haim Arlosoroff, who had been the driving force behind Ha'avara. Arlosoroff was assassinated that very same day.⁷⁹ After his death Ruppin took over the negotiations.⁸⁰

It was believed that the Revisionists had assassinated Arlosoroff. The leaders of the Palestinian Revisionists – Abba Ahimeir, Yehoshua Levin and poet Uri Zvi Greenberg – 'glorified the National Socialist creed... and hailed Hitler as Germany's savior'. They drew a distinction between Hitler's nationalism and his anti-Semitism.⁸¹ *Hazit HaAm* believed that the Nazi movement consisted of a shell and a kernel. 'The anti-Semitic shell is to be discarded but not the anti-Marxist kernel.' ⁸²

Ahimeir, from 1928 onwards, wrote a regular column 'Diary of a Fascist' in *Do'Ar ha-Yom*. When a group of Revisionists were prosecuted for having disrupted the speech of Norman Bentwich at the Hebrew University, their lawyer declared that 'yes, we Revisionists have a great admiration for Hitler. Hitler has saved Germany... And if he had given up his anti-Semitism we would go with him.' ⁸³ More than a dozen cities in Israel have streets named after Ahimeir. There is a museum in Ramat Gan dedicated to his legacy and his portrait appears on an Israeli stamp.⁸⁴

However Jabotinsky insisted that this Hitler worship end.

Articles and notices on Hitler and the Hitlerite movement are to me and all of us, like a knife thrust into our backs... to find in Hitlerism some feature of a 'national liberation movement' is sheer ignorance. **Moreover and under the present circumstances, all this babbling is discrediting and paralysing my work.**⁸⁵ (my emphasis)

On 7 August 1933 agreement was reached. Ha'avara was enacted as Reich Decree 54/33 on 28 August.⁸⁶ 'Ha'avara was a Zionist idea and initiative, not a Nazi one.'⁸⁷ Two corporations were set up – Paltreu in Berlin overseen by the ZVfD and Ha'avara Ltd. in Tel Aviv. German Jews liquidated their property and deposited the money in two blocked accounts in Germany controlled by Paltreu. Ha'avara Ltd. in Palestine placed orders for German equipment and manufactures which were paid out of the frozen account. Thus German exports increased, paid for with German marks. Little more than 25% of the proceeds was paid to the immigrants. Jews could take £1,000 out of the country, after various taxes, and qualify for entry to Palestine without restriction.⁸⁸

On 31 August the Nazis leaked the complete text of Ha'avara and the Decree.⁸⁹ Pandemonium ensued at the Zionist Congress in Prague and Berl Locker simply lied, denying that the JA had any role in the Agreement.⁹⁰ He claimed that Ha'avara had been organised by private concerns.⁹¹

Mapai used Arlosoroff's assassination to avoid debating a Revisionist resolution supporting the Boycott.⁹² Under a barrage of criticism worldwide Mapai put off endorsing Ha'avara.⁹³ Neither Prague nor the 1935 Congress at Lucerne discussed, still less condemned, the Nazi regime. It was more important to discuss Jabotinsky than Hitler.⁹⁴ The Revisionists called the JA 'Hitler's allies.'⁹⁵ Unsurprisingly 'Germany liked what happened in Prague.'⁹⁶

Nazi propaganda exploited Ha'avara to undermine the Boycott. Whilst world Jewry was doing its best to undermine the German economy and remove Hitler,

the Nazi party and the Zionist Organization shared a common stake in the recovery of Germany. If the Hitler economy fell, both sides would be ruined.⁹⁷

Ha'avara may have saved Hitler from being overthrown.⁹⁸ In return for Ha'avara the 'Zionists would halt the worldwide Jewish-led anti-Nazi Boycott that threatened to topple the Hitler regime in its first year.'⁹⁹ As soon as Ha'avara had been agreed German Zionists took minimal interest in the defence of Jewish rights in the Third Reich.¹⁰⁰

The leaders of Germany realized that the anti-Hitler boycott was threatening to kill the Third Reich in its infancy, either through utter bankruptcy or by promoting an

imminent invasion of Germany...The destruction of Hitler's tenuous regime... loomed as the crisis of the hour in Berlin ...[101](#)

However,:

the main question was whether the Zionists could really intervene, not only in the Boycott, but also in the anti-Nazi protest movement that was flaming a war fever among Germany's neighbours.[102](#)

On 27 August 1933 the *Berliner Tageblatt* reported a massive barter deal involving a swap of 10m RM of Jaffa oranges for German industrial goods. Citrus accounted for 80% of Jewish Palestine's exports. Germany was its largest customer: if Germany could not sell her exports, it would be unable to purchase Palestine's 1933-4 citrus crop.

Jews throughout the world unleashed a barrage of protest. The Warsaw Jewish community sent Prague an immediate condemnation.

It was called the 'Golden Orange.'[103](#) Rabbi Hillel Silver, one of America's leading Zionists, described it as 'a bankruptcy sale and the Jews of Palestine were endeavouring to salvage a few bargains for themselves.'[104](#) The barter agreement was extended to timber, cars, pumps, agricultural machinery etc.[105](#) Zalman Aharonowitz, like many Zionist leaders had a guilty conscience:

I have the feeling that we are breaching the boycott and have no way to justify this. We're doing it not to save Jews but to build houses for this or that organization. [...] We shall accomplish little and pay for it dearly. We shall befoul ourselves irreparably, and we will pay dearly for the money, too.

Moshe Shertok proclaimed that: 'It is Zionism's fate to be cruel toward the Diaspora at times [...] when this is necessary in order to build the country.'[106](#)

In a meeting of German foreign currency officials on 22 November 1938 it was reported that 170,000 German Jews had emigrated with a total of RM 340m in foreign currency, goods, foreign assets or Palestine transfers. Ha'avara was not the only means of exporting Jewish wealth.[107](#)

Ha'avara led to the selling of German merchandise throughout the Middle East and Cyprus, as the Palestinian market became saturated. The ZO set up the Near and Middle East Commercial Company to sell Nazi Germany's wares. The Zionists had become Nazi Germany's export agents.[108](#) Another transfer company, INTRIA, was formed in 1937. By the summer of 1939, there were transfer agreements in six European countries.[109](#)

Immediately following the Zionist Congress the Second World Jewish Conference of the WJC convened in Geneva from 6 September 1933. At that time the WJC still retained a measure of independence from the ZO and its rank and file, who belonged to hundreds of affiliated Jewish organisations, were overwhelmingly hostile to Ha'avara. Wise warned that 'We are not

rebuilding a Holy Land... in order to make a land of profits for some by their dealings with the German government.'

The proposed resolution called for the Boycott to be co-ordinated by a central Jewish committee. Wise and Nahum Goldmann, later President of the WZO and the first Chairman of the WJC, took fright, because this would mean a secondary boycott, which would include the ZO itself.¹¹⁰ When Wise read out the resolution, the final sentence calling for enforcement had been erased. Enforcement was via the Paris-based Committee of Jewish Delegations, a Zionist body. 'The boycott would be led by leaders who in fact opposed it.' The audience didn't comprehend what had happened.¹¹¹

The 1935 Zionist Congress approved Ha'avara.¹¹² Shlomo Kaplansky, a member of the JAE and Secretary of the World Union of Poale Zion, stated that Ha'avara was responsible for the import of German goods to the value of one million pounds and he estimated that in the previous year, the import of German goods not covered by the agreement reached a similar total.¹¹³

By June 1937 Germany had become the largest exporter to Palestine, although it still accounted for only 16.1% of Palestinian imports. Although Palestine was a small market in Germany's overall foreign trade¹¹⁴ Ha'avara contributed to the recovery of German industry.¹¹⁵ The JC thundered:

We object to the transfer of their assets in the form of the products of German factories and German employment. We say that that is aiding and comforting one of the most savage oppressions, even in Jewish history.... It breaks the united Jewish boycott front, a front let it not be forgotten, with which non-Jewish sympathisers were also aligned.¹¹⁶

Between 1933 and 1939, 139.6 million RM of German goods were exported to the Yishuv via Ha'avara.¹¹⁷ Ha'avara accounted for 60% of total capital investment in Jewish Palestine.¹¹⁸ Whole industries in Palestine, such as Printing and Brewing were founded as a result as well as major enterprises such as Mekoroth (water company) and Lodzia (textiles).¹¹⁹

The Zionists established their own Palestine Shipping Company, which bought the German passenger ship Hohenstein and renamed it Tel Aviv. The ship's first trip was from Bremerhaven to Haifa at the beginning of 1935. From the mast fluttered the swastika; 'a combination of metaphysical absurdity' wrote one of the passengers.¹²⁰

At the Revisionists' New Zionist Congress in September 1935 Ha'avara was attacked for only giving 39% of German Jews' capital back. The main beneficiaries were Zionist institutions such as the JNF. Kaplansky alleged that

without Ha'avara it was possible for Jews with £1,000 to emigrate and that 'the Transfer Agreement not only did not help the Jews of Germany but did a lot of harm.' Before Ha'avara Jews could take their wealth out in the form of money, losing about two-thirds in taxes. With Ha'avara, Jews were told that their wealth could only be taken out in goods.^{[121](#)}

In a debate between Berl Locker and Baruch Vladeck, the Bundist editor of the Yiddish *Forward* and Chairman of the Jewish Labor Committee, Vladeck described how 'The whole organized labor movement and the progressive world are waging a fight against Hitler through the boycott. The Transfer Agreement scabs on that fight.' Vladeck contended that 'the main purpose of the Transfer is not to rescue the Jews from Germany but to strengthen various institutions in Palestine.' Vladeck termed Palestine 'the official scab agent against the boycott in the Near-East'.^{[122](#)}

Selig Brodetsky, a member of the ZO Executive, argued that Ha'avara wasn't a breach of the Boycott because there was no foreign exchange transfer. Yet what mattered was not the loss of wealth so much as the need to keep the German economic wheels turning.^{[123](#)}

After the Nazi Party took office, eleven of the world's leading musicians, led by Arturo Toscanini and Fritz Reiner, announced a boycott of German cultural events.^{[124](#)} In Paris filmgoers cheered a band of Jewish youth who disrupted a German film. In Latvia the German embassy 'sought court restraint for Jewish student groups urging a boycott of German films'.^{[125](#)}

Latvia contained one of the strongest boycott campaigns. In every town where there was a Jewish community a Boycott Committee was formed. In one town four Jewish students were prosecuted for distributing a leaflet urging cinema goers not to watch German films or buy German goods. They were acquitted.^{[126](#)} The Nazis began boycotting Latvian butter until reaching an agreement with the Latvian government outlawing the Boycott campaign.^{[127](#)}

Zionist Justification for Ha'avara

Today the Zionist justification for Ha'avara is that it was intended to save the lives of German Jews; however, at the time the JA threatened to cut the 22% of Palestine immigration certificates allocated to German Jewry if the 'quality' of the immigrants didn't improve.

The staunchest supporters of the agreement in the Yishuv did not see the saving of lives as an independent goal at that time, rather they sought to extract German Jewish

property for the benefit of the Yishuv. [128](#)

Both Tom Segev and Moshe Zimmerman, stressed 'the cynical abandonment of German Jewry out of Palestinocentric Zionist considerations'.[129](#) The ZE declared that Ha'avara was 'the sole way of bringing into Palestine the maximum amount of German Jewish capital.' [130](#) Zionist activists spoke of 'saving the wealth' and 'rescuing the capital from Nazi Germany.' [131](#) Hitler boasted that Germany, in contrast to Britain, was aiding Jewish emigration, letting them take the currency required for entry into Palestine.[132](#)

Yehuda Bauer conceded:

No one knew then that the holocaust would happen. Nobody knew that a holocaust was even possible... the Germans had not decided on anything like it in the 1930s.[133](#)

Abraham Margalioth likewise concluded that 'none of the individuals who drew up the various proposals perceived the unprecedented danger which lay in store for the Jews under the National Socialist regime.' [134](#) To suggest therefore that Ha'avara was agreed in order to rescue Germany's Jews, when Palestine was not capable of taking them in and when the Zionists themselves did not foresee a future holocaust, is a *post hoc* rationalisation.

Weizmann was particularly disturbed by the statement of Hilfsverein, the German Jewish aid organisation, criticising Ha'avara and supporting Jewish emigration to South America, South Africa and the Far East. His concern was not saving German Jews but that Palestine might lose them. To Weizmann this was 'a betrayal of our trust.' [135](#)

The NYT Berlin correspondent, Frederick Birchall, reported that the World Jewish Economic Conference in Amsterdam passed a resolution warning that the Hitler government would proceed from annihilating the Jews economically to annihilating them physically.[136](#)

Between 1933 and 1939 the Jewish population in Palestine, the Yishuv, increased from 234,967 to 445,457,[137](#) of whom 52,600 were from Germany. Only in 1939 did they make up more than half the total immigrants.[138](#) The number of Jews who emigrated because of Ha'avara was approximately 20,000, 37% of the total number of German Jewish immigrants.[139](#) They entered on A-1 certificates, which enabled unrestricted entry to those bringing in £1,000.[140](#) Most would have found refuge elsewhere, because they were relatively wealthy. In 1937 and 1938, as a result of the Arab Revolt, Jewish emigration to Palestine slowed down and Ha'avara was no longer seen as effective.[141](#) After 1937 the

USA supplanted Palestine as the main destination for German Jews. 38% of all Germany's Jewish emigrants gained admission to the USA.¹⁴²

- [1](#) Review: 'The Land That Broke Its Promise : The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust,' *LA Times*, 23.5.93. <https://tinyurl.com/nx2sd74c>
- [2](#) Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, April 1942, p. 41.
- [3](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 184-5.
- [4](#) Robert Black, *Fascism in Germany*, Vol. 1, p 172.
- [5](#) R. Melka, Nazi Germany & the Palestine Question, p,223; Nicosia, *ZANG*, p. 133; Nicosia, Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy, D1270. See also Dawidowicz, *War Against the Jews*, p. 120.
- [6](#) Polkehnn p. 69; Nicosia, *ZANG*, p. 133.
- [7](#) Nicosia, Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy, D1273.
- [8](#) *NYT* 22.3.33., 25.3.33., *JC* 24.3.33. See Moshé Gottlieb, *The Anti-Nazi Boycott Movement in the United States*, pp. 198-9.
- [9](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 35.
- [10](#) Edwin Black, p. 37
- [11](#) *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- [12](#) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- [13](#) *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- [14](#) *Ibid.*, p. 52, citing minutes of the meeting of the German Cabinet of 29.3.33.
- [15](#) Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 6.
- [16](#) *Ibid.*, p. 8, Blumenfeld to Oberregierungsrat Sommerfeldt, Prussian Ministry of the Interior, 27.3.1933.
- [17](#) Stephen Wise, *Challenging Years: the Autobiography of Stephen Wise*, pp. 240-1.
- [18](#) Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 8.
- [19](#) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- [20](#) Black, pp. 43-4. 27.2.15.
- [21](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, pp. 41-2.
- [22](#) Black, p. 19.
- [23](#) *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- [24](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 63, citing *NYT* 31.3.33.
- [25](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.
- [26](#) *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- [27](#) Arendt, Zionism Reconsidered, *The Jew as Pariah*, p. 139
- [28](#) Eshkoli-Wagman, *Yishuv Zionism: Its Attitude to Nazism*, p. 31.
- [29](#) Francis Nicosia, *ZANG*, pp. 83-4.
- [30](#) Black, p. 59.
- [31](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 36.
- [32](#) Frank Bajohr, p. 195.
- [33](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, pp. 87-8.
- [34](#) Black, p. 106.
- [35](#) *Ibid.*
- [36](#) Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 5.

- [37](#) 'The Anti-German Boycott Works', *Jewish Chronicle*, 19.5.33.
- [38](#) Black, p. 223.
- [39](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 265, 273. This gives the lie to the myth about Arab support for the Nazis.
- [40](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ*, London: IB Tauris, 1985, p. 36.
- [41](#) Hilberg, p. 35.
- [42](#) Black, p. 116.
- [43](#) *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, <https://tinyurl.com/yxqv77a7>
- [44](#) Black p. 19.
- [45](#) *Ibid.*, p. 181.
- [46](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 129-31, 181.
- [47](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 223-4, citing US Ambassador in Germany to Acting Secretary of State, 28.7.33.
- [48](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 250, 372.
- [49](#) *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- [50](#) *Ibid.*, p. 264.
- [51](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 264-6.
- [52](#) 'Hitler Hard Up', *JC* 11.8.33, citing *Investor's Review*, 5.8.33.
- [53](#) 'East End Scenes - Crowds Demand Complete Boycott', *JC* 26.7.33,
- [54](#) Black, p. 34.
- [55](#) Black pp. 181-2.
- [56](#) Black., pp. 15, 33, 180.
- [57](#) 'Monster Jewish Protest Demonstration', *JC* 21.7.33.
- [58](#) Max Morris, 'Our Leaders: A Mockery of Democracy', *JC* 28.7.33.
- [59](#) Black, p.192.
- [60](#) 'World Alliance for Combating Anti-Semitism – Intensifying the Boycott – The Deputies Failure', *JC*, 31.3.33,
- [61](#) 'Boycott Discussed in Camera – Struggling with the Crisis', *JC* 28.7.33.,
- [62](#) Black pp. 209, 210-13.
- [63](#) 'Hitler hard up', *JC* 11.8.33.
- [64](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, pp. 81-2.
- [65](#) JTA Cable Dispatches, 10.12.35. <https://tinyurl.com/y269wb72>
- [66](#) 'Hitler Re-affirms Jew murder policy – Tribute to Jewry's Boycott Defence War', *JC* 8.9.33.
- [67](#) Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 2.
- [68](#) David Yisraeli, *The Third Reich and the Transfer Agreement*, p. 131; Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 41.
- [69](#) *Ibid.*, p. 132. Dr Reichart to his superiors, 30.3.35.
- [70](#) Black pp. 130, 188, 191.
- [71](#) Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 20.
- [72](#) Black, pp. 276-7.
- [73](#) Hilberg, pp. 40-1.
- [74](#) Black, p. 376. See Nicosia, *TRPQ*, pp. 134, 141-3. Former General Gerhard Engel, in a letter (18.5.76.) to Nicosia stated that 'although Hitler was skeptical about Zionism and opposed the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, he did not reject the Zionist option in German Jewish policy... Hitler came to favor *Konzentration* over *Zerstreuung*.'

- [75](#) Nicosia, Arab Nationalism and National Socialist Germany, 1933-1939, pp. 358-9.
- [76](#) Hava Eshkoli-Wagman, (p. 25) argued that '(their) standpoint cannot be attributed to selfish motives; rather it reflects the naive Zionist belief that its prediction of the eradication of the Diaspora was being fulfilled.'
- [77](#) Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 24.
- [78](#) Black, When Zionists made deal with the Nazis, *Jerusalem Post*, 23.9.09.
<https://tinyurl.com/3uk9856z>
- [79](#) Black, pp. 151-3.
- [80](#) Bloom, Arthur Rupp and the Production of the Modern Hebrew Culture, p. 415; Bein, 1968, 19 June 1933, *Chapters of My Life, Diaries, Letters and Memoirs*, Vol. I, Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 1968, p. 221. (Hebrew)
- [81](#) Weinstock, p. 150. Segev, 'Words That Can't Be Retracted,' *Ha'aretz*, 20.4.12.
- [82](#) Eshkoli-Wagman, *Yishuv Zionism: Its Attitude to Nazism and the Third Reich Reconsidered*, p. 23.
- [83](#) *Ibid.*, p. 22. See also Elis Lubransy, 'Hitler in Jerusalem,' *Weltbahne* (Berlin, 31 May 1932), p. 835.
- [84](#) Segev, 'Words That Can't Be Retracted,' *Ha'aretz* 20.4.12.
<https://www.haaretz.com/1.5215759>
- [85](#) Laqueur, p. 364.
- [86](#) Black, pp. 249-50. Nicosia ZANG p. 87 dates the signing to August 25.
- [87](#) Nicosia, ZANG, p. 82.
- [88](#) Abraham J Edelheit, *The Yishuv In The Shadow Of The Holocaust: Zionist Politics And Rescue Aliya, 1933-1939*, Routledge, 2019.
- [89](#) Black, p. 335
- [90](#) Brenner, p. 64, citing *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, 29.8.33. p. 4. See also Black, pp. 314-15.
- [91](#) *JC*, 13.10.33. 'Those German trading interests' cited in Black, p. 347. See also Weiss, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, p. 1.
- [92](#) Black, pp.122-3, 144, 159.
- [93](#) *Ibid.*, p. 343 states that the delegates voted yes, but this is incorrect.
- [94](#) *Ibid.* p. 294.
- [95](#) Eshkoli-Wagman, *Yishuv Zionism: Its Attitude to Nazism*, p. 26.
- [96](#) Black, pp. 307-10 citing *NYT* 25.8.33.
- [97](#) *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- [98](#) *Ibid.*, pp. xiii, 181-2.
- [99](#) *Ibid.*, p. xix.
- [100](#) Cesarani, *The Final Solution*, p. 69.
- [101](#) Black p. 110, see also p. 130.
- [102](#) *Ibid.*, p. 130..
- [103](#) *Ibid.*, p. 318. A not too subtle reference to the Golden Calf.
- [104](#) *Ibid.* pp. 319-21.
- [105](#) Hilberg, p. 140.
- [106](#) Weitz, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Movement*, pp. 25-7.
- [107](#) Hilberg, p. 142.

- [108](#) Black, p. 374; Yisraeli p. 134.
- [109](#) Ibid., pp. 377-8.
- [110](#) Ibid., pp. 353-7.
- [111](#) Ibid., pp. 359-61.
- [112](#) Ibid., p. 374, <https://tinyurl.com/2p8c7h93>
- [113](#) 'Zionists Close their Rank,' *JC* 6.9.35.
- [114](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 49.
- [115](#) Herbert Strauss, *Jewish Emigration from Germany*, p. 350.
- [116](#) 'The Unclean Thing,' *JC*, 27.12.35.
- [117](#) Klaus Polkehn, *The Secret Contacts* p. 66. Others value Ha'avara at around 100m RM. Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 213; Hilberg fn. 9. p. 139; Saul Friedlander, p. 26. Eshkoli-Wagman estimates that its value was 80m Palestinian lirot or 140m DM, p. 29. Strauss, *Jewish Emigration from Germany*, pp. 345-6.
- [118](#) David Rosenthal, 'Chaim Arlosoroff 65 Years After his Assassination,' *Jewish Frontier*, May-June 1998, p. 28, New York <https://tinyurl.com/ySmsw8ts>. In 1937 over 31m RM was transferred. Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 213.
- [119](#) Black p. 257, 379.
- [120](#) Polkehn, p. 65.
- [121](#) 'The Transfer Agreement – Serious Charges Against Ha'avara,' *JC*, 20.9.35. p. 30.
- [122](#) Brenner, *51 Documents: Zionist Collaboration with the Nazis*, 1972, pp. 92-3.
- [123](#) 'The Unclean Thing' *JC* 27.12.35.
- [124](#) Black, p. 61.
- [125](#) Ibid., pp. 180, 183, citing *JC* 5.5.33. and *NYT* 11.6.33, 17.6.33.
- [126](#) 'Effective Work in Latvia,' *JC* 27.10.33.
- [127](#) Black, p. 183.
- [128](#) Eshkoli-Wagman, p. 31, *Yishuv Zionism, Modern Judaism*, V. 19:1, February 1999.
- [129](#) Ibid.
- [130](#) 'Zionist Executive Defends Ha'avara,' *JC*, 13.12.35.
- [131](#) Black, pp. 257-8.
- [132](#) Melka, *Nazi Germany & the Palestine Question*, p. 221.
- [133](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 213.
- [134](#) Abraham Margalio, 'The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry,' p. 567.
- [135](#) David Silberklang, *Jewish Politics and Rescue*, pp. 340, 346.
- [136](#) Black, p. 206 citing *NYT*, 21.7.33. 'World Jews Push Boycott of Reich.'
- [137](#) Factsheet No. 7, *Demographics of Historical Palestine Prior to 1948*, July 2004 <https://tinyurl.com/3p478mh>
- [138](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 212, Appendix 7. Strauss, *Jewish Emigration from Germany*, p.346 states that 51,700 German Jews entered Palestine.
- [139](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, p. 10. Black, p. 379. Hilberg, fn 9, p. 139, puts the figure at 19,000 (36%).
- [140](#) Strauss, *Jewish Emigration from Germany*, p. 345.

- [141](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ* p. 212. Immigration to Palestine for the years 1937 and 1938 (8,500) was less than that for 1936 (8,700). [See [Table 5](#)]
- [142](#) Strauss, *Jewish Emigration from Germany*, p. 358.

Chapter 7

When & What Did They Know?

'The road to Auschwitz was built by hate but paved with indifference.' (Ian Kershaw) ¹

The first direct reports of the murder of Jews reached the JA from Apolinary Hartglas and Moshe Koerner in February 1940. They told of how 'the Jewish population of Poland is being mercilessly and cruelly annihilated....'² Several meetings of the ZE between February and May 1940 were devoted not to the situation of the Jews in Poland but to proposals for intensifying resistance to the 1939 White Paper which had drastically cut Jewish immigration into Palestine.³ With war against Germany imminent, the British could not afford to further antagonise the Palestinians after crushing the 1936-9 Arab Revolt. Dov Hoz, in early August 1940, reported on the 'destruction of the people of Israel in many countries.' Yet no Zionist body in Palestine even discussed these reports. Dina Porat admits 'these questions are hard to answer' because 'Ben-Gurion's concentration on post-war goals shifted attention away from the present plight of Europe's Jews.'⁴

The explanation is remarkably simple. As Porat conceded, the Zionists' focus was on achieving Jewish statehood post-war not the Holocaust. Saving Jews from anti-Semitism had never been a Zionist priority. At the height of the Holocaust from 9-11 May 1942 the Zionist Organisation of America [ZOA] held the Biltmore conference in New York whose sole concern was creating a future Jewish state. The Zionist movement never once considered holding a conference on the Holocaust and the rescue of Europe's Jews.

The first reports of mass shootings reached Britain, via the Delegate's Report on the situation of Jews in Poland, on August 30 1941.⁵ In November 1941 the British Minister in Berne, Sir David Victor Kelly, reported that a Polish informant had told him that about 1.5 million Jews in Eastern Poland had 'disappeared'. In October the JC reported that thousands had died in pogroms in Ukraine.⁶ In mid-January 1942 Ignacy Schwarzbart, the Zionist member of the Polish Government-in-exile received the Delegate's Report of mass executions at Ponary near Vilna, Bialystok District and other towns and cities in Poland yet no mention of it appeared in his diary or other correspondence.⁷

In August 1941 a group of young men were arrested in the southern Netherlands for distributing copies of the Bishop's protest against the

Nazification of the Catholic trade unions. They were arrested and two of them were sent to Auschwitz. They were there during the winter of 1941 when the gassing of Jews and Russian POWs began. On 4 May 1942 gassings began at Birkenau. Eight days later the two were released. When they returned home no one would believe their stories.⁸

In December 1941 Nathan Schwalb, the representative of Hechalutz in Geneva, cabled a report describing the 'extreme suffering' of Jews in the countries under Nazi occupation. Only then did the JA hold its first full meeting devoted to the Jews of Europe.⁹ In the same month 46 Palestinian Jews residing in Nazioccupied Europe were exchanged for German nationals in Palestine.¹⁰ As the first reports came into London of mass atrocities committed against Poland's Jews and a report on the first use of gas came from the British consul in Basel on 18 February 1942, 'the Jewish public became increasingly agitated, but its leaders were still afraid to issue a public response.'¹¹

In July and August 1942 protest demonstrations were held in London and in August a pamphlet 'Stop Them Now: German Mass Murder of Jews in Poland' was published by Shmuel Zygielbojm with an introduction by Lord Josiah Wedgewood.¹² Berl Katznelson of the JAE began to chronicle the Holocaust in 1942 with a book series *Min ha-Moked* [From the Inferno].¹³

Zionist indifference when the Holocaust could no longer be denied

The JA, which had listening posts in Istanbul and Switzerland, was not interested in sending messengers into Nazi-occupied Europe or the Polish ghettos. Richard Lichtheim, the Jewish Agency representative in Geneva, together with other leaders, had established contacts with more than 30 cities.¹⁴ Melech Neustadt of the JAE returned in May 1942 from a mission to Istanbul. He discovered, much to his surprise, that with the exception of Eastern Poland and the Baltic states, communications could easily be established via cable and even long-distance phone calls with Jewish communities. He himself had established contact with 50 Polish Jewish communities. Jewish emissaries frequently travelled from one place to another: 'The good news was that all over Europe Jewish life continued, that the Zionist youth movement was showing much activity in difficult conditions.'¹⁵

If the Polish government's response to news of the Holocaust was lethargic, still worse was that of Schwarzbart. As early as May 1942 Britain's Polish daily, *Dziennik Polski*, had reported that Jews had 'disappeared' from towns in Eastern Poland. On 29 July its front page announced 'Mass executions of Poles and Jews.'¹⁶ Only Zygielbojm kept pushing for action. Finally on 27 October an extraordinary session of the Polish National Council declared that more than a million Polish Jews had been murdered. Zygielbojm put the figure at over 1.5 million.¹⁷

On 20 June 1942 the US Office for Strategic Services [OSS], received a report: 'Germany is no longer persecuting the Jews. It is systematically exterminating them.' The information came from a British officer hiding out in the Warsaw Ghetto, who described the death of Jews by starvation and a visit by Himmler to Governor Frank in April, telling him that the Jews weren't dying fast enough.

At a Histadrut Council meeting in early December 1942, Anshel Reis, from the Association of Polish Immigrants, mentioned the pamphlet 'Stop Them Now'. 'Where were we? Why did our news agencies not report this? What did we do to stop the slaughter?' Moshe Aram replied, 'Reis is right. For months, we... have been unwitting accomplices to murder.'¹⁸ An example of this indifference was the agenda of the May 1943 meeting of Histadrut's Executive Committee which listed 'rescue efforts' as the sixth of eight items.¹⁹

Some Zionists were not happy with the situation. Meir Ya'ari, the future leader of Mapam, contrasted the activity of Zygielbojm with that of the Zionists.²⁰

Two months ago the pamphlet of the Bundist Zygielbojm... was published in London, containing a detailed description of the destruction campaign. Residing in London was Berl Locker. The pamphlet was widely disseminated, and only the Jewish Agency's news service, Palcor, seems to have missed it completely. This pamphlet was published by a Bundist and not by Dr Schwarzbart and not by Berl Locker. ²¹

In July 1942 news of the exterminations came from a number of sources. Ernst Lemmer, a newspaper correspondent, mentioned the gas chambers. Col. Artur Sumner, an economist who had served in the Economics Section of the German Army Command, informed Edgar Salin, Professor at the University of Basel, that camps were being readied in the East for gassing and urged the BBC to broadcast warnings. Salin sent the information to the President of the Bank for International Settlements, Thomas McKittrick, who cabled President

Roosevelt. *Newsweek* reported on 10 August 1942 that trainloads of Warsaw Jews were disappearing into a 'black limbo'.²²

Gerhard Riegner of the WJC in Geneva was informed on 30 July by a German industrialist, Eduard Schulte, who had access to Hitler's HQ, that Hitler had ordered the annihilation of the Jews.²³ Browning suggests that Schulte got his information from Karl Hanke and Fritz Bacht, the Gauleiters of Lower and Upper Silesia respectively. Bacht had accompanied Himmler when he toured Auschwitz on 16 and 17 July, witnessing the gassing of a transport.²⁴ It is also suggested that Carl Buckhard, a leading figure in the ICRC, brought the existence of the Fuhrer Order to the attention of Prof. Paul Guggenheim, a friend of Riegner.²⁵

Riegner sent a cable on 8 August 1942 to the US and British consulates in Geneva confirming the Final Solution. Although the US State Department did not pass on the information to Jewish representatives, the Foreign Office did. On 17 August Britain's Deputy Foreign Secretary, Richard Law, sent it to Sidney Silverman MP.²⁶

On 30 August Richard Lichtheim sent Riegner's report to Gruenbaum in Jerusalem, including a report from two eye-witnesses, one non-Jewish, concerning the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto and the killings in Lithuania, Eastern Poland and Belzec. The first reply from Dr Leo Lauterbach, head of the JA Organisation Department to Lichtheim, of 28 September 1942, was explicit:

I will tell you frankly that we are not inclined to accept all of its contents verbatim.²⁷

Gruenbaum replied asking him to 'verify cable'.²⁸ According to Bauer, not only American Jewry but the Roosevelt Administration were equally powerless. In fact there was a lot they could have done, from bombing the railway lines to the camps to using troop ships returning empty to the USA to carry refugees.²⁹ Ben-Gurion maintained a 'puzzling silence' about what was happening in Europe and Riegner's telegram.³⁰

Wise received the Riegner telegram from Silverman on 28 August and on 2 September he was asked by Benjamin Sumner Welles at the State Department to stay silent. Wise agreed, even though he told his students that he was 'deeply troubled' by the Administration's refusal to help save Europe's Jews.³¹ Deborah Lipstadt excuses this saying that Wise 'would have probably alienated officials in Washington and London.'³² Bauer argued the exact opposite:

It is somewhat difficult to put all the blame for complacency on British and American statesmen when Jewish leaders made no visible attempt to put pressure on their

governments for any active policy of rescue. [33](#)

For three months Wise and the US Zionist leaders suppressed news of the Holocaust. During this period one and a half million Jews were exterminated. It was the most intense period of the Holocaust when Poland was combed for Jews.[34](#) Wise's concern was that 'wild people' in the Jewish community were criticizing Roosevelt and the State Department.[35](#)

The Bund sent a report: 'Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto' to London on 31 August and the Polish underground sent a cable on the same date revealing that 15,000 Jews a day were being deported from the Ghetto. A cable on 10 September said that 300,000 had been deported and only 40,000 were still alive. A further Bund report of 2 October said that very few Bundists remained alive. This report arrived in December. The only person who announced the extermination of the inhabitants of the Warsaw Ghetto was Zygielbojm, who was in possession of the same information as the Polish leaders and Schwarzbart, who 'remained surprisingly passive.'[36](#) The cable of General Roweki of 19 August was particularly detailed about the situation in the Warsaw Ghetto.[37](#)

Dr Jonah Wise of the Joint Distribution Committee [JDC] protested that 'It is difficult for Americans... to understand the silence of President Roosevelt.' [38](#) When asked after Kristallnacht if immigration regulations would be relaxed, Roosevelt replied, 'That is not in contemplation.' [39](#) The Roosevelt administration 'consciously neglected opportunities to find Jewish refugees a haven in the 1930s and to rescue Jews during the holocaust itself.' [40](#) Faced with a conflict between proponents of rescue, such as Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, and the State Department, Roosevelt 'unhesitatingly' chose the latter.[41](#)

Under the 1924 Immigration Act, nearly 26,000 Germans a year were allowed into the USA. Yet between 1932 and 1935, whilst Jews were steadily being stripped of their rights, just 14,202 Germans of all faiths entered America.[42](#) This was thanks to the obstacles that Assistant-Secretary of State Breckinridge Long placed in the way of refugees.[43](#) To the bitter end Roosevelt defended Breckinridge Long. Roosevelt, in conversation with ex-Vichy General Charles Noguès, referred to the:

understandable complaints which the Germans bore towards the Jews in Germany, namely that while they represented a small part of the population, over 50% of the lawyers, doctors, school teachers, college professors, etc. in Germany were Jews.[44](#)

By annihilating its Jews, Berlin was not only solving its Jewish Question it was solving the State Department's refugee problem.⁴⁵ Wise boasted of his personal relationship with Roosevelt yet he made no efforts to raise the question of the refugees.

Wise and Goldmann had no doubt about the authenticity of the reports yet they sat on them.⁴⁶ On 27 August Wise wrote to Sumner Welles regarding France, that 'hundreds of thousands of these innocent men, women and children have been killed in brutal mass murders.'⁴⁷ On 16 November 1942 69 Jewish women arrived in Palestine as exchange prisoners.⁴⁸ They too confirmed the reports yet according to Yehuda Bauer:

Nobody really understood the reports about the Nazi mass killing until it was too late. There was little or nothing the Allies could have done to rescue the Jews... American Jewry was powerless to influence Allied policy.⁴⁹

Bauer demonstrated once again that he was a Zionist first and a historian second. This was palpable nonsense. Wise 'not only knew of the death camps in the summer of 1942... but actively collaborated with the (State) Department in keeping verified accounts of mass murder from the public.'⁵⁰ In a letter to Roosevelt of 2 December 1942 Wise admitted that

it is indisputable that as many as two million civilian Jews have been slain. I have had cables and underground advices for some months, telling of these things. **I succeeded, together with the heads of other Jewish organizations, in keeping these out of the press** and have been in constant communication with the State Department, particularly Under-secretary Welles.⁵¹ (my emphasis)

It was AK agent Jan Karski who provided the first eye witness evidence of the physical extermination of Polish Jewry. Karski was smuggled into the most secretive of extermination camps, Belzec, and the Bund smuggled him twice into the Warsaw Ghetto.⁵² Karski reached the West in November 1942 where he reported on what he had seen to both Eden and Roosevelt.⁵³

In June 1943, after a considerable delay, Karski's report of what he had witnessed was broadcast on the BBC by Arthur Koestler. This was the first of two major reports (the other being the AP in April 1944) about the extermination camp system.⁵⁴ The Karski Report disabled, 'if only temporarily', general resistance in Polish government circles to making the Jewish issue a question of policy priority during the war.'⁵⁵

One of the Exchange Jews, Ya'akov Kurtz of Tel Aviv, had been trapped in Piotrków. He wrote his *Book of Testimony* in 1943 about his experiences and it is clear from his description of Treblinka, that the Nazis were embarking on the Final Solution. But when Kurtz told what he knew to the JA: 'They didn't

believe me! They told me I was exaggerating. They asked questions and carried out interrogations as though I were a criminal out to deceive people...' [56](#)

On 6 January 1943, Henry Monsky, President of B'nai Brith, called a preliminary meeting of the American Jewish Conference. In his letter of invitation he wrote that

American Jewry... must be ready to voice the judgment of American Jews ... with respect to the post-war status of Jews and the upbuilding of a Jewish Palestine.

The American Jewish Conference met from 29 August to 2 September 1943. [57](#) Hilberg commented that 'the destruction of the European Jews is not even mentioned... The holocaust is unopposed. The paralysis was complete.' [58](#) Zionist thoughts were on the post-war settlement.

In February 1943 another 14 Exchange Jews arrived in Palestine, totalling 220 in all. There could be no doubt about the Final Solution, yet some of the exchange group were asked to give their evidence only in closed forums, in order to continue the conspiracy of silence. [59](#)

On 19 April 1943 the USA and Britain held a conference on Jewish refugees in Bermuda. The WJC submitted a memorandum which did not mention the death camps or gas chambers. The death of the Jews was ascribed primarily to starvation and their transportation in cattle trucks. On 11 June Weizmann met for nearly an hour with Roosevelt. Not a word was spoken about the Holocaust. Weizmann had more pressing Zionist concerns on his mind. [60](#) When in July Weizmann returned to London 'he invested no effort in persuading the British to do something about European Jewry, preferring to discuss their future policy toward Palestine.' [61](#)

Another source of information was Archbishop Angelo Roncalli, Apostolic Delegate in Istanbul. In a report of 8 July Roncalli stated that millions of Jews had been sent to Poland and annihilated there. [62](#)

The JA rejected the idea of a protest demonstration before the Bermuda Conference opened. There were 'differences of opinion' as to whether Zionist concerns should be kept separate from those of rescue. Menachem Landau, an invitee to the conference, wanted to give up 'the attempt to use this conference for Zionist purposes.' [63](#)

On 6 October 500 rabbis staged a march through Washington DC in order to lobby Roosevelt. They marched first to Capitol Hill and then the US Senate. Vice-President Henry Wallace went out to meet them. When they proceeded on to the White House they found that Roosevelt wasn't there. He had

changed his schedule.⁶⁴ The response of the Zionist movement to the march was hostile because it had been organised by dissident Jews.⁶⁵

The Final Solution – What did the German people know?

It was to prevent the German people learning of the Final Solution that the death camps were located in Poland. It was a closely guarded state secret.⁶⁶ A determined effort was made to keep the news from the German people.⁶⁷ This was because the Nazi leadership felt it could not rely on popular backing for its extermination policy.⁶⁸

Edwin Salin told Chaim Pozner, the Director of the Palestine Office in Geneva, that the Nazis 'are doing everything to prevent the German people from finding out what they are planning to do and will certainly carry out.'⁶⁹ Professor Eugen Kogon, who was detained in various Nazi concentration camps, including Buchenwald, confirmed that the Nazi system of terror succeeded in restricting knowledge of the Holocaust to very few.⁷⁰

Thousands of German soldiers had seen or heard the shooting of Jews during OB. They had taken pictures and written home describing what they had seen. Army officers such as Major Karl Rosler of the 528th Infantry Regiment were repelled at what they saw. Generaloberst Friedrich Fromm, chief of the Replacement Army, was the recipient of a complaint from the deputy commander of Army District IX in Kassel.⁷¹

It is more than likely that information seeped back from Auschwitz.⁷² Auschwitz had a constant flow of engineers, officials and others through it.⁷³ Most Germans would have had no illusions about the fate of the deported Jews, not least because of the Allied radio broadcasts.⁷⁴

But most ordinary Germans were unaware of the extermination camps or the use of gas. There were only two cases in the Munich Special Court files of references to the use of gas. In one, a Munich woman referred to listening to foreign broadcasts about the extermination of Jews. She received three years in prison. Many people believed the heavy bombing raids were in retaliation for the treatment of the Jews.⁷⁵ It is noteworthy that when Pastor Bernhard Lichtenberg was interrogated by the Gestapo he referred to 'evacuation' not 'extermination' of the Jews.⁷⁶

Hitler's Order no.1 or *Führerbefehl Nr. 1*, played a crucial role in limiting the number of people who knew of the Final Solution. No one was to know about secret matters who didn't need to know nor should they learn any earlier than they needed nor more than they needed to know.⁷⁷

The Jews were out of sight and out of mind. Many Germans dismissed any rumours as 'atrocious propaganda'. Others preferred not to believe that such things could happen, given that they were powerless to do anything. This was also true of the Polish Government-in-exile, who did more than most to uncover news of the Holocaust. It was a case of knowing yet not knowing.

Walter Laqueur argued that 'while only a handful of Germans knew all about the "final solution" very few knew nothing'.⁷⁸ There is a difference though between suspecting and knowing. Even when the Jews of the ghettos were informed of what had happened in previous 'resettlements' they refused to believe that they would be killed.

Observing the Einsatzgruppen shooting Jews during the invasion of Russia, which many soldiers took part in, does not constitute knowledge of the Final Solution and the extermination camps.

Many of those who joined the resistance against Hitler, including the 20 July conspiracy, did so because they learnt of the Final Solution. Even those in senior government positions knew nothing, as the Nuremberg transcripts bear out. Admiral Karl Dönitz, in an interview on 25 May 1974, said that the first time he learnt about the Final Solution was after he became Hitler's successor and that he took immediate steps to have the atrocities investigated. The Security Police in Lublin sought an indictment against Christian Wirth for the killing of Jews, unaware that his orders came from the top of the Nazi hierarchy. SS Judge Georg Konrad Morgen testified at Nuremberg that he sought an investigation of Eichmann. The SS court submitted a request to Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Himmler's Deputy, only to be told that Eichmann was carrying out a secret assignment on Hitler's orders.⁷⁹

What was unforgivable was that the Zionist leadership in Jerusalem refused to believe the evidence, even when it came from Jewish witnesses.

Ordinary Germans had already experienced the 'Euthanasia' programme between 1939 and 1941.⁸⁰ It had been impossible to conceal the murder of disabled Germans from the population.⁸¹ The lesson that the Nazis drew was that the extermination camps should not be situated in Germany. It is possible that the reason the T4 programme was halted in Germany was 'because its

teams of practiced murderers were needed to carry out the infinitely vaster enormity in the East...’ [82](#)

The Secret of Auschwitz/Birkenau

Laqueur suggested that although Auschwitz was known about in July/August 1942, it was not realised that it was an extermination camp.[83](#) This was not however because of a lack of information but because the fate of the Jews was not high on the Allied agenda.[84](#) Richard Breitman accused the British and Americans of having known about the Holocaust from the beginning and deliberately concealing it.[85](#) Anti-Semitism played its part in this. The President of the British Joint Intelligence Committee, Victor Cavendish-Bentinck wrote that:

in my opinion it is incorrect to describe the Polish information regarding German atrocities as ‘trustworthy’. The Poles and to a far greater extent the Jews, tend to exaggerate German atrocities in order to influence us.[86](#)

The existence of Auschwitz was known including detailed information about the early stages of the Holocaust.[87](#) At Bletchley Park, the SS code had been broken early in the war including communications with the camps. According to the second volume of *British Intelligence in the Second World War* Order Police reports of mass shootings in Occupied Russia were deciphered as early as July 1941. An SS-cavalry report of 17 August 1941 reported 7,819 executions in the Minsk area.[88](#) The shooting of Jews was reported on 17 occasions between 23 and 31 August. Also deciphered were the daily return of prisoners, including numbers of deaths, from Auschwitz, Dachau, Buchenwald and seven other concentration camps.

Auschwitz had 40 branches and 40,000 inmates worked in its industrial concerns.[89](#) There were hundreds of civilian employees, both German and Polish. The flames from the crematoria could be seen for up to 20 kilometres and the sickly sweet smell of burning human flesh was all-pervasive. If the role of Auschwitz as a death camp was unknown it was because the Allies were not looking for it.[90](#)

Auschwitz was mentioned numerous times in conjunction with the extermination of Jews. For example on 2 June 1942 French Red Cross representative Col. André Garteiser noted that those deported there were never heard of again. The head of the Slovakian Red Cross, Skotnický, mentioned Auschwitz on 9 June 1942.[91](#) Breitman cites a Polish journalist,

Tadeusz Chciuk-Celt who wrote in the autumn of 1942 about mass executions at Auschwitz.⁹² In September 1942 the AK reported that Auschwitz had installed gas chambers and three crematoria worked around the clock.⁹³

On 27 November 1942 the Polish Government-in-exile warned that tens of thousands of Jews and Soviet POWs had been sent to Auschwitz 'for the sole purpose of their immediate extermination in gas chambers.' On 23 March 1943 the underground Polish *Delegatura* of the Government-in-exile reported the building of new crematoria at Auschwitz that could handle 3,000 bodies a day 'and the intention to kill Jews there.' In May 1943 Polish intelligence reported in London that 520,000 Jews had been killed and in December that 645,000 Jews had been murdered in Auschwitz before June.⁹⁴ This formed the basis of an article in the *Polish Jewish Observer* on 3 September 1943.⁹⁵

Yet Martin Gilbert argued that Auschwitz-Birkenau's role as an extermination (as opposed to a concentration) camp was not known in the West until 1944.⁹⁶ Bauer asked, 'Why is there an impression that nobody knew about Auschwitz until the spring of 1944?'⁹⁷ It is a good question.

In July 1942 the *Polish Fortnightly Review* printed a list of 22 camps, including Auschwitz, where Nazi atrocities were taking place. A message from the Polish resistance in March 1943 mentioned Auschwitz as one of the places where Jews were being killed.

On 1 June 1943 *The Times* published an article: 'Nazi Brutality to Jews' which mentioned Auschwitz by its Polish name, Oswiecim.⁹⁸ On 5 September 1943 Gisi Fleischmann wrote to Saly Mayer of the JDC in Switzerland: 'We know today that Sobibor, Treblinka, Belzec and Auschwitz are annihilation camps.'⁹⁹

The communications by Fleischmann, like those of the Rescue Committee of Budapest, constitute some of the most convincing evidence that the Jewish leaders of the world, including of course the Hungarian ones, were fully acquainted with the Nazis' massacre programme. ¹⁰⁰

The OSS received a 'most remarkable document about Auschwitz.' Compiled from a Polish source, it was written in August 1943 detailing the approximate numbers of Jews and others who had been gassed. The report had clearly been compiled by the Polish underground in the camp.¹⁰¹ It was received on 10 April 1944, over a month before the start of the deportation of Hungarian Jewry.

Porat asked how it was that Birkenau was not yet known about in June 1944, when Rudolf Kasztner admitted he had known of it in 1942. ¹⁰² In

January 1944, women arriving in Switzerland provided details of Auschwitz as an extermination camp. Porat's statement that until June 1944 'the real nature of Auschwitz... was not understood either in Palestine or anywhere else' begs the question 'why'? [103](#)

A number of Dutch prisoners, were released from Auschwitz in 1942.[104](#) There were 952 releases during the first half of 1942 and 26 during the second half and in 1943 those deported as a result of the Rosenstrasse round-ups in Berlin were returned. Jehovah Witnesses were also freed. In 1944 a number of Jewish women were freed as a result of the intervention of Oscar Schindler.[105](#) There were also 928 escapes from Auschwitz of which 196 were successful and 433 which failed. Another 25 were successful but they were later recaptured. For 274 there is no information available but the Germans did not record their capture.[106](#)

Occasionally in Slovakia, escapees brought back news of Auschwitz. In Brussels a Belgian engineer was sent to discover the fate of the deportees and brought back news of the smoking chimneys.[107](#) A Palestinian citizen who was among the 69 Palestinian exchange prisoners who arrived in Palestine, told the JA about the chimneys of Auschwitz and their purpose.[108](#) Josef Garlinski, a former prisoner of Auschwitz, described how the first report about Auschwitz reached London in March 1941 and that 'many other reports' followed on from this.[109](#)

In the *NYT* of 25 November 1942, a report mentions Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. There is also an item from Jerusalem with details about gas chambers and crematoria at Oswiecim.[110](#) In April 1943 the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance issued a 'Manifesto to the Poles' which declared that 'We shall avenge the gory deeds of Oswiecim, Treblinka, Belzec and Maidenek!' [111](#)

Kurt Gerstein was a Protestant church worker who joined the Waffen SS on 10 March 1941 in order to fight the Nazis from within.[112](#) Horrified by the death of his sister Bertha Ebeling at Hadamar,[113](#) Gerstein was determined to find out the truth of what was happening. He became Head of the Waffen SS's Technical Disinfection Services and was responsible for the introduction of Zyklon B to Auschwitz.[114](#) Gerstein visited Maidenek, Belzec and Treblinka extermination camps between 17 and 21 August 1942[115](#) and witnessed the extermination of 5,000 Jews at Belzec.

Horrified by what he had seen he encountered Swedish diplomat Baron von Otter on the Warsaw-Berlin express on 20-21 August 1942 where he told

everything. However, the Swedish Government did not pass the information on.¹¹⁶

In August 1942 Gerstein informed Dr Winter, legal advisor to Bishop Preysing of Berlin, and Cesare Orsenigo, the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, about what he had witnessed in Belzec¹¹⁷. Orsenigo was a Hitler supporter and turned him away. Gerstein told hundreds of people including Paul Hochstrasser, the press attaché to the Swiss legation in Berlin and Otto Dibelius, the Lutheran Bishop in Berlin. Dutch resistance contacts who forwarded his information to their government were reprimanded for spreading stories.¹¹⁸ After the war Gerstein was jailed by the Americans as a possible war criminal and he hanged himself in his cell on 25 July 1945.¹¹⁹

Bombing of the Railway Lines and Auschwitz

The first suggestion to bomb Auschwitz came from the Polish Government-in-exile in January 1941, which had received, in the preceding December, a report from prisoners describing it as one of the ‘most inhumane concentration camps.’ Prime Minister Wladyslaw Sikorski’s aide-de-camp, Stefan Zamoyski, wrote to Air Marshall Richard Peirse on 4 January 1941.

The proposal was rejected because of the technical difficulty involved. In his letter of 8 January Peirse explained that ‘from the point of view of distance I could undertake it with a small Wellington force under suitable moonlight conditions.’ There is no doubt though that the 1,700 mile round trip was at the outer limit of the Wellington’s capability and it would not have been able to carry the optimum 4,500-pound bomb load.¹²⁰ When Rabbi Michael Dov Weissmandel made the same pleas in 1944 the situation had changed. The Lancaster bomber, which entered service in 1942, was capable of 2,530 miles with a payload of 7,000 lbs.¹²¹

On 16 May 1944 ¹²² Weissmandel cabled Isaac Sternbuch, the Swiss-based representative of the Jewish rescue committee (*Vaad Hahatzala*) of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of America, urging the Allies to bomb the railway lines to Auschwitz.¹²³ This appeal was forwarded to John Pehle of the WRB on 18 June and on 21 June conveyed to John McCloy of the US War Department.¹²⁴ In late July the ECSJE wrote to Roosevelt calling for the bombing of the railway lines and gas chambers. However such proposals ‘were constantly turned down by the War Department.’ ¹²⁵

On 25 May Rabbi Benjamin of Al-Domi came to the JA offices asking that Shertok insist that the railway lines from Hungary to Poland should be bombed. A week later Gruenbaum passed the message on to Lowell Pinkerton, the American consul-general in Jerusalem. Yet on 11 June the JAE rejected a proposal to ask the Allies to bomb Auschwitz¹²⁶ because they still did not know 'the true situation in Poland'.¹²⁷ Two of the five who spoke, Werner Senator and Dov Joseph, 'were openly outraged' at the suggestion. Ben-Gurion summarized that 'the opinion of the Executive is that no proposals should be made to the Allies to bomb places where Jews are located.'¹²⁸

There was also no pressure from American Jewish organisations, most of which were silent. Leon Kubowitzki, head of the Rescue Department of the WJC advised against bombing¹²⁹ although it did submit an appeal to McCloy on behalf of the Czech Government-in-exile on 8 or 9 August.¹³⁰

It was only at the end of June that the JAE apparently reversed its decision and called for the Polish resistance to break into the camp, an absurd call.¹³¹ This was made as a result of the AP.¹³² The JA's plea to bomb the railway tracks was made for the record rather than as part of a campaign.¹³³ At no time did the Zionist leaders campaign openly and publicly for the bombing of Auschwitz.

The British Government did not take the Zionist requests for bombing seriously. Air Vice Marshall (Bomber) Arthur Harris stated that he had never heard of such plans nor indeed of the existence of the extermination camps. Leonard Cheshire of Bomber Command conceded that the bombing of the camps, although difficult, was feasible but again it was not raised with him.¹³⁴ There was only one occasion, the Servigliano Operation, where Allied planes helped support an attack by partisans on a concentration camp by mounting a bombing operation. Hundreds of lives were saved.¹³⁵

The calls fell on deaf ears. Churchill, an ardent Zionist, was opposed to bombing Auschwitz.¹³⁶

At critical times, Churchill, without hesitation, supported Eden's callousness regarding the fate of the Jews. Churchill's sole 'positive' contributions were warm words of sympathy over the Jews' plight and harsh condemnation of their murderers.¹³⁷

On 6 July Weizmann and Shertok met with Eden to press the case for bombing Auschwitz.¹³⁸ On 7 July Eden wrote to the Secretary of State for Air, Archibald Sinclair:

Dr Weizmann admitted that there seemed to be little enough that we could do to stop these horrors, but he suggested, and both Prime Minister and I are in agreement with his

suggestion, that something might be done to stop the operations of the death camps.¹³⁹

Eden referred to the fact that these proposals had already been rejected. Eden had a consistent record of opposing any request to ameliorate the position of Jewish refugees.

David Wyman argued that such raids would have been feasible since American bombers by summer 1944 were able to bomb the synthetic oil and industrial facilities less than five miles away from Auschwitz. How effective that would have been we will never know. On 14 August the War Department wrote that such bombing would be a diversion from 'decisive operations elsewhere.'¹⁴⁰

The actions of those who publicised the exterminations and put pressure on Hungary's rulers is vindicated by the decision of Hungary's ruler, Admiral Miklós Horthy, to stop the deportations. The failure of the Zionist leaders or the Palestinian Jewish press to publicise the deportations is testament to their disinterest in either bombing the railway lines or the Holocaust itself.

The End of Extermination

The last exterminations in Auschwitz took place on 30 October.¹⁴¹ At the beginning of November 1944 Himmler ordered the killings to cease. He was now more interested in keeping Jewish prisoners alive as a means of establishing communication with the Allies.¹⁴²

According to Rudolf Kasztner, on 26 November SS Colonel Kurt Becher, Himmler's personal representative in Hungary, came back from Himmler saying, 'I have achieved complete victory.' The gassing at Auschwitz and the extermination was to be stopped and 'Jewish life respected.'¹⁴³ As even László Karsai and Judit Molnar admit, 'Kasztner inordinately exaggerates Kurt Becher's role' so that 'every measure beneficial to the Jews could be credited to Becher.'¹⁴⁴

Kasztner claimed that he and Becher had prevented the murder of the survivors in the camps.¹⁴⁵ Under cross-examination he admitted that up to and including May 1945 Jews were still being exterminated. There was no favourable treatment of the Jews.¹⁴⁶ Following the cessation of extermination in Auschwitz and elsewhere there followed the period of the death marches from January 1945 onwards when thousands of those who had survived the

camps perished from cold and hunger on marches away from the rapidly moving front lines.¹⁴⁷

Himmler's order of 25 November 1944 was to destroy the gas chambers in Auschwitz.¹⁴⁸ Those in Auschwitz who had not been sent on the death march, mainly the sick, were liberated by Soviet troops on 27 January 1945. Buchenwald was captured by the Americans on 4 April 1945. When Hitler heard that freed Jews had plundered Weimar he countermanded Himmler's order for the surrender of the concentration camps.¹⁴⁹

The saving of Jewish inmates owed more to Himmler's physician Felix Kersten and Swedish diplomat Count Folke Bernadotte than Becher.¹⁵⁰ Himmler reached an agreement with Kersten on 8 December allowing up to 150 'White Buses' from Sweden into Germany to rescue prisoners.¹⁵¹ Together with Bernadotte, they were responsible for the release of thousands of prisoners including 1,615 Jewish prisoners. The 'White Buses' were sent in February 1945.¹⁵² It is suggested that up to half of the 21,000 internees released to Sweden via Denmark were Jewish.¹⁵³

In early December Himmler summoned Becher and Eichmann to a meeting in his private train in the Black Forest. According to Becher's testimony at Nuremberg Himmler told Eichmann that

if until now you have exterminated Jews, from now on, if I order you, as I do now, you must be a fosterer of Jews.¹⁵⁴

Himmler ordered Becher to ensure that the remaining extermination camps were closed and the evidence of mass murder within them destroyed. Himmler also ordered an end to the death marches. However the death marches continued and the killing continued in concentration camps.¹⁵⁵

In April 1945 Himmler signed an order (which still exists in his own handwriting) that the camps should not be surrendered and that no prisoner 'fall into the hands of the enemies alive.'¹⁵⁶ At Buchenwald, which had received 20,000 Jews between March and May 1945,¹⁵⁷ most of the prisoners were marched to other camps. The Americans captured Mauthausen on 5 May 1945, just before its 22,000 prisoners could be blown up underground. Kasztner stayed in Berlin and visited Bergen-Belsen, Mauthausen and possibly other concentration camps with Becher

- ¹ Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Public Dissent*, p. 277.
- ² Porat, *The Blue & Yellow Stars of David*, p. 9.
- ³ Sykes, *op. cit.* p. 239. A maximum of 15,000 immigration certificates per year would be issued for a maximum of five years. The position of the JA was in Ben-Gurion's words that they 'would fight the war as if there was no White Paper and fight the White Paper as if there was no war'.
- ⁴ Porat, pp. 10-11, 18.
- ⁵ Stola, p. 4, *Early News of the Holocaust from Poland*, 9 July 1942.
- ⁶ Wasserstein p. 167.
- ⁷ Stola pp. 4,5.
- ⁸ Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p.275.
- ⁹ Porat, p. 21.
- ¹⁰ Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 50.
- ¹¹ Sompolinsky, p. 64. The Board of Deputies had been captured by the Zionists and Selig Brodetsky became its President on 18 December 1940.
- ¹² Beit Zvi, p. 34.
- ¹³ Dalia Ofer, p. 30, *The Strength of Remembrance*.
- ¹⁴ Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 28.
- ¹⁵ Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, *op. cit.* pp. 188-9.
- ¹⁶ Stola, pp. 9, 18.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ¹⁸ Beit Zvi citing *Davar*, 12 January 1945.
- ¹⁹ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 108.
- ²⁰ Beit Zvi, pp. 119-20, citing Meir Yaari, *Hashomer Hatzair*, January 6 1943.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120, 6 January 1943, 'In the Face of the Calamity,' *Hashomer Hatzair*.
- ²² Hilberg, p. 1202.
- ²³ Braham, p. 697. Hilberg, p. 1201. Browning, *The Riegner Telegram Reconsidered*, p. 8.
- ²⁴ Browning, 'A Final Hitler Decision for the 'Final Solution'', p. 8.
- ²⁵ Saul Friedlander, p. 342.
- ²⁶ Sompolinsky, p. 6.
- ²⁷ The Riegner Report: Correspondence Regarding the 'Riegner Cable' <https://tinyurl.com/wkr59c5>. See Gelber, *Zionist Policy and European Jewry, 1939-1942*, p. 191.
- ²⁸ Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, pp. 178-9, 28.9.42. Gruenbaum cabled Zionist Rabbi Ehrenpreis in Stockholm. Laqueur described Ehrenpreis as 'one of the most unlikely authorities about current events in Eastern Europe, nor was he willing to make a great effort to find out.'
- ²⁹ Rafael Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p 133.
- ³⁰ Teveth, *The Burning Ground*, p. 842.
- ³¹ Medoff, 'Conflicts between American Jewish leaders,' *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2003 5(3).
- ³² America and the Holocaust, *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 10: 3, Oct., 1990, p. 290.

- [33](#) Midstream in April 1968. Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p. 128.
- [34](#) Lewi Stone, 'Quantifying the Holocaust: Hyperintense kill rates during the Nazi genocide,' *Science Advances*, 2.1. 19. <https://tinyurl.com/yaSe9pek>. See *ToI*, 'Israeli study: 1/4 of Jews killed in Holocaust murdered in 100 days in 1942', 3.1.19. <https://tinyurl.com/y2j4baqy>
- [35](#) Medoff, *Conflicts Between American Jewish Leaders*, p. 440.
- [36](#) Stola, pp. 11, 13.
- [37](#) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- [38](#) Morse, p. 121.
- [39](#) *Ibid.*, p. 149.
- [40](#) Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p. 128.
- [41](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 167.
- [42](#) Joe Stork and Sharon Rose, 'Zionism and American Jewry,' *JPS*, Vol. 3:3, Spring 1974, p. 45.
- [43](#) Ariel Hurwitz, *The Struggle over the creation of the War Refugee Board (WRB)*, p. 24.
- [44](#) Wasserstein, p. 207 also fn 78. Roosevelt repeated these views the same day, ones which Churchill shared.
- [45](#) Henry Feingold, *Politics of Rescue*, p. 166.
- [46](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 161.
- [47](#) *Ibid.*, p. 224.
- [48](#) Porat, *Blue & Yellow Stars of David*, p. 36. Wasserstein (p. 252) suggests 137 people arrived including 78 Jews.
- [49](#) Medoff, p. 127, citing the *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, VI:1, 2012.
- [50](#) Saul S. Friedman, *No Haven for the Oppressed: United States Policy Toward Jewish Refugees*, p. 139.
- [51](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 160, 2.12.42. Stephen Wise Papers, Brandeis University, Brenner, *51 Documents*, pp. 194-5.
- [52](#) Or into one of its satellite camps at Izbica Lubelska. E. Thomas Wood and Stanislaw Jankowski, *Karski: How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust*, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1994 pp. 128-31.
- [53](#) *JC*, 30.8.81. Letter Josef Garlinski. The only question that Roosevelt asked was on the condition of horses in Poland. About the Jews there was nothing.
- [54](#) Frank Baron, 'The "Myth" and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust: The Karski-Koestler and Vrba-Wetzler Reports,' *The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 2 (2000), p. 2. <https://tinyurl.com/y6cjapfy>
- [55](#) *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- [56](#) Beit Zvi, pp. 30, 60-1. Porat pp. 36-7.
- [57](#) Hilberg, p. 1209.
- [58](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1205.
- [59](#) Porat, pp. 38, 145.
- [60](#) Beit Zvi, p. 280.
- [61](#) Gelber, *Zionist Policy and the Fate of European Jewry 1943-44*, p. 144.

- [62](#) Braham, pp. 1064-5. Porat, 'Tears, Protocols and Actions in a Wartime Triangle: Pius XII, Roncalli and Barlas.' In: *Cristianesimo nella Storia*, 2006, Vol. 27: 2; 599-632. Archbishop Roncalli was later to become Pope John XXIII.
- [63](#) Porat, p. 142.
- [64](#) Deborah Lipstadt, 'America and the Holocaust,' *Modern Judaism*, p. 286.
<https://tinyurl.com/7uhr8wrn>
- [65](#) Beit Zvi, pp. 300-2. Novick, p. 40, described how the American Zionist organisations 'boycotted and sought to discredit the one group that worked most energetically for rescue,' Bergson's ECSJE.
- [66](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 95
- [67](#) Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, p. 335.
- [68](#) *Ibid.*, p. 371.
- [69](#) Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 56.
- [70](#) Alfred-Maurice de Zayas, *The Wehrmacht Bureau on War Crimes*, p. 394.
- [71](#) Hilberg, p. 332.
- [72](#) Friedlander, p. 304.
- [73](#) Hilberg, p. 1031.
- [74](#) In 1942, 985 Germans were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment or the death penalty for having listened to foreign radio broadcasts (not all such sentences were reported). The number of Germans who listened to such broadcasts was inevitably much higher. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 28.
- [75](#) Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, pp. 367-8.
- [76](#) Beate Ruhm von Oppen, *Nazis and Christians*, p. 401.
- [77](#) Alfred-Maurice de Zayas, *The Wehrmacht Bureau on War Crimes*, p. 395.
- [78](#) Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 17.
- [79](#) Alfred-Maurice de Zayas, *The Wehrmacht Bureau on War Crimes*, pp. 396-9.
- [80](#) Lewy, *The Catholic church and Nazi Germany*, pp. 265-6.
- [81](#) See Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide – From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, pp. 86-110.
- [82](#) Griech-Polelle, p. 55, citing Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance*, p. 180.
- [83](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 145.
- [84](#) *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- [85](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 222. See "'The Enemy Is Listening!' What Did the British Intelligence Service Know about the Holocaust?' Christoph M. Wieland, *Inconvenient History*, <https://tinyurl.com/sb3dqch> citing Richard Breitman, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1998).
- [86](#) Erich Kulka, *Attempts by Jewish Escapees to Stop Mass Extermination*, p. 300.
- [87](#) Weinberg & Bankier (eds.) *Secret Intelligence and the Holocaust: Collected Essays from the Colloquium at the City University of New York Graduate Center*. Eds.; Shlomo Aronson.
- [88](#) Hilberg, p. 1199. 'Holocaust Reports Decoded,' *JC* 18.9.81.
- [89](#) *Ibid.*, p. 995.
- [90](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, op. cit. pp. 22-4.

- [91](#) Ibid., p. 61.
- [92](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 222.
- [93](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 111, citing *Informacja Biezac* 33, 8.9.42. See also pp. 153-4.
- [94](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* pp. 222-3. <https://tinyurl.com/ybpbw2xtt>
- [95](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 693.
- [96](#) Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 233.
- [97](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 223.
- [98](#) Rees, *Auschwitz - the Nazis and the Final Solution*, p. 304. Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 145.
- [99](#) Anna Porter, p.80. Randolph Braham, p. 703, suggests the recipient was Dr. Adolf Silberschein, a Zionist who founded the Relico relief organisation and who was trapped in Geneva by the war. Hilberg refers to another letter by Fleischmann of 27.7.42. (*NYT* 20.8.42.) that 60,000 Slovakian Jews had been killed in the eastern part of Upper Silesia: Auschwitz.
- [100](#) Braham, p. 703.
- [101](#) Hilberg, pp. 1211-12.
- [102](#) Porat, p. 214.
- [103](#) Ibid., p. 219.
- [104](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 150.
- [105](#) Ibid., p. 169.
- [106](#) Escapes and reports <https://tinyurl.com/nhe7hsej/> Lacquer says that there were 667 escapes, almost 400 of which were successful, *The Terrible Secret*, p.168.
- [107](#) Hilberg, "The Judenrat: Conscious or Unconscious "Tool"", *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 42, Jerusalem April 4-7 1977; Yad Vashem, Jerusalem 1979, 'Ahva' Cooperative Press. citing Victor Martin, who travelled to Upper Silesia in October 1942. Yad Vashem Archives, O-2/300.
- [108](#) Teveth, *The Burning Ground 1886-1948*, p. 845, states that the woman was from Oswiecim (Auschwitz)
- [109](#) *JC*, 30.8.81. Letter Josef Garlinski.
- [110](#) Hilberg, p. 1203.
- [111](#) Marek Edelman, *The Ghetto Fights*, p. 100, citing the second report from the Jewish underground movement, 15 November 1943.
- [112](#) Kurt Gerstein, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurt_Gerstein
- [113](#) Suzanne Evans, *Hitler's Forgotten Victims – The Holocaust and the Disabled*, Stroud: Tempus, 2007, p. 44.
- [114](#) Kurt Gerstein, <https://tinyurl.com/y69ruax6>
- [115](#) Irving v Lipstadt, Defense Documents, Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution: <https://tinyurl.com/yxtbhpmx> Browning described him as 'a covert anti-Nazi who infiltrated the SS.'
- [116](#) Hilberg, pp. 1030, citing affidavit of Ernst A Struss (IG Farben), 17.4.47.
- [117](#) Zuccotti, pp. 108-9. Braham, *Remembering and forgetting*, p. 234.
- [118](#) Valerie Hébert, *Disguised Resistance? The Story of Kurt Gerstein*, p. 10.
- [119](#) Saul Friedlander, p. 340.

- [120](#) Edward B. Westermann, *The Royal Air Force and the Bombing of Auschwitz*, pp. 718.
- [121](#) *Perfidy*, p. 142. 'Holocaust Victims Accuse,' Shonfeld, p. 54.
- [122](#) Baron suggests in fn. xlvi, p. 32 that two telegrams were sent from Bratislava on May 16 and 24th and a letter on the 22nd requesting the bombing of railway lines to Poland.
- [123](#) Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, pp. 209, 236.
- [124](#) David Wyman, *Why Auschwitz was never bombed*, p. 3.
- [125](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 7.
- [126](#) Beit Zvi, p. 360. citing Israel Klausner, ed., *The Extermination Camps in Poland* (Hebrew) p. 8. See also Porat, p. 213.
- [127](#) Porat, p. 213.
- [128](#) Beit Zvi, *Post Ugandan Zionism*, pp. 360-2.
- [129](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 172.
- [130](#) Richard Levy, *The Bombing of Auschwitz Revisited: A Critical Analysis*, p. 278.
- [131](#) Porat, p.216. Levy in *The Bombing of Auschwitz Revisited*, states that 'there is no indication that the JAE ever changed its mind.' Wyman described this as 'an astounding error that collapses his entire argument.' Yet neither Porat nor Wyman gives any firm detail of when or why the JAE changed its mind.
- [132](#) M. Berenbaum, 'Righteous Anger Fuels "Auschwitz"', *Jewish Journal*, 14.10.04. <https://tinyurl.com/s2pompq>
- [133](#) Stuart Erdheim, 'Could the Allies Have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau?'
- [134](#) *Ma'ariv* 1.6.61., *Daily Telegraph* 2.6.61., cited in Shonfeld, p. 67.
- [135](#) Steinberg, p. 77. Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation. <https://tinyurl.com/2p84n6p3>
- [136](#) A myth has grown up based on a minute of 7.7.44. where Churchill said, in response to a request to bomb Auschwitz, 'Get anything out of the Air Force you can and invoke me if necessary.' Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 270. However, there was no follow up. Churchill continued to display the same disinterest in the Holocaust that he had done throughout the war. See Michael Cohen, *Churchill and the Jews*, pp. 27-49.
- [137](#) Sompolinsky, *The British Government and the Holocaust*, p. 2.
- [138](#) *Ha'aretz* 2.6.61. Beit Zvi, p. 360. Hilberg, pp. 1215-16 refers to a meeting on June 30 with Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, G.H. Hall. 'They made the point without much emphasis.'
- [139](#) Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 272.
- [140](#) Wyman, *Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed*, p. 9.
- [141](#) Auschwitz concentration camp. <https://tinyurl.com/ydgbjtfp>
- [142](#) Cesarani, p. 747.
- [143](#) *Kasztner Report*, pp. 257, 306.
- [144](#) Introduction to the *Kasztner Report*, p. 32.
- [145](#) Shoshana (Ishoni) Barri, *The Question of Kasztner's Testimonies*, pp. 143-4.
- [146](#) *Perfidy* pp. 155-6.
- [147](#) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_marches_\(Holocaust\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_marches_(Holocaust))
- [148](#) Hilberg, p. 1046, citing affidavit by Becher of 8.3.46.
- [149](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1055.

- [150](#) Hugh Trevor-Roper, *The Strange Case of Himmler's Doctor*, Commentary, April 1957, <http://tinyurl.com/y26fStSb>. Trevor-Roper suggested that Bernadotte had claimed all the credit.
- [151](#) Ibid.
- [152](#) *Kasztner Report*, fn 241 p. 306.
- [153](#) Breitman, *American Rescue Activities in Sweden*, p. 211.
- [154](#) Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes*, p. 193. Laurence Rees, p. 325. See also Arendt, p. 138.
- [155](#) Porter, pp. 357-8, 361. At Mauthausen, Himmler's order was countermanded by Ernst Kaltenbrunner, successor to Heydrich as head of the RSHA. It was only action by Louis Heflinger together with an SS officer that prevented the murder of the prisoners. Bauer, *Death Marches*, p. 5.
- [156](#) <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/denialbrief.html>
- [157](#) Hilberg, p. 1051.

Chapter 8

Resistance & Collaboration

'Anti-Semitism is the characteristic sign of a backward civilization' (Friedrich Engels) (1890) ¹

During the Eichmann trial Prosecutor Gideon Hausner made strenuous efforts to portray the resistance to the Nazis as coming from the Zionists. But the witnesses contradicted him. All sections of the Jewish population had participated in the resistance. The primary distinction was between the organised and unorganised, the young and the middle-aged.²

The Jews under Nazi occupation had no access to arms or military training and they often had to cope, especially in Eastern Europe, with hostility from the local population as well as 'the ferocity of the Nazi assault.'³ Resistance for many meant going into hiding.

The revolts in the death camps of Treblinka and Sobibor were planned and led by Jewish military officers. The Treblinka revolt was organised by a former captain in the Polish army, Dr Julian Chorazycki. On 2 August 1943 the revolt broke out and barracks, garages and warehouses were set on fire but not the gas chambers and the killings continued. Up to 200 men escaped and perhaps 60-70 survived.⁴ The revolt in Sobibor was an almost exact replica of that in Treblinka. It was led by a Russian officer, Alexander Pechersky. Some eighty died in the breakout on 14 October 1943, and 53 survived to the end of the war.⁵ 11 SS men were killed.

In Auschwitz the revolt of the crematoria workers took place on 7 October 1944. Three SS men died and Crematoria IV was set on fire.⁶ But it had come too late. In early November operations ceased anyway. On 17 January 1945 the last roll call was taken.⁷ There were 67,000 sick inmates left in Auschwitz and 58,000 were sent on a death march.⁸ When Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz there were still more than 7,000 alive.

In Galicia sporadic resistance resulted in eight German dead and 12 wounded in addition to clashes between Jewish partisans and German forces in other parts of the East and occasional acts of resistance in the ghettos and killing centres. Coupled with those killed and wounded in Warsaw, it is doubtful if the Nazis lost more than a few hundred dead and wounded.⁹

In a number of the small ghettos such as Nieśwież, the Jews put up a fierce resistance with whatever was to hand. In other ghettos such as Markuszowa,

Morzek, Szarkowszczyzna, Rohatyn, Lachwa, Tuczyn, Zhetel and Pilica there was a flight to the forest. In Markuszowa, despite the attitude of the Judenrat, the Jewish Police from Lublin turned up to effect the deportations on 7 May 1942.¹⁰

Given that the Nazis were far more brutal in Poland than in Western Europe, where they were constrained by the need not to unduly antagonise the local populace, the idea that the Judenrate of the Netherlands and France were powerless to do anything holds no water.

In the words of an SS and police report, the Jews 'tried every means in order to dodge evacuation.' There was fierce resistance to being sent to Belzec, whose purpose was by now an open secret. According to *Standartenführer* Herbert Böttcher, SS and police leader of Radom, Jews were being hidden by Poles. Before long several thousand were hiding in the forests, shooting it out with the German soldiers with weapons which were often bought from the Italian army:

The Jewish resistance movement did not emerge from the Judenrat, because that organization was composed of precisely those elements of the community that had staked everything on a course of complete cooperation with the German administration.¹¹

Only around 3% of those who fled to the forests in Lublin joined the partisans and 50% of them survived.¹² The guards in the camps and ghettos numbered several hundred. They were Ukrainians in black uniforms, graduates of Globocnik's training camp at Trawniki.¹³

Most Jewish members of the German resistance belonged to left-wing political groups, especially the KPD.¹⁴ The Baum Group, which was set up in 1937 in Berlin operated until May 1942. It consisted mostly of communists and a few Zionists.¹⁵ In France communists and left-wing Jews were also prominent in the resistance.¹⁶

In the ghettos of Kaunas and Minsk it was the communists who led the revolts. Kaunas, the capital of Lithuania between the wars, had a large communist contingent who launched a campaign among the young Zionists to take to the forests. 'It was the Young Communists, with Haim Yellin, the 30 year old Yiddish speaking poet at their head, who took the initiative.'¹⁷

The Jewish Police in Kaunas differed from many of their contemporaries. Zvi Levin and Moshe Levin, both Revisionist officers in the police, cooperated with the communist resistance. Without the communists, the Zionists wouldn't have escaped. Yellin was captured after a shoot out with the

Gestapo. The Young Kovno Zionists, like their counterparts in other East European cities, lived in a kibbutz inside the ghetto.¹⁸

The Zionist combat organisations... favoured making a last stand in the ghetto despite the contempt the Communists exhibited for notions of 'dying with honour'. But in coming to terms with the Judenrat's view of the ghetto's possibilities, the Zionists changed their plans.¹⁹

Bauer estimated that there were 25,000 Jews who fled western and central Poland to join the partisans, 15,000 in western Belorussia and 2,500 who participated in the Slovakian Uprising.²⁰ Jews constituted more than one-third of the partisan units in Belorussia.²¹ Dov Levin estimated that 10,000 participated in resistance in Lithuania, including 2,000 ghetto fighters, the rest being part of the Soviet and Polish military.²² Reuben Ainzstein estimated that there were at least 20,000 Jews among the Soviet partisans.²³ After Stalin's Partisan Order, anti-Semitism was punished. The Ukrainian partisan Gopko was executed for having killed five Jews. With Soviet military success at Stalingrad anti-Semitism correspondingly declined.²⁴

On 5 September 1942 Stalin signed the Partisan Order which declared a 'peoples' war'. It meant that the previous reluctance to take civilians, women and minority nationalities such as Jews was reversed. Considerable pressure was put on partisan commanders to implement this directive.²⁵

In ghettos such as Lachwa in Belorussia, where the Judenrat had refused to cooperate in the deportations, the inhabitants attacked the Nazis with whatever came to hand, such as axes. One hundred and twenty succeeded in escaping and joining up with the partisans in the forests.²⁶

In Eastern Poland the forests, coupled with a communist partisan movement, enabled such a flight. One of the reasons for establishing ghettos in Soviet territory was to separate the local population and the Jews, between whom friendly ties had grown.²⁷ By the end of 1941 over half a million Soviet Jews had been murdered. By mid-1942 the second sweep of the Einsatzgruppen was under way. By the time the partisan movement had gained strength relatively few Jews remained.²⁸

The Judenrate

Nearly everywhere the Nazis conquered they established Judenrate. The Judenrate were composed of the traditional leadership, over two-thirds of

whom (67.1%) consisted of Zionist supporters of all factions.²⁹ The Zionists were an integral part of the traditional Jewish leadership in Eastern Europe.

The Judenrate communicated the Nazis' orders to the Jewish population and supplied information, money and labour to the Nazi occupiers. They also established a Jewish Police, ran soup kitchens and acted like a local council. Nazi policy was that 'the authority of the Jewish Council be upheld and strengthened under all circumstances.'³⁰ The Jewish Police was 'the most conspicuous Jewish instrument in the destructive machine.'³¹

The Judenrate were useful politically to the Nazis. Warsaw Ghetto Kommissar Heinz Auerswald, observed how, when problems occurred, 'the Jews direct their resentment against the Jewish administration and not against the German supervision.'³²

The Judenrate were nearly always hostile to resistance. There were exceptions such as in Staszow and Minsk, where there was a strong partisan presence, Piotrków Trybunalski, Kaunas, Zhetel, Tuczyn, Opoczno, Bilgoraj and Lwów were other exceptions.³³ In Minsk Wilhelm Kube was blown up in his bed. The fighting Judenrate were exceptions.³⁴ However, in most of these ghettoes, manifestations of resistance were the actions of individual council members not the council as a whole.³⁵

Isaiah Trunk cites some of the Ghetto Police in Kovno (Kaunas), Riga, Baranowicze, Vilna, Seabrianski, Lida, Rohatyn and Minsk as having aided the resistance. These were the exception. In most cases the Ghetto Police were hostile. Kraków and Warsaw were particularly bad examples. In Kraków, when seven Nazis were killed the Jewish Police were particularly active in betraying the Resistance.³⁶

Minsk was the capital of the Soviet Republic of Belorussia. It had no Bundists or Zionist groups. The Resistance, which was solely communist, was led by Hersz Smolar. Two separate ghettos were set up — one for German Jews, the other for East European Jews. The Resistance met in the local hospital which served as a medical centre for partisans over a wide area. The Minsk Ghetto succeeded in sending 10,000 persons into the Partisan lines, of whom some 50% survived unlike the German Jewish ghetto where most perished.

Under Chairman Ilya Moshkin, 'the Judenrat began to function as the executive arm of the underground.' Moshkin was in regular contact with

Smolar. However this co-operation was 'entirely atypical' of that further west in the Baltic countries and Poland.³⁷

Moshkin was executed by the Nazis in March 1942.³⁸ Moshe Yaffe was appointed in his place. The Nazis demanded that the head of the Resistance, Efim Stolarevich be handed over. The Judenrat instead successfully fooled the Gestapo by preparing false papers, dipping them in blood and saying he had died.³⁹ On 28 July 1942 a large *Aktion* began when 25,000 Jews were killed and just half were left. Yaffe was murdered by the Nazis and until October 1943 the Judenrat collaborated closely with the Nazis.⁴⁰

One cannot explain how the Nazis achieved their objectives so efficiently without taking the behaviour of the victims, including the Judenrate into account.⁴¹ Zionist historians have immense difficulties in reconciling support for resistance with support for the Judenrate. This dilemma formed the background to the Third Yad Vashem International Historical Conference in 1977.⁴²

The Judenrate were powerless to alter the balance of forces between the Nazis and the Jews but they were able to undermine the will to resist.

The Jewish leadership in the Polish ghettos stood at the helm of the compliance movement ... Always they delivered up some Jews to save the other Jews.... Generally the poorest Jews were the first to be taken.⁴³

The Judenrate were an integral part of the extermination process:

Virtually all of the Councils were placed into an irreversible position, regardless of the thoughts or perceptions of their leaders. ⁴⁴

Most Jews detested the Judenrate. They could only establish their authority by relying on force.⁴⁵ The Judenrate ensured that the deportations were carried out efficiently.⁴⁶ It didn't matter if they were well-intentioned or malevolent. It was only in rare cases that a Judenrat consciously resisted the role that the Nazis mapped out for them. Doron Rabinovici, in one long apology for the *Kultusgemeinde*, the Vienna Judenrat, argued that:

It was not because the Jewish councils betrayed the Jewish community but because they attempted to act in their interests that the Jewish functionaries were condemned to see things from the perspective of the authorities. They had to think like Nazis in the interests of the Jews.⁴⁷

This was nonsense. How was ferreting out the hiding places of Jews for deportation in the interests of the Jews? The President of Israel's Supreme Court, Yitzhak Olshan, ruled, in the case of Hirsch Berenblatt, Jewish police commander in the Polish town of Będzin (Bendin) that

no matter how the *Judenrat* acted, they served the Nazis... Even those who served the interests of the Jewish communities assisted the Nazis.⁴⁸

Idith Zertal described this as a 'bewildering oxymoronic statement.'⁴⁹ What Olshan meant was that even the *Judenrate's* 'positive attributes and achievements became functional in the overall German design.' ⁵⁰ It was precisely their authenticity that made the *Judenrate* so lethal.⁵¹

The voice of Hayka Klinger, a resistance fighter in Bedzin and Warsaw is especially important in this respect because she not only bore witness to how the *Judenrate* operated but she was a Zionist who took an active part in the resistance. Her criticisms have particular weight given the attempt of Zionist historians to exonerate the *Judenrate*.

Hayka described members of the Jewish Councils as having become 'tools of suppression in the hands of authorities.' They played an 'object' role in the destruction of the Jews. Although members of the *Judenrate* had not, at first, known what the Nazis' intentions were 'there were instances of clear knowledge... and they lied knowingly [to the deportees].'

Hayka Klinger told the Executive of Histadrut that:

[the] various Jewish communities [in Europe] were headed by members of the Zionist movement and most of them understood that if [the Nazis] said A they would need to carry on and [do] B. And after they began assisting the Nazis to collect gold and furniture from Jewish homes, they had no choice but to go on to help them prepare lists of Jews for labor camps... And precisely because those who stood at the head of most of the communities were Zionists, the psychological effects on most of the Jewish masses vis-à-vis the Zionist idea was devastating, and the hatred towards Zionism grew day by day... One bright day we will need to try these people. It must be said clearly and publicly that many Zionists betrayed [their people] ... Yes one must try Haim Molchadsky, the head of the JNF in Bedzin...⁵²

Dan Porat wrote that

Members of the Zionist movement, Klinger believed, played a disproportionately large role in the leadership of European Jews under the Nazis. According to one postwar survey, two-thirds of such leaders were members of a Zionist party. As a result of their relatively greater numbers, Zionists also carried a greater burden of responsibility for the betrayal of their people, as many of them she suggested, had collaborated with the Nazis.

Hayka Klinger's message was not well received when she arrived in Israel.

In the introduction to her Diaries, Professor Avihu Ronen wrote how Klinger:

Stressed the inadequacy of the efforts of the Jewish *yishuv* in assisting the youth movement fighters, the process of radicalization to the left that the *Hashomer Hatzair* movement underwent during the war, and the cooperation with the Germans... by Zionist activists in Poland who were members of the *Judenräte*. As a result of these claims, Chajka came into conflict with the leader of *Hashomer Hatzair* [in Israel], Meir Yaari, who rejected her claims about the lack of support from the *yishuv* and demanded

clarifications about the positions of *Hashomer Hatzair* in the ghettos, which Chajka could provide only sparingly.’

Ronen, her second son, described how Klinger ‘was apparently not satisfied with the way they [her Diaries] were edited, shortened, and censored.’ In 1958, Hayke took her own life on the 15th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.⁵³

Two years later Zivia Lubetkin, a resistance fighter from Warsaw, repeated the same message:

The Germans issued decrees and their despised work was carried out by Jews from the Jewish Council... And in this way, each Jewish Council, without exception, in each and every town, played a treacherous part.’⁵⁴

There were a number of stages in the destruction process – marking, concentration, stripping, rounding up, deportation and finally extermination. In Poland and Russia between 1941 and 1943 the Judenrate registered the names of the Jews, brought them to the assembly place and eventually followed them to the death camps.⁵⁵ Despite this, Yisrael Gutman and Robert Rozett opined that ‘the Judenrat reinforced the Jews’ power of endurance in their struggle for survival.’⁵⁶

In Vienna, the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien [IKG] cooperated with the Zionists in aiding the emigration of Jews up to 1941 and subsequently collaborated with the deportations.⁵⁷ Verband (Jewish Invalid Organisation) leader Halpern described the IKG as ‘only a messenger of the Gestapo.’⁵⁸ In the spring of 1942, its head, Josef Lowenherz, demanded from Furth, deputy head of the Verband, a list of its members. Furth made the ‘disastrous mistake’ of handing them over. By June 1942 1,100 of their 2,500 members had been deported.⁵⁹

The IKG seized Jews in the round-ups, arguing that they would be more humane than the Nazis.⁶⁰ Lowenherz was allowed by the Nazis to stay on in Vienna until the end of the war as head of a skeleton Jewish community, mostly a few thousand Jews in mixed marriages.⁶¹ He was arrested by the Russians before emigrating to the USA.⁶² After the war, despite the efforts of the Zionists to exonerate him, Lowenherz was subject to repeated accusations of collaboration from the newly-elected IKG.

In Britain, where 30,000 Austrian Jews had found refuge, *Zeitspiegel*, an Austrian exile publication, accused Lowenherz and Benjamin Murnelstein, his Deputy, of collaboration.⁶³

In Poland, if the Judenrate stepped out of line, they were themselves murdered and replaced. Usually they were very short-lived institutions. Lodz was very much the exception.

Many Judenrat members became intoxicated with their 'power' to save some Jews, for a limited time, and choose others for deportation. A Nazi observer in Kraków in March 1940:

was struck by the contrast between poverty and filth in the Jewish quarter and the business-like luxury of the Jewish community headquarters, which was filled with beautiful chairs, comfortable leather chairs, and heavy carpets. In Warsaw, the Jewish oligarchy took to wearing boots.⁶⁴

Hannah Arendt wrote that

Wherever Jews lived, there were recognized Jewish leaders, and this leadership, almost without exception, cooperated in one way or another, for one reason or another, with the Nazis... The whole truth was that if the Jewish people had really been unorganized and leaderless, there would have been chaos and plenty of misery but the total number of victims would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people.⁶⁵

This provoked an outcry from Zionist historians but 'the Jewish Councils had been created by the Germans for the sole purpose of destroying the Jews.'⁶⁶ Dieter Wisliceny explained that:

Our system is to exterminate the Jews through the Jews. We concentrate the Jews in the ghettos - through Jews; we deport the Jews - by the Jews; and we gas the Jews - by the Jews.⁶⁷

Joseph Michman, Director General of Yad Vashem [YV]), summarised the different perspectives of Hilberg and Arendt who saw the Judenrat as a Nazi instrument; and the Zionist Trunk-Weiss position 'which emphasises the positive aspect of the Judenrat...'⁶⁸

Bauer believed that the Judenrate 'tried to act for the good of the community... according to the best of their understanding and under impossible conditions.'⁶⁹ Their subjective motivation and how they rationalised their actions was irrelevant. What mattered was their objective role. They enabled the Nazis to pacify the Jewish communities and round up Jews. They were 'the principal factor in styming the possibilities for organizing armed resistance or sending out groups of fighters into the forests.'⁷⁰

Bauer asked, 'Did the Judenrat realize the murderous intentions of the Germans?'⁷¹ They probably did but for the majority it made no difference in terms of how they behaved.

The traditional Jewish leadership had employed the methods of *shtadlanut*, or bribing their enemies. The Nazis were cut from different cloth. They would accept, even demand, bribes but their decisions were still no different. The attitude to bribes was laid down by Himmler: 'Take whatever you can from the Jews. Promise them whatever you want. What we will keep is another matter.'⁷²

Arendt argued that where the Nazis failed to set up puppet governments they failed to secure the co-operation of the Jews. I am not convinced by this argument.⁷³ In Poland there was no Polish Quisling yet Judenrate operated in most ghettos. Likewise in the Netherlands.

On 5 April 1944, the first Jewish escapee from Auschwitz, Ziegfried Lederer entered Theresienstadt, set up by Heydrich as a "model" ghetto for prominent Jews,⁷⁴ to warn Rabbi Leo Baeck, Head of the Council of Elders, that deportation to Auschwitz meant death. Baeck refused to inform the Jews because 'living in the expectation of death by gassing would only be harder.'⁷⁵

Baeck was one of only two rabbis to vote against the German Rabbinical Association's condemnation of Political Zionism in 1897.⁷⁶ Reform Jewry's rabbinical college in Britain is named after Baeck, a Nazi collaborator, who became a respected member of the post-war Anglo-Jewish community.⁷⁷

Baeck became President of the RVt in September 1933.⁷⁸ The RVt disbanded after Kristallnacht and in February 1939 it became the RV. On 4 July 1939 it became the 'new' RV until it disbanded in June 1943. It became 'a tool for the destruction of the Jewish community.' Baeck headed this, with Paul Eppstein as his deputy.⁷⁹ Its equivalent was created in Prague and Vienna.⁸⁰

The RVt functioned as a communal organisation providing welfare services. It also tried to secure emigration for Germany's Jews. The RV, although carrying out many of the same tasks as the RVt, was a department of the RSHA and the Gestapo. By June 1943, the vast majority of German Jews, except Privileged Jews and Mischlinge, had been deported. After June 1943 all that remained was a rump organisation, the *Rest-Reichsvereinigung* [RVn].

Eppstein opposed the granting of Palestine certificates to Polish Jews detained in the camps. When the Youth Aliyah representative Recha Freier tried to bypass this she was denounced to the Gestapo. She only just managed to flee in time, with her children, to Vienna.⁸¹

Theresienstadt was controlled by the RV and all its leading positions were held by Zionists.⁸² Hans Günther Adler revealed how the transport lists 'were put together by the Judenrat which conducted searches to find anyone hiding

from the deportations.’⁸³ From September to October 1944 most of its 18,400 inhabitants were sent to Auschwitz, including nearly all the Judenrat. Benjamin Murelstein became the last ‘Elder.’⁸⁴

In Lodz, Rumkowski ‘wanted the working Jews to hand over their small children to save the ghetto as a whole.’⁸⁵ The Judenrat promised that only communists and the poor would be deported whilst the middle class would be left alone. In Amsterdam and Vienna the same trick was perpetrated. In Kaunas, Vilna and other ghettos, the Judenrate operated on the basis that in order to save some of the Jews, one had to accede to the demands of the Nazis regarding deportation of the rest.

In countries such as Denmark, the Nazis did not try to set up a Judenrat. In most of White Russia and Ukraine, they did not bother doing so. They concentrated the Jews themselves, took them to the forests and the edge of towns and murdered them.⁸⁶ It is estimated that at least one million Jews were murdered by the Einsatzgruppen and SD killing squads.⁸⁷

There were two instances in the Eichmann Trial where the collaboration of the Jewish Councils was raised. The first was by Judge Yitzhak Raveh, who secured the admission of a resistance leader that the ghetto police were ‘an instrument in the hands of murderers’. Halevi in cross examination of Eichmann, obtained an acknowledgment that ‘the Nazis had regarded this cooperation as the very cornerstone of their Jewish policy.’⁸⁸

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

During Easter 1940 the German Air Corps instigated pogroms by Polish anti-Semites. After three days without resistance the Bund’s militia engaged in revenge action. Despite their action being opposed by all other Jewish groups the pogroms came to an end.⁸⁹

The Warsaw Ghetto was established in November 1940. At first people didn’t believe that the Nazis intended their extermination but on 18 April 1942 the Nazis began a reign of terror with nightly shootings.

The Nazis appointed a Judenrat which consisted overwhelmingly of Zionist functionaries or sympathisers, including Chairman Adam Czerniakow.⁹⁰ It represented, in a distorted form, the class interests of the Jewish bourgeoisie. The Bread Tax ‘had the appearance of exactions from the poor to keep alive the destitute.’⁹¹ The community budget was paid for via

indirect taxation, which bore heaviest on the Jewish poor.⁹² There was a saying that 'The Germans are killing us, and the Community [the Judenrat] is torturing us.'⁹³

The Judenrat prioritised setting up a labour battalion for the Nazis as a way of preventing them from seizing the richer Jews. The poorest sections of the populace were forced to undertake labour.⁹⁴ Ghetto diarist Chaim Kaplan described the Judenrat as 'an abomination in the eyes of the Warsaw community.'⁹⁵ The population saw no difference between the Judenrat and the Nazis. The Judenrat 'supports itself from the misfortunes of the Jews.'⁹⁶ Czerniakow appointed the hated Josef Szerynski as Police Chief, against the opposition of the Bund.⁹⁷

In the summer of 1942, as part of the forty-four day *Aktion*, it was the Jewish Police who carried out the manhunts. They were the most hated of the Nazis' Jewish puppets.⁹⁸ The Jewish Fighting Organisation [ZOB], in a report to the Polish Government-in-exile on 15 November 1942, spoke of the 'treachery' of the Judenrat in carrying out the deportations.⁹⁹ Reuben Ainsztein spoke of 'the monumental betrayal of the Warsaw Judenrat. ¹⁰⁰

Emmanuel Ringleblum, the Warsaw archivist, excoriated the Judenrat who he held had exceeded the Nazis in malevolence. The Jewish Police had uncovered perfectly good hiding places and dragged the occupants to Umschlagplatz, from where the deportation trains ran.¹⁰¹ Kaplan described the Jewish Police as 'the cruellest toward the condemned.' ¹⁰²

Even during the period of the first massive extermination one saw almost no German soldiers. Nearly all the work of administration, and later the work of transporting hundreds of thousands of Jews to their deaths, was carried out by Jewish collaborators. Before the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising... the Jewish underground killed, with perfect justification, every Jewish collaborator they could find. If they had not done so the Uprising could never have started. The majority of the population of the Ghetto hated the collaborators far more than the German Nazis.¹⁰³

Prime amongst these collaborators was the Group of 13, Gestapo agents led by Abraham Gancwajch, a Zionist activist from Lodz. The Gestapo liquidated him on 24 May 1942.¹⁰⁴

Deportations to Treblinka began on 23 July 1942 and by the end of September 310,322 Jews had been deported, with about 63,000 remaining.¹⁰⁵ Direct reports from Treblinka did not reach the ghetto until mid-August.¹⁰⁶ In January and April 1943 the *Aktion* resumed.

Zionist historians have sought to rehabilitate Czerniakow, who committed suicide on 24 July 1942, as the Nazis began the deportations. The verdict of the

Bund was harsh:

He had no right to act as he did.... since he was the only person in the Ghetto whose voice carried a great deal of authority, it had been his duty to inform the entire population of the real state of affairs, and also to dissolve all public institutions, particularly the Jewish Police.¹⁰⁷

Marek Edelman, the last Commander of ZOB, described how Czerniakow served 'German rather than Jewish interests.'¹⁰⁸ Zivia Lubetkin, a Zionist and one of only thirty-four fighters to have survived the revolt, said that 'the Jews who remained alive could not forgive him... why didn't he warn the Jews of the plans to destroy the Ghetto?'¹⁰⁹

The Warsaw Ghetto resistance first began in opposite camps – the Revisionist Jewish Military Union [ZZW] and the Communists - and spread to the Bund, the Zionist youth groups, and LPZ. Only Agudat Yisrael opposed resistance, although in practice the General Zionists also did.¹¹⁰

The Zionist belief that Jews should forsake involvement in the politics of the countries where they lived, acting instead as a national minority, was disastrous in Nazi-occupied Poland, cutting off Jews from non-Jews. That was why the Zionists had to look to the Bund to obtain arms.

Mordechai Anielewicz of Hashomer Hatzair commanded the Jewish resistance, possibly because he had served in a pre-military training camp.¹¹¹ Young Zionists fought alongside the Bund and communists. Anielewicz expressed his regret over the 'wasted time' undergoing Zionist educational work.¹¹² Yitzhak Zuckerman told the Council of Kibbutz Ha Meuchad in May 1947 that 'had the fate of the Jews in 1942 lain in the hands only of the political parties [Zionist], the revolt would never have taken place.'¹¹³ It was despite, not because of, their Zionist politics that the young Zionists participated in the resistance. The Zionist youth organisations had previously spent their time training on Polish farms, whose owners had been deported as slave labour to Germany.

The first inter-party conference on armed resistance took place in January 1942 between the Bund, Hashomer Hatzair and Hechalutz. The Bund representatives, Maurycy Orzech and Abrasha Blum, maintained that an armed uprising could only take place in agreement with the Polish underground. It was the Bund that organised the first battle formation. At the meeting of groups during the first *Aktion* in Warsaw, on 23 July 1942, only the Communists and Hechalutz were in favour of immediate resistance. The position of the Bund at that time is not clear.

The Zionist groups allied with the communist Polish Workers' Party [PPR] under a Jewish National Committee.[114](#)

The main problem that ZOB faced was a lack of weapons. Edelman described how the Bund did its utmost to obtain them from the Aryan side despite 'lack of understanding for our efforts on the part of our Polish comrades...'[115](#) The first time that ZOB received weapons from the Polish underground was in December 1942.[116](#) The AK supplied in total about 60 pistols, hand grenades and explosives to ZOB and more weapons to the ZZW. The ZZW was better armed than ZOB. In a visit to their headquarters at 7-9 Muranowska Square, Ringleblum saw racks of weapons including machine guns, carbines, revolvers, grenades and German uniforms. [117](#) He saw the purchase of arms, including two machine guns, from a Polish army officer for a quarter of a million zloty.[118](#)

Because of the presence of left-wing groups in ZOB their efforts to obtain weapons from the AK 'were met with considerable suspicion.'[119](#) ZOB had to turn away volunteers because of a lack of arms. The combined forces of ZOB and ZZW were at most 750.[120](#)

When the deportations began not a single member of the Judenrat stopped to consider whether they should be carrying out the Nazis' orders. They only debated how it should be carried out.[121](#) The Second Report of the Jewish underground of 15 November described how assassination attempts against Police and Judenrat collaborators lent popularity to ZOB.[122](#) On 21 August 1942 Izrael Kanal shot Szerynski, wounding him in the face.[123](#) On 29 October 1942 the Deputy Chief of the Jewish Police, Jacob Lejkin and a month later the Judenrat representative of the deportation staff, Israel Furst, were executed.[124](#)

The Second Report described the main battle of 19 April on the corner of Zemenhofa and Mila Streets where the Nazis were attacked with machine-guns.[125](#) The Report speaks of Nazi casualties totalling about 1,200 killed or wounded. Edelman claims that the uprising lasted seven weeks.[126](#) According to Gideon Hausner's absurd estimate, Nazi losses were of the order of 'several thousand.'[127](#) The number of Nazi casualties will never be known; however, the revolt had a major impact on the Nazis, leading directly to the offer to Rudolf Kasztner, a year later, of a safe train out of Hungary for the Zionist elite (see later).

Nowhere does Anielewicz mention a revolt. It was a 'Jewish defence'. Batya Temkin-Berman, writing from the Aryan side of Warsaw, described the events as the third *Aktion* or extermination operation.¹²⁸ SS General Jürgen Stroop, who commanded the Nazi forces, listed sixteen Germans killed and eighty-five wounded. Edelman, in his report of the Mila-Zamenhofa Street battle, told of how 'not a single German left this area alive' and that 'German blood flooded the street'.¹²⁹ There were also AK and communist forays from outside the wall.¹³⁰

Edelman suggests that several hundred died and that over a hundred SS were killed by an electric mine. The Nazis even sent three negotiators in to arrange a truce. In the Toebbens area a truck was blown up killing 55 of the 60 SS in it. The Report from the Jewish Workers Underground Movement claimed that

more than one thousand were killed or wounded and tremendous material losses were suffered by German war production enterprises that were set on fire and destroyed by the Jewish Armed Resistance Organisation.¹³¹

The Zionist leaders were opposed to resistance. David Wdowinski, a leader of the ZZW, declared in his memoirs that at the end of April 1942, Czerniakow considered the report of the Lublin liquidation 'an exaggeration.' Hans Frank assured him that three ghettos would remain intact – Warsaw, Radom and Krakow. Wdowinski went to the Zionist leaders and suggested organising self-defence. Dr. Yitzhak (Ignacy) Schipper, a former member of the Polish Sejm, looked at him as if he was 'babbling out of delirium.' He told him that 'the Germans wouldn't dare annihilate the largest community in Europe.'¹³²

On the second day of the first *Aktion*, 23 July, proposals for active resistance 'were vehemently rejected' by Agudat Israel representative Zisha Frydman. Schipper drew the lesson from Jewish history that the Jewish people had to resign itself to the deportations 'in order to save the core of the nation.' Only Dror-Hehaluz and Hashomer Hatzair supported the call for resistance.¹³³

The Jewish police did their best to prevent an uprising.¹³⁴ Dr Alfred Nossig, a Zionist activist who had attended the First Zionist Congress in 1897, compiled lists of bunkers where people would hide during the coming *Aktion*. He was executed on 22 February 1943 by ZOB.¹³⁵

When Himmler visited Warsaw he was astonished that there were still so many Jews about.¹³⁶ When the deportations resumed in January, the first armed resistance surprised the SS so much that they stopped the deportation after two days,¹³⁷ although they deported nearly 8,000 Jews.¹³⁸

The Warsaw Ghetto was ignored and forgotten by the Palestinian Zionist leaders. Yitzhak (Antek) Zuckerman asked why no-one left Geneva, Istanbul or Sweden, 'if only to serve as a gesture, a sign, a hand extended as a token of sharing our fate?' Only the Bund and the AK sent emissaries into the ghetto. Other movements in Europe sent their emissaries from one ghetto to the next.¹³⁹

Yet when reports arrived in Palestine of the Uprising, the Zionist leaders 'attempt(ed) to appropriate the heroism of the ghetto fighters as its own symbols'. They could only see Jewish resistance in Europe through the prism of settler colonial violence against the Arabs. Ben-Gurion described the ghetto fighters as having 'learned the ways of a new death which was left to them as a legacy by the defenders of Tel Hai and Sejera.'¹⁴⁰ This trivialised and exploited the memory of the fighters and projected Ben-Gurion's hopes and fantasies onto a completely different situation.

Similarly, Shneur Zalman Rubashov, at a Histadrut Executive Committee meeting, imagined that in the streets of the Warsaw Ghetto 'the banner of Tel Hai was being raised.'¹⁴¹ Moshe Dayan, Israel's former Defence Minister, continued the trend with his funeral eulogy to Roi Rotberg, a settler who was killed by Fedayeen in April 1956.

Millions of Jews, who were exterminated because they had no country, are watching us from the ashes of Israeli history and exhorting us to settle and to build up a land for our people.¹⁴²

What happened in Palestine played no part in the ghetto resistance. According to Edelman:

We joined hands with all Jewish Zionist underground organizations. Our comrades lived and worked with the others just as members of a close family. A mutual aim united us. During this entire period of over half a year, there were no quarrels or struggles, which are common among adherents of different ideologies.¹⁴³

Czerniakow's successor, Marc Lichtenbaum, invited ZOB leaders for talks but they refused. He had to tell the Nazis that 'I have no authority over the ghetto – another government is in power here.'¹⁴⁴ A pre-condition for resistance had been the destruction of the Judenrat's power. Ringleblum listed the names of 13 Gestapo agents who were shot by ZOB.¹⁴⁵

Edelman described how 'the cornered partisans... succeeded, by truly superhuman efforts, in repulsing the attacks' as well as capturing two German machine guns and burning a tank.¹⁴⁶ Jan Karski suggested that it was the anti-Semitism of the Commander of the AK, General Stefan Rowecki, which led to the denial of weapons to ZOB, though Edelman disputed this.¹⁴⁷

The role of the Bund and Edelman in the Revolt has been airbrushed out of history by Zionist holocaust historians. The Revolt has become another Zionist foundational myth with the suggestion that the Resistance was solely composed of Zionists.¹⁴⁸ Bauer fatuously suggested that the majority of Jews in the resistance were motivated 'by their Jewishness.'¹⁴⁹

The Israeli state was extremely hostile to Edelman, who had written an open letter to the Palestinians asking them to stop the bloodshed and enter into peace negotiations. The letter caused outrage because Edelman did not mention the word 'terrorism.' Israeli leaders were particularly incensed by its title: 'Letter to Palestinian partisans.'¹⁵⁰

Mr Edelman ... wrote in a spirit of solidarity from a fellow resistance fighter, as a former leader of a Jewish uprising ... He addressed his letter to 'commanders of the Palestinian military, paramilitary and partisan operations – to all the soldiers of the Palestinian fighting organisations.' This set up a howl of rage in the Zionist press, who reminded their readers that Mr Edelman, despite his heroism in the 1940s, is a former supporter of the anti-Zionist socialist Bund and can therefore not be trusted.¹⁵¹

What was particularly irksome was that Edelman had compared the structures of the Jewish resistance movement in Warsaw to that of the Palestinians.¹⁵² Although he occasionally came to Israel to visit old friends, Edelman retained the Bund's hostility to Zionism. In an interview he described Israel as a:

chauvinist, religious state, where a Christian is a second-class citizen and a Muslim is third-class. It is a disaster, after three million were murdered in Poland, they want to dominate everything and not to consider non-Jews!¹⁵³

When Edelman died on 9 October 2009 he was honoured with a state funeral and a fifteen-gun salute. Not even the lowliest clerk at the Israeli Embassy attended.¹⁵⁴ Edelman received Poland's highest honour and the French Legion of Honour but he died unrecognised and forgotten in Israel.¹⁵⁵

The President of Poland spoke at his funeral... held in the old Jewish cemetery of Warsaw. Two thousand people attended the grave-side ceremony. But no one from the Israeli government attended... No official representative of any international Jewish organisation attended either: not even from the holocaust memorialisation organisations.¹⁵⁶

Moshe Arens, the former Likud Minister, interviewed Edelman as part of his research into the history of the ZZW. Arens described how, as they parted, Edelman said 'You must make peace with the Arabs.' Arens tried to persuade a number of Israeli universities to award Edelman an honorary doctorate but: 'I ran into stubborn opposition led by holocaust historians in Israel.'¹⁵⁷

The Revisionists made up the leadership and ranks of the Jewish police and the leadership of ZOB had contempt for them. The ZZW obtained their arms via their Polish fascist friends. Despite this, stiff resistance to the Nazi invasion of the Ghetto came from the Revisionists. For two days, both the Polish and Jewish Star of David flags flew, visible to thousands of Poles on the Aryan side of Warsaw.¹⁵⁸

Some five to six thousand Jews are estimated to have escaped from the ghetto to the Aryan side of Warsaw and to have remained hidden till the end of 1943. After the Uprising, there was panic in Palestine. Melech Neustadt

repeatedly implored the youth movement leaders in Palestine to save those still alive – even against their will – by issuing a directive that they were to leave immediately by whatever ways possible... The issue was whether or not the Yishuv was morally justified in instructing these comrades to abandon their communities, save themselves, and thereby stop the armed uprisings.... the numerous revolts in the summer of 1943 would ultimately deprive the Yishuv of the cream of Europe's potential pioneering force... among the major youth movements in Palestine Neustadt's views prevailed and attempts to extricate the activists failed. They refused to leave.¹⁵⁹

The ghetto uprisings had already taken place. A Zionist emissary arrived in Bedzin in July 1943 to persuade Frumka Plotnicka to leave. She replied that 'I have a responsibility for my brethren... I have lived with them and I will die with them.' The Zionist youth in Europe, such as Antek Zuckerman and Zivia Lubetkin, refused on principle to leave.¹⁶⁰ One can only admire the bravery and commitment of these young Zionist fighters who, given the choice between the fight against the Nazis in the Diaspora and the Arabs in Palestine, committed what in Zionist eyes, was a mortal sin. They chose the Diaspora.

One of the Palestinian emissaries, Yudke Hellman of Hakibbutz Ha Meuchad, described how in October and December 1939 he witnessed the return of Frumka Plotnicka and Zivia Lubetkin to German-occupied Poland and how he had tried and failed to persuade them to leave for Palestine. Frumka stood up and announced that her decision to return to Warsaw was final.¹⁶¹

Hayka Klinger, who arrived in Palestine in March 1944, told the Histadrut Executive that 'we received an order not to organize any more defence.' ¹⁶² To the Zionist leadership the ghetto fighters were more valuable in Palestine. Klinger observed that 'Without a people, a people's avant-garde is of no value. If rescue it is, then the entire people must be rescued. If it is to be annihilation, then the avante-garde too shall be annihilated.' ¹⁶³ Never was the ethical and

moral distinction between the Jewish diaspora and Palestine's Zionist leaders clearer.

The Zionist leaders saw the risings in the ghettos as 'a kind of betrayal of the overriding principle of the homeland.' ¹⁶⁴ Yet despite opposing the uprisings at the time, the ghetto fighters were 'retrospectively conscripted' into the Zionist terror groups. 'We fought here and they fought there' according to Palmach commander Yitzhak Sadeh.¹⁶⁵ Except that the Jewish partisans were fighting against the fascists whereas the Zionist militias fought with fascists.

Bialystok

In 1950 Jewish-Polish historian, Ber Mark published a book which, instead of praising the Zionist parties, praised the heroism and leadership of the communists. According to Mark the revolt failed to take off and was over in three to four hours.

Beit-Zvi called it 'an attempted revolt.'¹⁶⁶ In 1968 Yitzhak Zuckerman of Hashomer Hatzair spoke about the 'great uprising in Bialystok.'

The head of the Judenrat, Ephraim Barash, had 'mutually warm and trustful' relations with the head of the resistance, Mordechai Tenenbaum-Tamarov. The Zionists formed their own kibbutzim: 'The Judenrat... provided the necessary funds.' ¹⁶⁷ Tenenbaum-Tamarov co-operated with Barash over the initial deportation of 6,300 people.¹⁶⁸

When several hundred SS troops entered the ghetto on 16 August 1943 the 'combat organization was caught unprepared, not on the alert in the factories but at home in bed.' Once mobilised the ghetto population ignored their calls to resist the round-ups and streamed past them to the deportation area. Nonetheless the resistance fought to the end. The battle lasted until 20 August but the 500 combatants failed to break through the SS ring of steel. ¹⁶⁹

The underground was divided over tactics. The communists favoured escape to the forests whilst the Bundists and Revisionists were for making a last stand. A third faction favoured setting up armed groups outside the ghetto ready to come to the aid of its inhabitants. The last group won the day and formed the *Forais* (Forward) partisan detachment outside the ghetto.

Tennenbaum-Tamarov fought to the end, committing suicide rather than surrender, though it would have been wiser to have taken to the forests and regrouped, as most of the communists did. In Bialystok the Judenrat believed

that the industrial usefulness of the ghetto would save it. Unfortunately the Nazis' racial insanity defeated economic rationality.

Lodz

Lodz contained the second largest ghetto in Poland. It also lasted the longest, from February 1940 to August 1944. When it was established social provision such as soup kitchens were provided by the different political parties, but this was soon taken over by the Judenrat.¹⁷⁰

Chairman Chaim Rumkowski, who had been elected to the Lodz kehilla on the Zionist ticket, had postage stamps engraved with a portrait of him riding around in a broken-down horse-drawn carriage with currency notes bearing his signature.¹⁷¹ Rumkowski, who was 'despised and hated by every inhabitant of the ghetto'¹⁷² established 20 kibbutzim. These members of the Kibbutzim were on the way to becoming elitists, having distanced themselves from the Jewish masses.¹⁷³

The Judenrat and Jewish Police in the Polish ghettos were met with hostility and were the object of 'rage and contempt... universal loathing.'¹⁷⁴ The Bund's youth organisation, SKIF, picketed outside the Judenrat's office, declaring 'Rumkowski, you are our misfortune.'¹⁷⁵ In the summer of 1940 there were stormy street demonstrations against Rumkowski and the Judenrat. On 10-11 August hundreds gathered outside the Jewish Council shouting, 'We want bread.' The Jewish Police were unable to disperse them and Rumkowski called for the Nazi Order Police who quickly put an end to the protest. In December 1940 there was a strike wave by ghetto employees who Rumkowski denounced as criminals. He had the leaders arrested and deported to labour camps.¹⁷⁶

The same was true in Lublin, Częstochowa and other ghettos.¹⁷⁷ In February 1943 'a general strike swept the Lodz Ghetto because of the launching of mass executions by the Nazis. The strike was successful; the executions were halted.'¹⁷⁸ In August 1944 when an announcement was posted ordering the Jews to present themselves to the *Verlagerung*, Workshops I and II held a sit-down strike. The Nazi commander Hans Biebow assured them that they were only being moved out because of bombing raids. Rumkowski used all his powers of persuasion to reassure the workers.¹⁷⁹ The Jewish workers changed their minds and surrendered. They were transported

to Auschwitz. There was a lack of an organisation and weapons to combat the Nazi lies.¹⁸⁰

Even Bauer conceded that Rumkowski was a Jewish war criminal.¹⁸¹ Rumkowski's strategy had been to make the Jews indispensable to the Nazis through work but this was a failure. There was no case in which a policy of 'salvation through work' succeeded in saving a ghetto.¹⁸² When the Soviets captured Lodz in January 1945 there were just 877 survivors.¹⁸³

Unlike Warsaw all went smoothly. The first deportations were between 15 and 29 January 1942. 10,103 were sent 'for resettlement'. None returned.¹⁸⁴ By the end of May 1942 some 55,000 Jews had been killed in Chelmno.¹⁸⁵ In October 1942, when shipments of clothes arrived in the ghetto, many containing letters or papers from former deportees, it was clear that Chelmno was a death camp.¹⁸⁶ After having spoken to three gravediggers who had escaped from the camp, the Rabbi of Grabow, Jakob Schulman, wrote to his brother-in-law that thousands of Gypsies from Lodz and now Jews had been brought to Chelmno where they were exterminated.¹⁸⁷

Smuggling was not tolerated. Unlike the Warsaw Judenrat, Rumkowski wanted survival to depend solely on Nazi 'generosity'. By 1944 Lodz, with a Jewish population of 200,000, had seen 45,000 people die from hunger and illness compared to Warsaw with 470,000 people, 83,000 of whom died up to September 1942.¹⁸⁸ SS statistician Richard Korherr calculated that amongst those not deported, 335,000 Jews died in the Incorporated Territories, including Bialystok and 428,000 in the Generalgouvernement.¹⁸⁹ Hans Frank spoke openly about a 'sentence of hunger death'.¹⁹⁰

Order in the Lodz Ghetto was kept by the Jewish Police. The Lodz Ghetto's system of justice was even more 'advanced' than its Nazi prototype: the Judenrat had no separate justice department; the only legal office in the ghetto was incorporated into the police.¹⁹¹ In 2000, holocaust survivor Lucile Eichengreen provided evidence showing that Rumkowski was also a paedophile.¹⁹²

Sosnowiec and Bedzin (Bendin)

Sosnowiec and Bedzin lay in East Upper Silesia in the Polish Silesian coal fields. They were captured on September 4 1939 and annexed to Germany. Moses Merin, a member of the Sosnowiec's Jewish council and a Revisionist

Zionist, was first appointed head of the local Judenrat and at the end of 1939 head of a Central Committee of Councils of Elders for the whole of East Upper Silesia.

“*Führer*” notions played no small part in his “ideology,” wrote Friedman. It wasn’t long before he was calling himself “*der Leiter*”—the Leader, ‘almost like Hitler himself’.¹⁹³

Merin declared that ‘I will not be afraid to sacrifice 50,000 of our community in order to save the other 50,000.’ On German orders, Merin staged the largest “mass review” of his career in the summer of 1942. All the Jews of Sosnowiec, Bedzin, and Dabrova, some 50,000 stood together on one August day. More than 25,000 were selected by him for deportation.

Merin was responsible for 45 Jewish communities, containing some 100,000 Jews. Within a year, he controlled dozens of Judenrate. Merin personally signed the execution orders of those involved in resistance.

Merin like Chaim Rumkowski was convinced that by making the Jews in his ghettos economically useful to the Nazis that some would survive the war.¹⁹⁴ Like those under him, Merin ended his days in Auschwitz.¹⁹⁵

Vilna

Vilna, the Jerusalem of Lithuania, was occupied by Germany on June 24, 1941. It contained about 70,000 Jews, 80% of whom were murdered by the end of the year. The Nazis appointed a Jewish Council headed by a Revisionist Zionist, Jacob Gens. Twenty one thousand Jews were liquidated immediately before the rest were herded into two ghettos, one of which was also liquidated. Between September and December a further 27,000 were murdered, mainly in the Pits of Ponary, just outside Vilna.¹⁹⁶ The Jewish police actively participated in these killings and in some cases, actually carried out the “selections.”¹⁹⁷

Like Merin in Sosnowiec, Gens believed that by sacrificing the majority of Jews he could save the rest. In this way the Nazis used the Judenrat to carry out the deportations until there was no one left. The Nazis gave Gens absolute power, including the power of capital and corporal punishment.

In Vilna a United Partisans Organisation [FPO] was formed in January 1942, between the Communists and the Zionists. Josef Glazman, a Revisionist who had been deputy police commandant until Gens dismissed him, was deputy commander of the FPO.¹⁹⁸

The FPO was headed by a communist, Yitzhak Wittenberg. After having tortured another communist the Gestapo became aware of his role and ordered his arrest. On 16 July 1943, after having been invited to talks by Gens, Wittenberg was seized by the Lithuanian police led by the head of the Jewish police, Revisionist Salek Dessler. However Wittenberg was freed by the Resistance.

The Gestapo gave Gens an ultimatum – hand over Wittenberg or the ghetto would be destroyed.¹⁹⁹ Gens mobilised the ghetto and forced Wittenberg's surrender.²⁰⁰ Abba Kovner of Hashomer Hatzair urged surrender and Wittenberg gave himself up.²⁰¹ 'Aktion swiftly followed Aktion.' Between 1 and 5 September a great deportation to Estonia took place. The Jewish police, who were armed by the Nazis, 'went wild as they smelled blood.' They forced 5,000 people onto the trains. On September 23 the final *Aktion* took place.²⁰² Nine days previously Gens himself had been shot by the Gestapo.

Gens destroyed the Resistance knowing that a communist-led resistance would fight the ghetto's liquidation.²⁰³ The resistance under Kovner chose not to fight but escape instead to the forests.²⁰⁴ According to Chaim Lazar, Kovner reached an agreement with Gens and Salek Dessler and they were given a safe exit. Kovner ensured that only the underground escaped.²⁰⁵

The main purpose of Kovner's partisan group was to save themselves. Chaim Lazar alleges that when a group of Jews from Ishishuk came to the forest, having been sheltered by farms until the danger of being discovered became too great, they were refused entry into Kovner's group even though refusal was tantamount to a death sentence. For many weeks these Jews wandered near the Jewish camp, suffering from cold and starvation. Only after the Soviet partisan camp absorbed some of them did Kovner agree to absorb the rest.²⁰⁶ Soviet partisans, although thin on the ground, 'offered the most hope to the Jews' including arming them.²⁰⁷

- [1](#) Robert Wistrich, *Socialism and the Jews*, p. 126.
- [2](#) Arendt, p. 122.
- [3](#) Marrus, *Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust*, p. 98.
- [4](#) See Chil Rajchman, *Treblinka – A Survivor’s Memory*, and Vasily Grossman’s *The Hell of Treblinka*.
- [5](#) Hilberg, pp. 981-2.
- [6](#) Op. cit., p. 1047. Laurence Rees pp. 322-4.
- [7](#) Andre Biss, p. 11, *A Million Jews to Save*. P. 146 dates the closure of Auschwitz to ‘some weeks’ before the death march.
- [8](#) Hilberg, p. 1048.
- [9](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1106.
- [10](#) Weiss, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 216.
- [11](#) Hilberg, pp. 516, 518. 520. On 14 December 1942 the SS and Police Leader of Galicia posted a list announcing people sentenced to death for helping Jews.
- [12](#) Shmuel Krakowski, ‘The Opposition to the Judenrat By The Jewish Armed Resistance,’ *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 199.
- [13](#) Hilberg, p. 964.
- [14](#) Steinberg p. 22. Meryl Moose, *Anti-Nazi Germans*.
- [15](#) Marrus, *Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust*, p. 96. Steinberg p. 26, fn 1 p. 43 suggests that those who joined Hashomer Hatzair did so under the instruction of Herbert Baum. Meryl Moose, *Anti-Nazi Germans*, pp. 120-9.
- [16](#) Steinberg, p. 104.
- [17](#) *Ibid.*, p. 243.
- [18](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 243-4.
- [19](#) Dawidowicz, p. 390.
- [20](#) Slepian, *The Soviet Partisan Movement and the Holocaust*, p.15, estimates that between 20,000 and 30,000 Jews participated in the partisan movement out of half a million in total.
- [21](#) Leonid Smilovitsky, *Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Partisan Movement, 1941-1944*, p. 229.
- [22](#) Marrus, *History of the Holocaust*, p. 155.
- [23](#) Marrus, *Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust*, p. 101.
- [24](#) Slepian, *The Soviet Partisan Movement and the Holocaust*, p. 14.
- [25](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
- [26](#) Yuri Sahl, *They Fought Back* London 1968, p. 191. According to Eber Cheiffetz, up to 300 succeeded in joining the partisans, fn. 22, p. 344.
- [27](#) Shalom Cholowsky, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 115.
- [28](#) Slepian, *The Soviet Partisan Movement and the Holocaust*, p. 10.
- [29](#) I. Trunk, *Judenrat: the Jewish councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi occupation*, New York 1972, p. 32
- [30](#) R. Hilberg, p. 1111, citing Mohns (Deputy Chief of resettlement division, Warsaw District) to Leist (Plenipotentiary for the City of Warsaw) 11.1.41.
- [31](#) Hilberg, *The Ghetto as a Form of Government*, p. 112.

- ³² Ibid., p. 241.
- ³³ Trunk, 'Typology of the Judenrat,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 29, Weiss, *The Judenrat and the Jewish Police*, p. 214-16
- ³⁴ Dov Levin, 'The Small Communities,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, pp. 133-47.
- ³⁵ Hilberg, *The Ghetto as a Form of Government*, p. 104.
- ³⁶ Trunk, *Judenrat*, New York, 1972, pp. 519-25.
- ³⁷ Saul Friedlander, p. 302.
- ³⁸ Cholowsky, 'The Judenrat in Minsk' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 119-23.
- ³⁹ Sternberg, *Not as a Lamb*, p. 256.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 132.
- ⁴¹ Hilberg, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 61.
- ⁴² *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, Jerusalem April 4-7 1977.
- ⁴³ Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, pp. 515-16.
- ⁴⁴ Hilberg, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 32.
- ⁴⁵ Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 140.
- ⁴⁶ Arendt, *The Jew As Pariah*, p. 261.
- ⁴⁷ Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, p.201.
- ⁴⁸ Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, p. 432, citing NYT 2.5.64. (Braham dates this to 22.5.64). <https://tinyurl.com/45mmmtrj>; See JTA Report on the case, 26.5.64. <https://tinyurl.com/y2yrgyqg>. Bendin was the last Jewish community in Poland to be liquidated in the summer of 1943, *Kasztner Report*, fn. 52, p. 96
- ⁴⁹ Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, p. 78.
- ⁵⁰ Hilberg, *Patterns*, 'The Judenrat: Conscious or Unconscious Tool', p. 33. Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, pp. 1111-12, Hilberg, 'The Ghetto as a Form of Government', p. 110.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., p. 34. Yitzhak Arad, *The Lithuanian Ghettos of Kovno and Vilna*, p. 99.
- ⁵² Dan Porat, *Bitter Reckoning: Israel Tries Holocaust Survivors as Nazi Collaborators*, p.48. <https://tinyurl.com/4phxsxxj>
- ⁵³ Chajka Klinger, *I am Writing These Words to You, The Original Diaries, Będzin 1943*, pp. 10-11, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 2017.
- ⁵⁴ Dan Porat, *Bitter Reckoning: Israel Tries Holocaust Survivors as Nazi Collaborators*, p.49. <https://tinyurl.com/4phxsxxj>
- ⁵⁵ Reitlinger, op. cit., p. 26
- ⁵⁶ Linn, p. 77 citing Gutman and Rozett, *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, p. 762.
- ⁵⁷ Herbert Rosenkranz, *Patterns, Austrian Jewry: Between Forced Emigration and Deportation*, ' p. 74. Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, p.182, excuses and rationalises the behaviour of the Jewish Administration, despite former functionaries, such as Martin Schaefer testifying in support of Nazis such as Karl Ebner, former deputy head of the Vienna Gestapo, in his post-war trial.
- ⁵⁸ Hilberg, p. 452.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 451-2.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 476.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., p. 466.

- [62](#) Arendt, p. 63. Lowenherz died on 29.11. 60. See <https://tinyurl.com/y6gfuc9x>
- [63](#) Laura Jockusch & Gabriel Finder, *Jewish Honor Courts*, pp. 170-79. Mummelstein was initially arrested as a collaborator after the war, but released owing to lack of evidence. <https://tinyurl.com/yxmmuxb3>
- [64](#) Hilberg, *Destruction*, pp. 219-20.
- [65](#) Arendt, p. 125.
- [66](#) Lucien Steinberg, *Not As a Lamb: Jews Against Hitler*, p. 109.
- [67](#) Ben Hecht, *Perfidy*, fn 68, p. 261. Hecht's book shook the Zionist movement to its foundations.
- [68](#) Linn, p. 92, citing *Ha-Sho'ah ve-hikrah: hamsagah, minuah ve-sugyot yesod* (Tel Aviv: Moreshet Publication, 1998).
- [69](#) Bauer, 'The Judenrate – Some Conclusions', *Patterns of Jewish Leadership* p. 393.
- [70](#) Shmuel Krakowski, 'The Jewish Armed Resistance', *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, pp. 198-9..
- [71](#) Bauer, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 401.
- [72](#) Braham, *Rescue Operations in Hungary: Myths & Realities*, p. 42.
- [73](#) Arendt, p. 117.
- [74](#) The Red Cross visited it and also Auschwitz and gave them both a clean bill of health. It did the same with the Kistarca concentration camp in Budapest.
- [75](#) Hilberg, p. 1118. See Linn, p. 16.
- [76](#) Leo Baeck, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://tinyurl.com/cf6dbdxn>
- [77](#) <http://www.lbc.ac.uk>. Baeck believed that Jews should do the rounding up 'because they would be more gentle than the Gestapo.' The Jewish authorities commemorated him whereas Lederer died on 5.4.72, 'bitter and forgotten. Not a single notice appeared in the Czech media, let alone in Israel.' Linn, pp. 16, fn. 5, p. 131.
- [78](#) Central Organizations of Jews in Germany (1933-1943) Gudrun Maierhof, <https://tinyurl.com/yycyp6et>.
- [79](#) Hilberg, pp. 181, 184, 478.
- [80](#) *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- [81](#) Meyer, pp. 47-54.
- [82](#) Arendt, pp. 60, 80. Saul Friedlander, p. 296. The camp leadership was criticized for its 'Zionist slant' from the beginning.
- [83](#) Arendt, pp. 119-120, citing Hans Günther Adler's *Theresienstadt 1941-1945*.
- [84](#) Hilberg, pp. 456-7.
- [85](#) *Ibid.*, p. 542.
- [86](#) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babi>
- [87](#) Marrus, *History of the Holocaust*, p. 123, suggests that as many as 2.2. million were killed.
- [88](#) Arendt, p. 124.
- [89](#) Edelman, p. 38.
- [90](#) Matthew Brzezinski, *Isaac's Army* (Random House, 2012): 'The fact that he "spoke Polish exclusively" rankled the Yiddish-centric Bund as did his Zionist sympathies.' Brenner describes him as a minor Zionist, p. 204.
- [91](#) Hilberg, p. 240.

- [92](#) Friedlander, p. 214.
- [93](#) Yosef Kermiz, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, 'The Judenrat in Warsaw', pp. 80-82, citing *Unzer Veg*, December 1941, 6.
- [94](#) Hilberg, p. 252.
- [95](#) Friedlander, p. 212, 23.4.41.
- [96](#) Fein, pp. 225-6, 236. See *The Chaim Kaplan Diary – selected extracts*, <https://tinyurl.com/686S4qj>
- [97](#) Trunk, 'Typology of the Judenrate,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 21-2.
- [98](#) Kermiz, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 87. Friedlander, p. 214.
- [99](#) Krakowski, 'The Jewish Armed Resistance,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 193.
- [100](#) *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-occupied Europe* (Elek Books, 1974), pp. 903-4 fn. 4 cited by John Rose, p. 24. Edelman, *Introduction to The Ghetto Fights*.
- [101](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 605.
- [102](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 249.
- [103](#) Israel Shahak, 'Falsification of the Holocaust', 19 May 1989, *Kol Ha'ir*, Jerusalem.
- [104](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 246, citing Emmanuel Ringleblum.
- [105](#) Hilberg, p. 527.
- [106](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 253.
- [107](#) Edelman, p. 56.
- [108](#) [Chapter 17](#), *Isaac's Army*.
- [109](#) Dalia Ofer, *Commemorating the Holocaust During the First Decade of Israel*, p. 40.
- [110](#) Hilberg, p. 521.
- [111](#) Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw*, p.296, see also <https://tinyurl.com/mundpj6t>.163
- [112](#) Gutman *The Jews of Warsaw 1939-1943*, p. 143. Gutman, *The Youth Movements in Eastern Europe*, p. 72. Emmanuel Ringleblum describes how Anielewicz regretted that so much time had been wasted on educational work and the spiritual development of youth. A similar regret was expressed by Yitzhak Zuckerman when he came to Israel and reported to the Kibbutz council at Naan.
- [113](#) *Ibid.*, p. 441, fn. 23.
- [114](#) Hilberg, fn. 81, p. 525, p. 530.
- [115](#) Edelman p. 50.
- [116](#) *Ibid.*, p. 104.
- [117](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 607.
- [118](#) Moshé Arens, *ZZW and the Warsaw Ghetto*, pp. 217-18.
- [119](#) *Ibid.*, p. 215.
- [120](#) Hilberg, p. 534. Edelman estimated 200 and S Beit Zvi estimated 300, p. 339.
- [121](#) Edelman, p. 54.
- [122](#) <https://tinyurl.com/nltcSye>
- [123](#) Hilberg, p. 532.
- [124](#) Kermisz, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 88.
- [125](#) Edelman, p. 107.

- [126](#) Ibid., p. 107-8. 110.
- [127](#) Beit Zvi, p. 356, citing *Justice in Palestine*, p. 223.
- [128](#) Ibid., p.347 citing Batya Temkin-Berman, *Underground Diary*, Hebrew, pp 17, 87.
- [129](#) Edelman, p. 76.
- [130](#) Hilberg, pp. 538-9, puts the figures of Germans killed at 14, presumably excluding two SS men killed in a Soviet raid outside the ghetto, Hilberg, p. 1105. Dawidowicz, *War Against the Jews*, pp. 405-6 estimates that the Nazi dead were in the hundreds.
- [131](#) *Battle for the Warsaw Ghetto*, Report from the Jewish Workers Underground Movement, 22.6.43. <https://tinyurl.com/nltc5ye>. Edelman, pp. 76-7, 81, 94.
- [132](#) Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw 1939-1943*, p. 167.
- [133](#) Ibid., p. 230, citing Edelman, *Getto walczy*, p. 30, Goldstein, *finiefyor*, p. 248.
- [134](#) Edelman, p. 102.
- [135](#) Ibid., p. 74. See also <https://tinyurl.com/62xcckuj>.
- [136](#) Hilberg, p. 562. Himmler visited in January 1943.
- [137](#) Edelman, pp. 104-5.
- [138](#) Hilberg, p. 533. According to Nazi commander Stroop's report one German police captain was wounded in the abdomen. The private diary of a German policeman notes two dead and two wounded.
- [139](#) Porat, p. 228. Anton Zuckerman was a youthful Zionist.
- [140](#) Yechiam Weitz, *The Positions of David Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Tabenkin*, p. 196. Zertal, p. 25.
- [141](#) Weitz, *The Yishuv's response to the destruction of European Jewry*, p. 220.
- [142](#) Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, p. 180.
- [143](#) Edelman, pp. 110-11, citing second report of the Jewish workers' underground movement, 15.11.43.
- [144](#) Kermisz, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 89.
- [145](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 257.
- [146](#) Edelman, p. 76.
- [147](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 234.
- [148](#) Arens, *The Last Bundist*, <https://tinyurl.com/3k23kcwf>.
- [149](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 139.
- [150](#) *Ha'aretz*, 9.8.02. <https://tinyurl.com/y4mshfyh>.
- [151](#) Paul Foot, *Palestine Partisans*, *The Guardian*, 21.8.02. <https://tinyurl.com/y3pux8hl>
- [152](#) Syd's Blog, *The Last Bundist*, <https://tinyurl.com/jte3682n>.
- [153](#) Yitzhak Laor, 'Children of the State,' *LRB* 26.1.06. <https://tinyurl.com/ybussvp7>
- [154](#) *Zionism Boycotts the Funeral of Marek Edelman*, 15.10.09. <https://tinyurl.com/2dku623>
- [155](#) Yossi Melman, 'Hero of Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Marek Edelman, Dies at 86,' *Ha'aretz*, 4.10.09., <https://tinyurl.com/yyzhmby4> See also 'Marek Edelman - Death of an anti-fascist hero of the Warsaw Jewish Resistance' <https://tinyurl.com/y3qpzrgm>
- [156](#) Syd's Blog, *The Last Bundist*, <https://tinyurl.com/jte3682n>.
- [157](#) Arens, 'The Last Bundist,' *Ha'aretz*, 4.10.09., <https://www.haaretz.com/1.5401978>
- [158](#) S Beit Zvi, p. 353.
- [159](#) Porat, *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David*, p. 241.

- [160](#) Ibid., p. 241.
- [161](#) Weitz, The Yishuv's response to the destruction of European Jewry, pp. 218-19.
- [162](#) Porat p. 242.
- [163](#) Zertal, Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood, p. 33.
- [164](#) Ibid., p. 34.
- [165](#) Ibid., p. 26.
- [166](#) Beit Zvi, p. 338.
- [167](#) Steinberg, p. 249.
- [168](#) Dawidowicz, p. 395.
- [169](#) Ibid., pp. 397-8.
- [170](#) Hilberg, p. 266.
- [171](#) Arendt, p. 119. Hilberg, p. 220, citing Emanuel Ringleblum who was killed by the Nazis. His notes were found after the war.
- [172](#) Dawidowicz, p. 295. JDC Report, 22.12.41.
- [173](#) Dawidowicz op. cit. p. 322.
- [174](#) Beit Zvi, p. 331. See also Trunk, Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945, p. 27.
- [175](#) Dawidowicz, p. 336.
- [176](#) Cesarani, p. 325.
- [177](#) Trunk, p. 28.
- [178](#) Edelman, p. 99, citing second report from the Jewish workers' underground movement, 15 November 1943.
- [179](#) Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 48.
- [180](#) Hilberg, p. 545.
- [181](#) Linn, p. 95, citing Bauer, *They Chose Life*, p. 43.
- [182](#) Gutman, Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945, p. 159.
- [183](#) Linn, p. 97. The Lodz Ghetto, *Jewish Virtual Library*, <https://tinyurl.com/zjfn3cn6>
- [184](#) Trunk, *Judenrat*, citing Tushnet, *Pavement of Hell*. Ibid. 48.
- [185](#) Kershaw, *Improvised Genocide?* p. 77.
- [186](#) Hilberg, Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945, p. 43. See also Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, fn. 135, p. 542.
- [187](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 131.
- [188](#) Hilberg, pp. 268, 273.
- [189](#) Ibid., p.274.
- [190](#) Ibid., p. 549.
- [191](#) Ibid., p. 235.
- [192](#) Eichengreen, Rumkowski and the Orphans of Lodz, San 2000.
- [193](#) Philip Friedman, Two "Saviors" Who Failed, *Commentary*, December 1958.
- [194](#) Moshe Merin, <https://tinyurl.com/mtedddue>
- [195](#) Merin, Moshe, Shoah Resource Centre, <https://tinyurl.com/56d8yfnp>
- [196](#) Philip Friedman, Two "Saviors" Who Failed, *Commentary*, December 1958.
- [197](#) Jacob Gens, Yizkor, <https://tinyurl.com/kpp9hfd>

- [198](https://tinyurl.com/4w6h3zmy) Jacob Gens, The Holocaust in the Vilna Ghetto, <https://tinyurl.com/4w6h3zmy>.
- [199](https://tinyurl.com/kpp9hfd) Jacob Gens, Yizkor, <https://tinyurl.com/kpp9hfd>
- [200](#) Arad, Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945, p.109.
- [201](#) Lucien Steinberg, *Jews Against Hitler*, pp. 235/7. See also Friedlander, p. 372. Friedman states that it was the Communist Party itself that made the decision.
- [202](#) Philip Friedman, Two "Saviors" Who Failed, *Commentary*, December 1958.
- [203](#) Alexander Rindziunski, 'Debate,' Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945, p. 184.
- [204](#) Hilberg, p. 398.
- [205](#) Shonfeld, 'The Holocaust Victims Accuse' p. 30. citing *Destruction and Rebellion*.
- [206](#) *Ibid.*, p. 33, citing Chaim Lazar, *Destruction and Resistance*.
- [207](#) Cesarani, p. 649.

Chapter 9

The Hungarian Holocaust

'Why didn't we know?... To this day I try to understand what happened. If ever there was a tragedy that could have been prevented, it was that one.' ¹ (Elie Wiesel)

Never was Hannah Arendt's observation truer, that if the Jewish people had been leaderless then far fewer would have died, than in Hungary.

By 1944 Nazi Germany was facing defeat. In January Soviet forces entered Poland, having lifted the siege of Leningrad, before turning their attention to the Baltic countries.² In April most of Crimea and the Ukraine were recaptured and Soviet forces were poised to enter Romania. In June the Allies would land in Normandy and in July the invasion of Sicily would take place. This was the background to the Holocaust in Hungary.

What underpinned Hungary's alliance with Nazi Germany was the loss of over 70% of its territory in the 1920 Treaty of Trianon. Following the 1938 Munich Agreement and Hitler's Vienna Awards of 1938 and 1940, Hungary regained these territories.³

Throughout the war, Hungary had provided a refuge for Jews from elsewhere in Europe. An estimated 10,000 Slovakian Jews entered during 1942.⁴ The 1941 census identified a total of 725,005 Jews within the newly enlarged Hungary and another 100,000 Christian Jews.⁵ To the Zionists though 'the Hungarian Jew was a branch which long ago dried up on the tree.'⁶

The first anti-Semitic legislation in May 1938 was supported by both the churches⁷ and the Jewish leaders.⁸ It was 'the stone that started the landslide.'²

The second anti-Jewish Act in May 1939 was opposed by the Jewish establishment but supported by the churches.¹⁰

The third anti-Jewish law of August 1941 was opposed unanimously by the Christian churches, partly because of its effect on converts. It defined Jews racially and was more wide-ranging than Germany's Nuremberg Laws. Its attempts to expropriate the Jews met with difficulties because they were largely assimilated and constituted the backbone of the country's middle and professional classes.¹¹ Prominent in his opposition was Laszlo Ravasz of the Reformed Church.¹²

Prior to the Nazi occupation of Hungary there had been two massacres of Jews. The first was at Kamenetz-Podolsk, when some 16,000 Jewish deportees

from Carpatho-Ruthenia, in addition to over 5,000 other Jews, were murdered by the Nazis between 27 and 28 August 1941.¹³

Interior Minister Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer ordered an immediate halt to the deportations and recalled seven trains that had not yet reached the killing fields. Some 2,000 Jews returned to Hungary and told of what had happened. Following the Moscow Declaration on Atrocities in November 1943, the Hungarian Government took fright and indicted General Feketeahalmyczeydner and two others. However they escaped to Germany.¹⁴ The second massacre was at Delvidek (Novi Sad) in January 1942, when about 700 Jews and 2,550 Serbs were massacred.¹⁵ In March 1942 Laszlo Bardossy, who was executed after the war, was replaced as Prime Minister by Miklos Kallay, who resisted Nazi pressure for the deportation of the Jews.¹⁶

After Hungary had refused to send troops to the Balkans and the Nazis learnt of Kallay's overtures to the Allies, Hitler summoned Horthy to Klessheim Castle on April 17 1943. Joachim von Ribbentrop said that the Jews either had to be annihilated or put in concentration camps.¹⁷ An entry in Goebbels diary for 8 May said that 'The Jewish question is being solved least satisfactorily by the Hungarians.'¹⁸

On 15 March 1944 Horthy was again summoned to Klessheim Castle where he was told to accept a German-approved government or be removed. When Horthy's train left Berlin on 18 March, attached to it was a carriage containing the new Nazi plenipotentiary, Edmund Veessenmayer. On arrival Horthy was met by Nazi troops.¹⁹ Kallay sought refuge in the Turkish legation.²⁰

The new government was led by Döme Sztójay. Horthy told the Crown Council that he had been attacked for not having permitted the massacre of the Jews.²¹ From now on Hungary's leaders too would be complicit in the Holocaust,²² though at the Eichmann Trial, Horthy was defended by the Prosecution.²³

There is no doubt that Horthy was fully aware of what deportation meant. In the draft of a letter to Hitler on 7 May 1943, one sentence read: 'A further reproach of Your Excellency was that the [Hungarian] government has failed to take as far-reaching an action in the extirpation of the Jews as Germany had taken.' This sentence was deleted from the final version.²⁴

Angelo Rotta, the Apostolic Nuncio, on 15 May 1944, wrote that the whole world knew what deportation meant.²⁵ In his trial before the People's

Court on 17 December 1945 László Endre, the Secretary of State in the Interior Ministry and a committed National Socialist, gave evidence that Horthy instructed him to help the Nazis execute the deportations as quickly as possible. [26](#)

On 19 March 150-200 members of Eichmann's Judenkommando entered Hungary. Hermann Krumei was second in command.[27](#) According to some historians, Hungary had at its disposal sufficient troops to oppose the Nazi occupation.[28](#) In Russia, Hungary had lost over 100,000 out of 136,000 troops, with the crushing defeat at Voronezh and then Stalingrad.[29](#)

General Otto Winkelmann, who commanded the SS troops, was a bitter enemy of Veessenmayer. Ribbentrop instructed Veessenmayer that there must be no delay in the concentration and deportation of the Jews. Otherwise there would be a full German occupation.

A resistance movement was almost non-existent in Hungary. If there had been one, it is doubtful that the Nazis would have invaded.[30](#) According to Veessenmayer, 'a day in Yugoslavia was more dangerous than a year in Hungary'.[31](#) He testified, after the war, that the deportations would have been impossible without 'the enthusiastic participation of the entire Hungarian police apparatus' who consisted mainly of gendarmes, many of whom were of Swabian origin and ardent Nazis.[32](#)

The only government minister to oppose the deportations was the Deputy Foreign Minister Mihály Arnóthy-Jungerth. The Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party were both extremely weak and their anti-fascist demonstrations had often been held at the request of Kallay![33](#)

Budapest Judenrat

The SS, because they had so few men in Hungary, needed the co-operation of the Jewish leaders in order to effect the deportations. In his interview with Dutch Nazi journalist Willem Sassen, Eichmann told how Hungary's Jews had lived through the war relatively untouched.[34](#)

... they had sent me, the 'master' himself, to make sure the Jews did not revolt as they had in the Warsaw Ghetto. I now concentrated on negotiations with the Jewish political officials in Budapest ... One man stood out among them, Dr. Rudolf Kasztner an ice-cold lawyer and a fanatical Zionist. He agreed to help keep the Jews from resisting the deportation – and even keep order in the collection camps – if I would close my eyes and let a few hundred or a few thousand young Jews emigrate illegally to Palestine. It was a good bargain. For keeping order in the camps, the price of 15,000 to 20,000 Jews ...

was not too high for me.... there was a very strong similarity between our attitudes in the SS and the viewpoint of these immensely idealistic Zionist leaders.... And because Kasztner rendered us a great service by helping keep the deportation camps peaceful, I would let his groups escape.... That was the 'gentleman's agreement' I had with Kasztner.³⁵

On 20 March 1944 the Jewish leaders were summoned by Wisliceny and Krumej and instructed to form a Judenrat, the Central Council of Hungarian Jews, by the next day. Its jurisdiction covered the whole of Hungary.

The Budapest Jewish leaders were impressed with the politeness and the respect Wisliceny and Krumej had shown them. They called their friends and relatives after the meeting to reassure them that, as usual, the horror stories had been exaggerated.³⁶

The atmosphere was so genial that one member, said 'There is nothing wrong, they want to collaborate with us...'³⁷

Hungary's Jews would not have followed the instructions of anyone. That was why the Nazis put the existing Jewish leadership on the Council.³⁸ In their attitude to working with the Nazis, there was nothing to choose between the Zionist and non-Zionist leaders. Kasztner and Council President Samu Stern worked closely with each other. After the Arrow Cross government came to power, the Zionist Relief and Rescue Committee (Vaada) '(took) over the functions of the Judenrat.'³⁹

Stern was a confidant of Horthy. Even at the height of the mass deportations he rejected the idea of a clandestine distribution of an appeal to Hungarian Christians or any 'illegal' activity. The Judenrat placed their hopes on Horthy and the traditional elites whereas Vaada 'followed the so-called "SS-line," in a vain attempt to bribe the Nazis. Vaada was established in January 1943 under the auspices of the JA Rescue Committee.⁴⁰

In March-April the Hungarian Government decreed the removal of Jews from the different professions, with the exception of doctors, 4,000 of whom, out of a total of 13,000, were Jewish.

On 31 March Eichmann summoned the Council to a meeting. Eichmann told them that all would be well but that they would have to act as a conduit for German orders. 'He virtually hypnotised the Jewish Council and, through that body, the whole of Hungarian Jewry.'⁴¹ The Council sent a letter to the Presidents of the provincial Jewish communities, calling upon them to obey their orders.

Following a request by the Central Council, whoever is called must appear at the requested place.... the life of every individual as well as of the entire community depends on their exact implementation.⁴²

They informed them that the ‘Central Jewish Council has been granted the right of absolute disposal over all Jewish spiritual and material wealth and manpower.’⁴³

Decree 1610/1944 ordering the wearing of the Yellow Star was issued on 31 March and was effective from 7 April.⁴⁴ The Jewish Council told the Jews to wear the Yellow Star from 4 April, despite it being the first step in their destruction. Many Jews chose not to wear it.

The Yellow Star hit the Catholic Church particularly hard as tens of thousands of Christians had to wear it, including clergy. Cardinal Jusztinián Serédi threatened to instruct the clergy not to wear it. On 4 April Sztójay backed down. The clergy, members of mixed marriages, dependants of war veterans, Jewish widows of Christians and foreign Jews were exempted. However, when, on 23 April Serédi demanded that the same apply to all Christian Jews Sztójay refused.⁴⁵

The SS and Hungarian gendarmes did not have the necessary personnel to hunt for individual Jews. Those who turned up were among the first to be deported. Most of those who didn’t turn up survived.

On 24 April the Council complied with the SS order. When some Budapest Council employees advised against distributing the summonses, Dr Kohn, the Executive Secretary, responded that ‘they were exposing the entire Jewish Council to danger...’⁴⁶

Dr Imre Latkóczy of the Hungarian Independence Front warned Stern that the Judenrat should cease all contact with the SS Command and should not issue any more summonses ordering Jews to report for work. After the war, the Hungarian authorities seriously considered putting Vaada and the Jewish Council on trial for collaborating with the enemy.⁴⁷

Otto Komoly, the Chairman of Vaada, reassured Kasztner regarding the forthcoming deportations that ‘The admiral [Horthy] promised Hitler a hundred thousand Jewish workers.’⁴⁸ On 6 and 7 April the German Armaments Ministry had secured from Hitler an authorization to remove 100,000 of the Jewish deportees intended for Auschwitz to construction projects.⁴⁹

Leaders of other Jewish communities followed Budapest’s example and formed councils.⁵⁰ The Jewish leaders were aware of the Nazis’ record. Vaada was the best-informed in Europe about the Final Solution yet they kept neither

the Jewish masses nor the country's Christian leadership informed.⁵¹ The rumours were that Kasztner was a Gestapo agent.⁵²

The work of the Council in rounding up Jews for deportation was hampered by the increasing number of converts to Christianity. Many Christian Jews were of great assistance to the Jews, doing shopping or errands for them or hiding and safekeeping their valuables.⁵³ As a result of pressure from the Christian churches and leaders of the Association of the Christian Jews of Hungary, a plan was devised to separate converts from members of the Jewish faith.⁵⁴

Two categories of Jews acquired special protection and virtual immunity. These were the converted and exempted Jews. The exempted Jews were freed from practically all the harshest anti-Jewish restrictions because of their contribution to Hungarian society – artists, writers, scientists etc.

In the larger cities the Jews were pushed into ghettos. In Budapest Endre concentrated Jews into houses next to factories under the illusion that world Jewry would not bomb their own.

When, on 23 June, Jews in Zone IV in the south-east were concentrated in a ghetto, the Council was faced with an angry delegation. Their spokesman was a young Budapest Jew and member of Betar, Dr. Imre Varga. The audience was visibly shaken by the emotional impact of the speech:

Don't you want to understand that our fathers, mothers and brothers... are taken to their extermination? ... is it possible to be satisfied with petitions and servile requests? ... We must shout to the whole world that they are murdering us.... We have to resist and stop this cowardly submission.

They were disarmed by Stern's reply which was that the Council's complaint was being considered that day by the Hungarian cabinet.⁵⁵ When Varga proposed a partisan war against the Nazis, Stern threatened to report him to the Gestapo.⁵⁶ The next day Varga committed suicide. The encounter, however, was not a total failure because it galvanized some of the middle-echelon officials of the Council into drafting an appeal to the Hungarian people. 'It was the first overt act of defiance of any importance.'⁵⁷ The appeal was passed to Rabbi Fabian Herskovits, who made 2,000 copies.

Stern accepted the Nazi rationale for the deportations, that they were only intended for the eastern provinces and were only aimed at partisans. 'It makes sense for the nation to protect itself.'⁵⁸ The Council handed over lists of Jews to the Nazis and it was told by the SS and the Hungarian Police to prepare summonses for the Jews on the lists 'requesting' them to appear for 'work'.⁵⁹

Deportations and the Jewish Leadership

The first preparations for deportation began in April 1944 in Zone 1 in Carpathian Ruthenia. On 3 May the Council wrote a letter to Interior Minister Andor Jaross:

We emphatically declare that we do not seek this audience to lodge complaints about the merit of the measures adopted, but merely ask that they be carried out in a humane spirit. [60](#)

On 15 May the trains began rolling from Hungary, across Slovakia, to Auschwitz. [61](#) The Hungarian Judenrat, even after the deportations had begun, demanded that the Jews of Hungary ‘trust and believe’ in their leadership. [62](#) When the persecution of the Jews began, wrote the father of George Soros, ‘it was carried out not by the Germans, nor by their Hungarian lackeys, but – most astonishing – by the Jews themselves.’ [63](#) It was the same pattern as in Warsaw and elsewhere.

All the Jews in Zone III in Northern Hungary had been deported by 16 June. In Zones I, II and III a number of Jews attempted to flee and the movement to Slovakia was large enough for Veessenmayer to suggest that the Jews of Slovakia also be deported. Eberhard von Thadden, a specialist on Jewish affairs, reported that Jews elsewhere in Hungary remained calm because the Jewish Council of Budapest announced that these measures applied only to Jews of the eastern areas ‘who had been preserving their Jewish peculiarities.’ [64](#) The concentration and deportation of the Jews of Zone IV coincided with the first attempts to concentrate Budapest’s Jews. [65](#)

On 23 June after the deportations from Zones I to III, the Jewish Council wrote to Horthy that the Jews were going on a ‘fatal journey from which they will never return.’ [66](#) Livia Rothkirchen nonetheless believed that criticism of the Jewish Council was ‘overly severe.’ [67](#)

The ‘Presidential Troika’, Samu Stern, Charles Wilhelm, and Ernő Pető, of the Council and the four leaders of the Vaada: Komoly, Kasztner, Joel Brand and André Biss, and their families had immunity passes, which meant that they had immunity from arrest and deportation and did not have to wear the Yellow Star. They could even receive permits to visit concentration camps in Hungary. [68](#) They were allowed to use cars and phones and to ignore the curfew. The granting of these favours was a Nazi tactic for the more effective implementation of the deportations. [69](#)

Wisliceny arrived in Hungary carrying a letter from Weissmandel. Addressed to Chief Rabbi Pinchas Freudiger, it spoke of the ‘trustworthy’ people in Hungary, who have ‘enough guts and devotion to negotiate with the SS as the Slovak group had done.’⁷⁰ Weissmandel wrote that Wisliceny ‘could be trusted regarding a ransom such as the arrangement in Slovakia or the Europa Plan.’⁷¹ Randolph Braham described this as the ‘fatal advice of the Slovak Jewish leaders.’⁷² According to Nissan Kahan, a Zionist member of the Jewish Council, there were three letters from the Slovakian Working Group signed by Weissmandel, Fleischmann and Oskar Neumann. They were intended for Baroness Edith Weiss, Freudiger and Kahan. ‘They informed us in the letter that Wisliceny was the savior of the Slovakian Jews and was well disposed to them.’⁷³

Negotiations with the Nazis

On 21 April, in negotiations with Krumej and SS Captain Hunsche, Kasztner and his deputy, Joel Brand, were offered the opportunity of selecting 600 ‘Prominent’ Jews who would be able to leave on a train out of Hungary.⁷⁴ This offer was dependent on their silence as to the fate of the remaining Hungarian Jews. Kasztner and Vaada were being offered a straight swap – 600 of the Jewish and Zionist elite in exchange for nearly half a million Hungarian Jews.⁷⁵

At his trial in Israel, in response to the suggestion that his negotiations with Eichmann simply distracted the Jews from knowledge of their extermination, Kasztner agreed.⁷⁶ Both Eichmann and Kasztner had an interest in keeping the ‘rescue plan’ secret.’⁷⁷ Kasztner testified that:

Toward the end of April 1944, the German military agents informed me that they had finally decided on the total deportation of Hungary’s Jews I also received information from Auschwitz that they were preparing there to receive the Hungarian Jews . . . Wisliceny asked that we should do everything we could to comply with the demands of the new German Plan. Otherwise, he said, he could see no chance of helping Hungarian Jews.⁷⁸

This was the ‘logic’ of Kasztner’s negotiations with the SS. Hungary’s Jews were to be ‘helped’ by co-operating in their own deportation. Ladislau Lob suggested that Kasztner ‘intended to use the rescue of a few hundred to save many thousands more.’⁷⁹ Except that by the time the Train of the Prominents [TToP] had departed 400,000 Jews were already dead. Kasztner’s Report barely mentions them.⁸⁰

Throughout his report to the JA, Kasztner's main concern was Eichmann's refusal to keep his side of the bargain. Kasztner complained that 'More than 300,000 have already been sent to Auschwitz and there was no possibility of saving even one of the 300 prominent figures.'⁸¹ Kasztner's concern was exclusively for the fate of the Prominent Jews.

When the TotP eventually departed in the early hours of 1 July from Budapest, the number of passengers had increased to 1,684.⁸² It was headed for the Privileged Camp at Bergen-Belsen. When the train approached the border town of Auspitz panic set in.⁸³ "Auspitz" sounded a lot like "Auschwitz".⁸⁴ When informed that there would be hot showers the passengers protested that they were fine without them. They had heard rumours of the "showers" in the extermination camps. The same happened when the train arrived at Linz in Austria.⁸⁵ This suggests that knowledge of the Vrba-Wetzler Report [VWR] was widespread among the Jewish and Zionist elites.

On 18 August a group of 318 left Belsen for Switzerland and the remainder left on 5 December. Eichmann had been forbidden by Himmler from interfering with the train.⁸⁶ According to Kasztner the departure of the first 318 'was tantamount to a revolution.'⁸⁷

The number of Jews who were murdered was estimated at 564,507.⁸⁸ After the Nazis' defeat Braham estimated that 255,000 survived, of whom 144,000 lived in Budapest.⁸⁹ If Eichmann had succeeded in deporting the Budapest Jews, Kasztner claimed he had been promised another train for 1,500 Jews.⁹⁰

Strasshof

Kasztner's defenders claim that in addition to the TotP, he also reached an agreement with Eichmann on 14 June to "put on ice" up to 30,000 Hungarian Jews in Strasshof, near Vienna. In the end some 18,000 Jews were sent there at the end of June 1944, of whom some 12,000 were liberated by the Soviets.⁹¹

The saving of the Strasshof Jews had nothing to do with Kasztner. It was a product of the acute labour shortage in the Reich and the desperate situation militarily. Braham described how the head of the RSHA, Kaltenbrunner, was besieged by Austrian entrepreneurs operating war industries and by SS-*Brigadeführer* Blaschke, the Mayor of Vienna, demanding desperately needed slave labour. Kaltenbrunner instructed Eichmann to have a few transports of

deportees diverted to Austria.’ [92](#) Blaschke needed labourers to dig anti-tank ditches. Eichmann had no alternative but to comply.[93](#)

When Eichmann charged Kasztner \$100 a head for these ‘Exchange Jews’ and demanded that Vaada pay for their upkeep, he had already committed them to working in Austria.[94](#) Biss accepts that ‘the discussion concerned an order Eichmann had to obey.’ [95](#) The judges in the Eichmann trial found that Kasztner had been deceived by a ‘simulated concession.’ [96](#)

Braham interviewed a number of Strasshof survivors. ‘Many of them had warm memories about their humane treatment by Austrian farmers and villagers.’ [97](#) Despite the years of Nazi propaganda ‘many [local Austrians] ignored the prohibition against giving the Jews anything other than the prescribed near-starvation diet.’ Others offered to send and receive mail from Hungary. The SS had a number of Christians arrested ‘some of whose lives ended in concentration camps alongside the Jews they had tried to help.’ Some 100,000 Austrians were incarcerated in concentration camps during the war, of whom 20,000 died.[98](#).

Strasshof was liberated in April 1945. Krumej sought credit for saving the Jews of Strasshof, remarking that he hoped that Kasztner would remember this.[99](#) Kasztner did indeed remember Krumej, the butcher of Hungary’s Jews and the children of Lidice. Despite Krumej having extorted 115,000 RM from the earnings of the Strasshof Jews, Kasztner testified for him.[100](#)

The Joel Brand Mission

On 25 April Eichmann made the ‘Blood for Trucks’ offer to Brand. The SS offered ‘two distinct but interrelated consolation prizes’.[101](#) Eichmann told Brand, ‘I am prepared to sell you all the Jews. I am also prepared to have them all annihilated.’ [102](#)

On 15 May Brand held his last meeting with Eichmann.[103](#) Two days later, 23,363 Hungarian Jews having already been deported,[104](#) Brand flew with Gestapo double-agent, Bandi Grosz, to Turkey. Brand’s mission was to negotiate with the Allies over the ‘offer’. Eichmann had proposed to Himmler that they should offer a million Jews in exchange for ten thousand winterised trucks and other materials for use on the Eastern front. Eichmann was surprised that Himmler agreed.[105](#)

The real purpose of the proposal was the opportunity it created for negotiations with the Allies.¹⁰⁶ Almost to the end of the war Himmler and Hitler held on to the belief that the West would agree to a ceasefire, allowing the Nazis to fight on alone on the Eastern Front. Hitler, Jodl and Goering believed the Western Allies would agree through fear of a Russian victory.¹⁰⁷ At no time though was there any intention of letting 1 million Jews escape annihilation.

Becher assumed that Kasztner would understand this.¹⁰⁸ Grosz was informed by Gerhard Clages, the head of the SD in Budapest, that Brand was a cover for his own mission.¹⁰⁹ When Grosz testified to the Kasztner trial that his had been the main mission, no one believed that this 'small, ugly, balding, toothless old man' had been Himmler's personal emissary.¹¹⁰

Brand was immediately arrested by the British on arrival in Aleppo on 7 June. After meeting Moshe Shertok he was transferred to Cairo where he was detained. Brand blamed the Zionist leaders for having ignored if not sabotaged his mission.¹¹¹ However, the evidence suggests that the JAE devoted more time to the Brand proposals than to any other rescue matter.¹¹²

On 25 June Shertok left for Cairo having received detailed reports from Switzerland on the deportations to Auschwitz. The offer led to the JA 'inadvertently' failing to publicise the deportations.¹¹³ In the ensuing 12 days, before the deportations were halted, some 140,000 Jews were deported to their deaths whilst the JA concerned itself with diplomatic niceties.¹¹⁴ If the JA refused to publicise the danger to Hungarian Jewry, because they trusted Nazi promises to delay the deportations, then that is a damning indictment in itself. Five million Jews had already been murdered by the Nazis.

The weak link in the deportation process was always the Hungarian Government. Shortly before his death, Brand admitted that he made 'a terrible mistake' passing the Nazis' proposals to the British and that 'Himmler (had) sought to sow suspicion among the Allies.'¹¹⁵

This was the context for four meetings that took place between Becher and his entourage, Kasztner and Saly Mayer, at the Swiss-German border between 21 August and 5 November. The first meeting took place in St. Gallen.¹¹⁶ Mayer had been forced to resign from the Association of Swiss Jews because of his opposition to the entry of Jewish refugees.¹¹⁷

The talks were a charade, the transfer of money a pretext. Becher's adjutant, Max Gruson, pleaded with Mayer to go along with the pretence.¹¹⁸

What Kasztner didn't understand was that for Becher, the negotiations had to be seen to succeed. Becher therefore decided, whilst heading to Vienna, not to tell Himmler the truth about what had happened at the Swiss border.¹¹⁹

The second round of talks took place on 5 September. Becher refused to attend because he had been humiliated when, at the first meeting he was left standing at the frontier after he had failed to obtain a Swiss visa.¹²⁰ At the third meeting on September 28th, Becher's representative Herbert Kettlitz, like Gruson, was reduced to asking for something 'my chief could use'. Otherwise, he warned 'it will be impossible for him to intervene further with the Reichsführer-SS on behalf of the Jews.' ¹²¹ Both knew that the Jewish negotiators could not deliver on their promises.¹²²

On 5 November Becher and Roswell McClelland of the WRB met. Becher told Himmler that he was Roosevelt's personal representative.¹²³ The meeting was the first channel of communication between the Allies and the Nazis.¹²⁴

Alternative negotiations were also taking place on the initiative of Isaac Sternbuch, who persuaded Jean-Marie Musy, a former Swiss President, to intervene personally with Himmler, whom he had known since the 1930s. Musy had published a pro-Nazi newspaper, *La Jeune Suisse*.¹²⁵ His intervention secured the release of a train of 1,210 Jews from Theresienstadt in February 1945, the first of what was intended to be a weekly train. However Hitler vetoed any further trains at Kaltenbrunner's instigation.

Musy sought to save the lives of the 600,000 Jews remaining in the concentration camps, whom Hitler had ordered to be murdered, by persuading Himmler to countermand his order in late November 1944 and order the destruction of the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau.¹²⁶ Musy's intervention with Himmler 'saved the lives of many thousands of Jews.'¹²⁷ It was also responsible for the termination of the talks with Saly Mayer.¹²⁸

The Zionist Silence about the Hungarian Holocaust

In May 1944, as the Hungarian deportations were about to start, Mapai was convulsed by a split between Faction B and the majority.¹²⁹ On 2 June the General Council of Mapai met. They said nothing about Hungary.¹³⁰ Katznelson reminded Ben-Gurion that 'There are far more important problems at the moment than Weizmann. There is the loss of European Jewry.'¹³¹ Until 16 July the JA was silent about the Hungarian deportations,¹³² apart

from a cabled report on 22 June 'Why don't Hungary's Jews defend themselves?'¹³³

On 11 May there was a speech by Ben-Gurion. No mention was made of Hungarian Jewry. On 15 May Shertok delivered a speech. Again nothing was said about Hungary. On 21 May, after some 80,000 Jews had been deported, Ben-Gurion delivered another speech without mentioning Hungary's Jews.¹³⁴ The reaction of the Zionist press was familiar:

The secret of the annihilation was guarded... just as two years earlier they had not revealed the destruction of Polish Jewry.¹³⁵

On 23 May Ehud Avriel, who was involved with Aliya Bet, sent a cable from Istanbul concerning the danger to Hungary's Jews. This appeared in *Davar*. On 31 May *Ha'aretz* reported that 10,000 Jews a day had been deported from Hungary but no other paper took this up. The Zionist press reported on the 'danger of annihilation' on 6 June. On 27 June, *Davar*, quoting a Polish source, reported that 100,000 Hungarian Jews had already been murdered. On 30 June *Davar* cited "authoritative sources in Istanbul" as saying that as of 19 June 400,000 Jews had been transported to Poland.¹³⁶

The JAE were aware of the threat of deportations. Vanya Pomerantz of the Agency's Istanbul mission informed them on 25 May that 12,000 Jews a day would be deported the following week. In fact they had already started. Gruenbaum, who was alone in describing the Nazi 'offer' as a 'satanic provocation', informed members that 12,000 Jews a day were being transported to Auschwitz. Ben-Gurion asked those present 'to keep these things absolutely secret and not to talk to anyone about them.' Eichmann 'scored a major achievement' when the Zionists agreed to keep the deportations secret.¹³⁷

On 10 July after the deportations had ended *Davar* published a report from Moshe Krausz in Budapest about the exterminations. At no time was there a concerted campaign to publicise and highlight the deportations to the world. *Davar*, in an editorial, stated that 'The Nazi denial of extermination has a good foundation. Not as many were annihilated as was feared.'¹³⁸

Until mid-July, 6 weeks after the killing of 12,000 a day had begun, still not a single authoritative word is uttered by the Jewish Agency or any Zionist officials that the deportations had started - that already half a million were exterminated... for a full month and a half, Mr Sharett and the Jewish Agency are knowingly and wilfully suppressing all the news known to them.¹³⁹

When the Swiss press publicised the AP the deportations stopped shortly after.¹⁴⁰

The Hungarian Army and the Labour Service

Hungary was the only Axis country to send Jewish troops to the Eastern Front.¹⁴¹ 25,456 of the 37,200 Jews sent to Russia either died or were wounded.¹⁴² There were several reports of Hungarian troops protecting Jews in Hungarian-occupied areas of the Ukraine. In Situation Report USSR 23 (15.7.41.) Einsatzgruppe D reported that 'militia action against Jews has been stopped by the Hungarian army'. Situation Report USSR 67 (29.8.41.) told how in a territory bordering the Dniestr 'except for the area occupied by the Hungarians, the area from Chotin to Jamol has been made free of Jews.' Hungarian soldiers reported what they saw in letters home.¹⁴³

The rare references to the Hungarians do not find them co-operative. In Zhytomyr the Hungarians stopped an action against the Jews by the native police. Despite its official anti-Semitism, Hungarian Jewish nationals in Germany fared better than those of many other states because of the protection of the Hungarian Government. Hungarian Jews had to be treated like Jews from neutral countries.¹⁴⁴ In Occupied France and especially Paris they received particular protection by Dr. Antal Uhl, a Roman Catholic priest, who provided them with false papers.

On November 4, 1919 Horthy ordered that organised workers and Jews were to be excluded from recruitment to the army. Hungary too had its version of the stab-in-the-back legend in which Jews played a central part. On 6 December a military form of labour service was established for these 'unreliables'.¹⁴⁵

From March 1939 onwards a system of forced labour service for Jews was imposed. With the outbreak of the war in July 1941, more than 100,000 Jews were mobilised in labour battalions. They fought in the Ukraine and up to 50,000 were killed. Albert Speer sought to utilise this labour for the copper mines at Bor where some 6,000 servicemen ended up working in slave labour conditions until, in September 1944, they were evacuated as the Nazis retreated from the Balkans.¹⁴⁶ Very few survived at the hands of the Nazis and their Swabian allies or the forced marches.¹⁴⁷ One of the few courageous voices of protest against the conditions of the labour servicemen was that of Margit Schlachta of the Social Mission Society.¹⁴⁸

Many of the labour servicemen resisted the anti-Semitic measures they experienced and before Hungary's entry into the war a relatively large number

escaped into the Soviet Union. Some 20-30,000 Hungarian Jews were kept in captivity in the USSR.¹⁴⁹ Following defeat at Voronezh, the conditions of Jewish labour servicemen improved.

Jews in the withdrawing Hungarian army were the target of the Nazi police and military, which caused resentment among many Hungarian soldiers. General Gusztav Jany filed a protest with the Commander of the German Second Army. Defence Minister Vilmos Nagy made strenuous efforts to see that they were treated correctly.¹⁵⁰ Braham detailed a number of Hungarian agencies, such as the Budapest Volunteer Ambulance Service, which recruited able-bodied Jewish males into the labour service. The Ministry of Defence became a major source of rescue.¹⁵¹

Labour servicemen comprised 50,000, approximately 10% of the victims of the Hungarian holocaust.¹⁵² Paradoxically, labour service offered an avenue for survival between July and October 1944.¹⁵³ Col. Imre Reviczky, Commander of Labour Battalion X ordered that all Jews who appeared for service were to be inducted and given food and shelter regardless of their state of health or age. About 150,000 Jews were to be exempted from deportation.¹⁵⁴ Some army members decided to issue recruitment summons for Jews from the ghettos and even the concentration camps: 'Some brave commanders called up men for military forced labour with the deliberate purpose of saving lives.' The main aim was to preserve Jewish labour within Hungary.¹⁵⁵ Nonetheless, in Doroshich on 30 April 1943, the authorities decided to eradicate typhoid by setting fire to barns along with the 800 Jewish men who were living in them.¹⁵⁶

Lt. Col. Lazlo Ferenczy of the Hungarian gendarmes, who was in charge of the ghettoisation and concentration camps, 'was particularly upset' by the rescue of Jews. He complained to his superiors and the SS.¹⁵⁷ On 7 June the Ministry of Defence issued a secret decree under which labour servicemen were to be treated like POWs.¹⁵⁸ During the summer of 1944, after the replacement of Sztójay by General Géza Lakatos, the armed forces emerged as a partial source of rescue for civilian Jews as well. Their situation, however, deteriorated with the Nyilas coup and 50,000 were handed over to the Germans, thousands of whom were murdered and the rest marched to Mauthausen and then Gunskirchen, an offshoot which was liberated on 4 May 1945. ¹⁵⁹ Some 13,000 survived.¹⁶⁰

Ending the Deportations and Saving the Jews of Budapest

Bauer attributed the saving of the Jews of Budapest to Saly Mayer, who never set foot in Hungary and Kasztner, who was not in Budapest at the time.¹⁶¹ The real reasons for the survival of Budapest's Jews were the AP, international public opinion, the defeat of László Baky's plot to remove Horthy and the fact that the Nazis didn't want to turn Horthy into an adversary.¹⁶²

In Budapest Hechalutz concentrated primarily on saving themselves, smuggling several hundred across the border to Romania and Slovakia.¹⁶³ Bauer tried to magnify Hechalutz's role but Braham dismissed his suggestion that Oszeif Meir of Hashomer Hatzair had been involved in sabotaging and derailing the trains to Auschwitz. 'No corroboration for this claim has been found to date.'¹⁶⁴ Kasztner's claim that Vaada helped thousands escape over the Romanian, Yugoslav and Slovakian borders is also without foundation.¹⁶⁵

The Glass House in Budapest enjoyed extraterritorial status and was under the protection of the Swiss consulate and Carl Lutz, the consul. It became the centre of Hechalutz operations.¹⁶⁶ About 50,000 Jews lived in the ICRC's houses and neutral embassies and over 100,000 held false papers.¹⁶⁷ Under the Nyilas, Hechalutz maintained contact with the communist underground headed by Pal Demeny and anti-German bourgeois military groups headed by Ivan Fabry.¹⁶⁸

In late June and early July, the Pope, King Gustav of Sweden,¹⁶⁹ Cordell Hull, Anthony Eden and Max Huber of the ICRC appealed for an end to the deportations.¹⁷⁰ The Turkish, Spanish and Swiss governments also intervened. It amounted to a 'bombardment of Horthy's conscience.'¹⁷¹ The Hungarian Government had intercepted Anglo-American messages containing Jewish requests for targeted bombings of Hungarian offices including the names of 70 prominent officials responsible for the deportations, which the Allies promptly published.¹⁷² Roosevelt threatened that if the deportations were not stopped 'Hungary's fate will not be like that of any other civilized nation.' At the 26 June Crown Council meeting, as a result of the VWR, there was expressed for the first time at the highest government level a desire to halt the deportations.¹⁷³

On 30 June Veessenmayer indicated that Horthy had become 'restless' and now opposed the deportations. The Government was frightened because of

the threat of Allied bombing.¹⁷⁴ In an unusually heavy air raid, 600 American bombers raided Budapest on 2 July.¹⁷⁵

Horthy stopped, at a stroke, the deportations on 7 July.¹⁷⁶ Clearly he could have stopped the deportations earlier.¹⁷⁷ Horthy considered the Jews of the provinces as a rabble but the Jews of Budapest as cultured. The main reason for the halting of the deportations, Veessenmayer claimed, was that they were carried out with the world watching. Rothkirchen attributed Horthy's decision to the 'the impact of the Auschwitz Protocols.' Thomas Sakmyster agreed. Previously Horthy had been able to dismiss information about Auschwitz as gossip and 'Jewish exaggeration.'¹⁷⁸ Even Bauer accepted that the Protocols were "an important factor" in stopping the deportations.¹⁷⁹

There was a rearguard action by Jaross, supported by Baky and Endre, who continued with their deportation plans on 8 July. But without the continued cooperation of the Hungarian gendarmerie, Eichmann was helpless.¹⁸⁰ A further deportation from Kistarca was arranged on 12 July but the train was recalled by Horthy. Eichmann nonetheless managed to send the train back again on 19 July, this time successfully and 1,500 were deported from Sarvar camp on 24 July.¹⁸¹

Horthy's main target were the Nyilas 'who... want to swing the country into the hands of the Germans.'¹⁸² At a meeting of the Crown Council Horthy stated:

I shall not permit the deportations to bring further shame on the Hungarians! Let the Government take measures for the removal of Baky and Endre! The deportation of the Jews of Budapest must cease!¹⁸³

In order to prevent any further defiance of his order 'in a lightning move Horthy dismissed State Secretaries Endre and Baky and warrants were issued for their arrest.'¹⁸⁴ Up to 200,000 Jews in Budapest, Eichmann estimated 250,000, were saved from deportation.¹⁸⁵

Horthy's Last Days

In August the Soviet army broke through the German-Romanian lines. Within a few weeks 26 German divisions were hacked to pieces by the Soviets and their new Romanian allies.

The Nazis had intended to begin deporting Budapest's Jews to Auschwitz in mid-August but this was aborted by an order from Himmler to Otto Winkelmann.¹⁸⁶ Himmler didn't want to cause a rift with Hungary 'because of

the few Jews left in Budapest.’ [187](#) Himmler feared that Hungary would follow Romania’s example and switch sides.[188](#) Winkelmann testified after the war that Himmler feared that after the loss of the Romanian oil wells, they would lose the petrol of Zala too.

The Sztójay government was overthrown with the aid of a single tank on 29 August, to be replaced by that of General Lakatos, which lasted until 15 October. The Judenkommando was withdrawn at the end of August. For Budapest’s Jews it was the calm before the storm.

On 14 October, the Nazis were warned by Horthy that the alliance with Germany was being terminated. The whole affair had been botched.[189](#) In response, the Nazis sent the 24th Panzer Division into Budapest with the purpose of overthrowing Horthy and Lakatos. Horthy’s son, Miklos, was captured by SS Obersturmbannführer Otto Skorzeny and rolled up in a carpet. Horthy was told that if he showed the least sign of ‘treason’ his son would be shot.[190](#)

Szálasi and the Arrow Cross/Nyilas

On 16 October the Nazis installed a Nyilas government under Ferenc Szálasi. This was when the relationship between Kasztner and Becher flourished. Eichmann introduced Kasztner to Becher on 20 July.[191](#) Up to quarter of a million Jews were living, often in hiding, in Budapest.[192](#)

On 30 October Szálasi recognised the safe conduct passes of Switzerland and other countries because of his desire for international recognition.[193](#) Most of the Jews were housed in what was to become the international or large ghetto. In cooperation with the ICRC, Angelo Rotta authorised the issue of pre-signed blank safe-conduct certificates to be used for rescuing Jews from the Obuda brickyards and the death march. Swedish rescue workers supplied them with protective passes.[194](#) Sándor György Ujváry of the ICRC and his associates succeeded in rescuing thousands of Jews.[195](#) Szálasi created the category of ‘preferred’ Jews who were exempt from wearing the Yellow Star and belatedly recognised those exempted by Horthy.[196](#)

With the approach of the Red Army, the Nyilas and SS went on a rampage. Thousands were killed. The total was as high as 50,000.[197](#) Minister of Defence Nagy and Barna Kiss, a Hungarian army officer, saved thousands of labour

servicemen. Veesenmayer reported on 8 May 1944 that 80,000 Jews had been saved from deportation because of their recruitment into the labour service.¹⁹⁸

Anti-Semitism was widespread in Hungarian society. However, there was another side to Hungarian society. Braham writes of 'kind-hearted' Christians who had to hide their feelings lest they too were assaulted. He tells of a peasant woman who tried to hand over food to the deportees and was caught by a gendarme. She was thrown into the car and also sent to Auschwitz.¹⁹⁹ It was through such terror that the majority of the populace became cowed and apathetic.²⁰⁰

Eugene Levai tells of numerous attempts by Hungarians to rescue Jews, for example he describes how on 29 June in Békéscsaba, the Mayor, Dr. Gyula Janossy, and the detectives Szokolai and Ladanyi, as well as Lieutenant of Police Sitkay, did everything in their power to assist the Jews.²⁰¹

The Death March from Budapest to Vienna

As the Soviet encirclement of Budapest grew tighter, Eichmann decided to march the Jews to Vienna where their labour was required. Some 25,000 Jewish men and 10,000 women were seized from their homes. The large underground factories in the Reich which produced planes and V-2s urgently needed labour. The Budapest Jews were the only source of that labour. Transportation had, however, broken down and the Jews had to be marched on foot.

The death march started on 8 November but the marchers had no food or warm clothing in the midst of winter.²⁰² Coming from Vienna on 16 November, the Chief of the SS Operational Main Office and Himmler's deputy in the Replacement Army, SS General Hans Juttner, noticed the state of the marchers lying in ditches, exhausted.²⁰³ Clearly they would not be fit for any labour. On 21 November Szálasi got cold feet about the death rate of the women and ordered the marches to be halted.

A number of people claimed the credit for stopping the march. Kasztner suggested that Juttner, Becher and even Rudolf Höss played a part.²⁰⁴ It was Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat, Catholic priests and the ICRC who were most influential in placing diplomatic pressure on Szálasi.²⁰⁵ Becher and Juttner had become concerned with their future rehabilitation.²⁰⁶ Relations between Becher and Eichmann had all but broken down. The death march was

the last gasp of a defeated regime. Instead of secret murder it was now taking place out in the open.[207](#)

The Honorary Spanish Consul, Giorgio Perlasca and the previous consul, Ángel Sanz Briz, handed out 5,218 Spanish passports to anyone who was Sephardic or had any Spanish business connections. Perlasca gathered Jewish orphans in buildings where the Spanish flag flew until January 1945.[208](#) Wallenberg recovered 2,000 marchers. 20,000 passports were handed out by the Papal Nuncio to baptised Jews.[209](#) The Portuguese Charge d'Affaires authorised the issuing of passports to any Jew who had relations in Portugal or Brazil as did the Turkish representative.[210](#)

The Szálasi regime ironically was more willing to stand up to the Nazis' Jewish policy than the Sztójay regime. The Jews in the newly-established ghetto were shivering and starving. But on 17 January Pest was liberated by the Russians and on 13 February the rest of Budapest surrendered.[211](#)

- 1 Baron, *The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue*, p.10, citing Wiesel's introduction to Braham and Bel Vago, *The Holocaust in Hungary 40 Years Later*, NY: Columbia University Press, 1985, p.xiv.
- 2 Timeline of World War II (1944), <https://tinyurl.com/38jjwwf5>
- 3 <https://tinyurl.com/zxecp>
- 4 Braham, p. 105. This is larger than the figures quoted by Hilberg.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 77, 84, 1143.
- 6 *Perfidy*, fn. 176, p.271. Supreme Court Judge Shneur Zalman Cheshin quoting Kasztner's testimony, giving his verdict in the Appeal of January 1958.
- 7 Braham, *The Christian Churches of Hungary and the Holocaust*, <https://tinyurl.com/y5a7lu4b>
- 8 Braham, pp. 124, 126
- 9 Eugene Levai, Black Book on the Martyrdom of Hungarian Jewry.
- 10 Braham, p. 152.
- 11 Hilberg, pp. 854-7, 860.
- 12 Braham, pp. 192-5, 197, 1030.
- 13 Ibid. p.205. See The First Massacre: Kamenets-Podilskiy, <https://tinyurl.com/zpscyyev>
- 14 Hilberg, pp. 303, 870-1, Braham, pp. 206-215, described Kamenets-Podilskiy as the first five-figure massacre of the Final Solution. Hilberg, p. 871.
- 15 Braham, pp. 207-15.
- 16 Ibid., p.234.
- 17 Hilberg, pp. 875-6.
- 18 Braham, p.241.
- 19 <https://tinyurl.com/y2xjgc4y>
- 20 Döme Sztójay <https://tinyurl.com/y6bazrll> <https://tinyurl.com/y4kge7n4>
- 21 Hilberg, p. 879, citing Eugene Levai, *Martyrdom*, p. 78, minutes of Crown Council 19.3.44. See also Gilbert *Auschwitz and the Allies*, pp. 183-4. Cesarani argued that Hungary was occupied by the Nazis 'partly to get their hands on Jewish labour.' *Final Solution*, p. xxiii
- 22 Longerich, p. 406.
- 23 Biss, p.126.
- 24 *The Hungarian Spectrum*, 2.7.16., <https://tinyurl.com/bwm9Sjdc>, citing *The Confidential Papers of Admiral Horthy*, p. 255. Braham wrote that Horthy, upon whom the Jewish leaders had pinned their hopes, had consented at Schloss Klesheim on March 18 1944 to deliver a few hundred thousand Jews for 'employment' in the Third Reich - 'an agreement the German and Hungarian Nazis successfully exploited for the speedy implementation of the "final solution."' *Rescue Operations*, p.178.
- 25 Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p. 717. 'The evidence is overwhelming that Horthy, like the other top leaders of Hungary, was fully informed about the barbaric treatment of the Jews...' Braham, *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p.30.
- 26 *Kasztner Report*, fn. 69, p 104.
- 27 Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p. 394 and *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p. 28. Ernst Kaltenbrunner had originally arrived, but he was replaced after three days by Otto Winkelmann.

- [28](#) Braham, p. 384.
- [29](#) Arendt, p.195.
- [30](#) Braham, p. 989.
- [31](#) Ibid., p.990.
- [32](#) *New York Review of Books*, 27.5.82. <https://tinyurl.com/ySt7phzj> Fein, in response to Itzvan Deak's 'Could the Hungarian Jews Have Survived?' 4.2.82. <https://tinyurl.com/yxjkg4r>
- [33](#) Braham, p.988.
- [34](#) Brenner, *51 Documents*, pp. 275. Hecht, n.66 pp. 260-261.
- [35](#) Brenner, *51 Documents*, pp. 276, 280-2. Linn, p. 48, citing *Life* magazine, 28.11.60. and 5.12.60. Eichmann gave this interview whilst he was free. He openly admitted to his part in the Holocaust. Nor did he deny that there were gas chambers. The interviews were admitted into evidence in the Eichmann trial.
- [36](#) Porter, p. 107. Lob, p.35-7.
- [37](#) Levai, p.80.
- [38](#) Braham, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p.284.
- [39](#) Kasztner Report, p. 224.
- [40](#) Ibid., pp. 82, 86. Braham, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p.281. There are conflicting accounts of when it was set up. Porter, p.56 dated it to October 1941. See Arendt, p.198.
- [41](#) Levai, p.88.
- [42](#) Braham, p. 446.
- [43](#) Hilberg, p. 883. Arendt, p.118. Levai, p.98. The Budapest Jewish Council was a coordinating committee for the other Jewish Councils in Hungary. Kasztner alleged in his Report, p. 129, that Vaada gave a warning to the provincial ghettos. However, this contradicts his testimony during the Kasztner Trial when he said that he didn't phone other towns to warn them of the consequences of deportation. *Perfidy*, pp. 113-14.
- [44](#) Kasztner Report, p.119.
- [45](#) Lapidé, *Three Popes*, p. 150. Hilberg, pp. 885, 888, 889.
- [46](#) Braham, p.557.
- [47](#) Ibid., p.432.
- [48](#) Porter, p.133.
- [49](#) Hilberg, p. 1218.
- [50](#) Braham, p. 97.
- [51](#) Ibid., p. 110.
- [52](#) Kasztner Report, pp. 327-8, citing Levai's 'Grey Book.'
- [53](#) Braham, p.735.
- [54](#) Ibid., p.739.
- [55](#) Porter, p.218 citing Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*.
- [56](#) Baron, p. 28, citing Braham, *The Tragedy of Hungarian Jewry*, pp. 234-5.
- [57](#) Braham, pp. 629-30, p. 996.
- [58](#) Porter, p.134.
- [59](#) Braham, p. 533. Levai, *Black Book*, pp. 123, 163.
- [60](#) Hilberg, p.900. Shiraz Dossa, p. 177.

- [61](#) Porter, p.164. Longerich, p. 408, suggests that the deportations began with four trains per day on May 14th. On April 28 1,800 Jews left from Kistarca and on April 29 a train left from Topola with 2,000 Jews, Hilberg p.894. Kistarca, in NE Budapest was the most important internment camp. It was commanded by Istavan Vasdenyei 'a decent police inspector who did everything possible to alleviate the plight of the prisoners.' Braham, p. 482.
- [62](#) Braham, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p.280-1.
- [63](#) Linn, p.75.
- [64](#) Braham, p. 609.
- [65](#) Hilberg, p. 892.
- [66](#) Hilberg, pp.900-1, 1117 citing Levai, *Black Book*, p. 134.
- [67](#) *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 312.
- [68](#) Arendt, p. 199, suggested all the Vaada members were exempt.
- [69](#) Braham, p. 781-2. Dr Albert Belton, Reply to Itzvan Deak 'Could the Hungarian Jews Have Survived?', *New York Review of Books*, 27.5.82., <https://tinyurl.com/ySt7phzj>
- [70](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, p. 154.
- [71](#) S Beit Zvi, p.311. See Porat, p. 197.
- [72](#) Braham, *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p.44. Weissmandel claimed in *Min Hamitzair* that he had sent a 'secret' letter to Freudiger countermanning the letter Wisliceny had given him. Weissmandel 'explained that... if there are dealings then there is no Ghetto – I explained, that the beginning of the killings is gathering everyone into a Ghetto – and after that there is no escape.' See also Bogdanor, p.20. It is impossible to know whether this letter was either sent or received. Freudiger made no mention of it.
- [73](#) Kasztner Report, fn.75, p. 111
- [74](#) In his judgment in the Kasztner Trial, Benjamin Halevi found that the offer was made on May 2 by Krumey. André Biss, p.42, suggested it was made at any one of three or four meetings between Brand and Eichmann between April 25 and May 17. See Porter, pp. 140-1. Kasztner stated that it was the third meeting, held on April 21 and that the Palestine Office in Istanbul had allocated 600 certificates (*Kasztner Report*, p. 116).
- [75](#) Kasztner denied that 'mainly rich people' were saved. *Kasztner Report*, p.142.
- [76](#) *Perfidy*, p.101.
- [77](#) Akiva Orr, *The Kasztner Case, Perdition* p. 91, citing Benjamin Halevi.
- [78](#) Hecht, pp. 59-60.
- [79](#) Lob, pp. 80-1.
- [80](#) Wisliceny estimated that 475,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz. Ferenczy gave the number as 434,351 who were transported in 147 trains, Braham p.674. Tim Cole in *Holocaust City: The Making of a Jewish Ghetto* estimates that 437,402 were deported, Porter, p.264. Biss, p.45, states that the number was 410,223. Of these 80,000 were requisitioned for labour in Germany and 25,000 were admitted into Auschwitz according to Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 721. See also Herbert, p. 190.
- [81](#) Kasztner Report, pp. 137-8.
- [82](#) Kasztner had originally expected the train to leave on May 13-14 but the Nazis delayed its departure.
- [83](#) Kasztner Report, pp. 164-5.

- [84](#) Porter, p.250.
- [85](#) Biss, A Million Jews to Save.
- [86](#) Biss, p. 102, *Holocaust, Auschwitz and Re-writing the Holocaust*, 6.7.06, <https://tinyurl.com/y5Wgd4tl>
- [87](#) Kasztner Report, p.61.
- [88](#) See Orr, The Kasztner Case, *Perdition*, p.83.
- [89](#) Braham, p. 715. Sari Reuveni, *Anti-Semitism in Hungary 1945-46* gives lower figures of 134,000: 119,000 for Budapest and 15,000 for the labour battalions in addition to 65,000 who returned from the camps.
- [90](#) Kasztner Report, p.168.
- [91](#) Ladislau Lob, pp. 93-94. Wisliceny gave the figure as 20,700 to Kasztner, Porter p.221-2 states that 16,700 were registered (children under 10 were not registered) but quotes figures as low as 14,000, p.234. Porter also says that no more than 8,000 were found alive by the Soviet Union, p.353. Kaltenbrunner wrote to Karl Blaschke on 30.6.44. agreeing to meet his request for labour, Biss, pp. 68-9. Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, estimates the number of survivors at 16,000, p. 471 fn 37.
- [92](#) Braham, p. 650. None of this stopped Kasztner's 'Rescue' Committee offering Eichmann up to 2.5m RM in goods and money, of which 65,000 RM and various goods were handed over, Hilberg, p. 905.
- [93](#) Lob, pp. 93-94.
- [94](#) Porter p.410. The transcripts of the Eichmann trial confirm this. When cross-examined Eichmann admitted that: "It is possible that I painted a bright picture for Kasztner" (Session 104, Vol. IV, p.xxxx6)
- [95](#) Lob p.94, Andre Biss, pp. 67-68 suggest that Kasztner was 'fascinated, hypnotised even' by Eichmann.'
- [96](#) Lob p.94 citing Fischer, 'Valtozatok'. See Kasztner Report pp. 146-154.
- [97](#) Randolph Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p.663.
- [98](#) Porter, p.236.
- [99](#) Porter, p.216. It was the first time Kasztner had heard from Nazi lips that the war was considered lost
- [100](#) Kasztner Report, p. 283.
- [101](#) Braham, 'Rescue Operations in Hungary,' *East European Quarterly*.
- [102](#) Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 201.
- [103](#) Paul Lawrence Rose, 'Nazi-Jewish Negotiations, 1944-1945,' p. 910, *The Historical Journal*, 1991.
- [104](#) Porter, p.176.
- [105](#) Hilberg, p. 1220.
- [106](#) Beit Zvi, p.298.
- [107](#) Shirer, p.1304.
- [108](#) Porter, p.340, see also pp. 186, 200, 421.
- [109](#) Bogdanor, *Kasztner's Crime*, p.76.
- [110](#) Porter, p.420.
- [111](#) Shonfeld, *Holocaust Victims Accuse*, pp. 37-9.

- [112](#) Porat, p. 210. Tuvia Friling, *Nazi-Jewish Negotiations in Istanbul in Mid-1944*, p. 409, argues that the JA 'acted energetically to examine and promote the Blood for Trucks offer.' I agree. That was the problem. At the very time when 12,000 Jews a day were being deported to Auschwitz the JA was treating seriously an 'offer' that had no chance of being accepted.
- [113](#) Beit-Zvi, p. 316. Bogdanor, pp. 78-84 exonerated the JA whilst noting 'the disastrous aversion of the Labour Zionists to publicity in matters of rescue.' He forgot that it was the Labour Zionists who controlled the Jewish Agency.
- [114](#) Gelber, *Zionist Policy and the Fate of European Jewry 1943-44*, p. 159.
- [115](#) NYT, May 21, 1964, <https://tinyurl.com/y6pu9y99>
- [116](#) <https://tinyurl.com/y48gtlax>. Kasztner locates the meeting at St. Margarethen, p. 198. Braham, p. 961 wrongly dated the meeting
- [117](#) Porter, p. 285.
- [118](#) Lob, p.179.
- [119](#) Porter, p. 288.
- [120](#) Braham, p. 960. Kasztner says the meeting was on September 1, *Kasztner Report* p. 206.
- [121](#) Porter, p. 298, see *Kasztner Report* p. 211.
- [122](#) Porter, p. 459. Braham, p. 961.
- [123](#) Braham, p. 1117.
- [124](#) Porter, p. 321.
- [125](#) Joanna Seidel, 'Deal with the Devil,' *Tol*, 3.11.13., <https://tinyurl.com/sws4s24>.
- [126](#) Rose, p. 921.
- [127](#) Seidel, 'Deal with the Devil,' *Tol*, 3.11.13. <https://tinyurl.com/sws4s24>.
- [128](#) Rose, p. 922.
- [129](#) See Noah Lucas, p.192 and Ahdut Haavodah. <https://tinyurl.com/2p9bpnsy>
- [130](#) Beit-Zvi, pp.316-17 citing the JAE meeting of 25.5.44. Ben Hecht, *Perfidy* pp.146-7.
- [131](#) Porat, p. 251.
- [132](#) Hecht, p. 147.
- [133](#) Beit-Zvi, p. 317, suggested it was written by Yitzhak Gruenbaum.
- [134](#) Hecht, p. 129
- [135](#) Beit-Zvi, p. 317, wrote that the JA 'in its desire not to interfere in the negotiations disastrously refrained from revealing the secret of his (Eichmann's) operation. Braham pp. 715-6 citing Shonfeld, HVA p.124.
- [136](#) Beit-Zvi, p. 317.
- [137](#) *Ibid.*, p. 316 citing JA minutes of 25.5.44.
- [138](#) Hecht, p. 128.
- [139](#) *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- [140](#) Contrary to assertions by Porter, p.205, that the British censored news of the Holocaust, there was only Zionist self-censorship, see Beit-Zvi, p. 63.
- [141](#) Arendt, p. 195.
- [142](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 107.
- [143](#) Braham pp. 204-5. Hilberg, pp. 311-12 citing RSHA, IV-A-1, Operational Report USSR, NO-2837.
- [144](#) Hilberg, p. 464.

- [145](#) László Csősz, *The Origins of the Military Labor Service System*, fn.31, p.88.
<https://tinyurl.com/2umad4n4>
- [146](#) Hilberg, pp. 866-8..
- [147](#) Braham, pp. 334-7.
- [148](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1030.
- [149](#) *Ibid.*, p.317.
- [150](#) *Ibid.*, p.320.
- [151](#) *Ibid.*, p. 327.
- [152](#) László Csősz, *The Origins of the Military Labor Service System*, fn.31, p. 75.
- [153](#) *The Holocaust in Hungary: Frequently Asked Questions*, USHMM Csősz, *The Origins of the Military Labor Service System*, fn.31, p. 75.
- [154](#) Braham, p. 338.
- [155](#) Kasztner Report, fn. 52, p. 175. Braham, p. 339.
- [156](#) Braham, pp. 320-1.
- [157](#) Levai, pp. 156-7. Braham, p.339.
- [158](#) Braham, p. 340.
- [159](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 342-3.
- [160](#) Guns kirchen, <https://tinyurl.com/yv4bnb7>
- [161](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 239.
- [162](#) Erez, 'T. 6 Days in July 1944', pp.43, 48. Baky was Secretary of State in the Interior Ministry. Karsai and Molnar argue that there was no plot. *Kasztner Report*, p. 166.
- [163](#) Braham, *Rescue Operations in Hungary* p. 38.
- [164](#) *Ibid.* 'Rescue Operations in Hungary' p. 39. This claim was made in *Jews for Sale*, p. 235.
- [165](#) Kasztner Report, p. 73.
- [166](#) Braham, pp. 980, 982, 1002. Braham omits the resistance activities of the Hungarian Communist Party and other leftist parties and groups.
- [167](#) Per Anger, *With Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest: Memories of the War Years in Hungary*, p. 92.
- [168](#) Braham, p. 1011.
- [169](#) Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p. 714.
- [170](#) Kasztner Report pp. 156-7.
- [171](#) Linn, p. 33.
- [172](#) Hilberg, p. 1224.
- [173](#) Baron, 'The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust', p. 20.
- [174](#) Hilberg, pp. 909-11
- [175](#) Arendt, p. 201. Braham, pp. 503, 754.
- [176](#) They finished on 8 July. Beit Zvi, p. 307, citing Freudiger's testimony in the Eichmann trial and Krausz in the Kasztner Trial, Lob p. 165, Arendt p.201. Braham suggested that Romania breaking its alliance with Germany enabled the Hungarians to inform the Nazis that the deportation of the Jews would no longer be allowed. Following this Himmler recalled Eichmann. *Rescue Operations in Hungary* pp. 180-181. Longrich, p. 409, states that Sztójay informed Veessenmayer on July 6 that Horthy had ordered an end to the deportations. Porat, pp. 208, 234, 248 states that the date of Horthy's order was July 20.
- [177](#) Linn, pp. 31-4. Levai p. 114.

- [178](#) Linn p. 53. Sakmyster, T. L. *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklos Horthy, 1918-1944* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
- [179](#) Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 239.
- [180](#) Braham, p. 771.
- [181](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 763, 771, 773-4.
- [182](#) *Ibid.*, p. 176.
- [183](#) *Ibid.*, p. 755.
- [184](#) Hilberg, p. 911.
- [185](#) Biss, p. 155.
- [186](#) The Interior Ministry had agreed to resume the deportations on 25 August. <https://tinyurl.com/6y96kfvb>
- [187](#) Kasztner Report, p. 196.
- [188](#) Braham, p. 797.
- [189](#) The Tragic Story of General Lakatos, Premier of Hungary in 1944. <https://tinyurl.com/y83a4ar2>
- [190](#) Hilberg, pp. 912-4.
- [191](#) Kasztner Report, p. 149.
- [192](#) Porter p. 352 states that less than 1/10 of Jewish men in the labour corps survived, though other accounts put this somewhat higher.
- [193](#) Braham, p. 1083.
- [194](#) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angelo_Rotta
- [195](#) Braham, pp. 1074-6.
- [196](#) Kasztner Report p. 239.
- [197](#) Ruth Linn, Obituary, Rudolf Vrba, *The Guardian*, 13.4.06. <https://tinyurl.com/r8bgng9>
- [198](#) Endre came up with a similar number, Levai p. 157.
- [199](#) Braham, p. 606.
- [200](#) *Ibid.*, p. 924.
- [201](#) Levai, pp. 157-8.
- [202](#) Zoltán Vági, p. lxiii et al. suggest that the Death March began two days earlier on November 6.
- [203](#) Hilberg, pp. 915-7.
- [204](#) Kasztner Report, p. 249.
- [205](#) Braham estimates that he saved between 7,000 and 9,000 Jews. *Rescue Operations in Hungary* p. 36.
- [206](#) Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p. 962.
- [207](#) Porter pp. 325-6.
- [208](#) Braham p. 1092. <https://tinyurl.com/y7tmxk6c> 'Was Franco the 'good' fascist?' JC 20.11.15.
- [209](#) Lapidé, p. 159.
- [210](#) Braham, p. 1095.
- [211](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1142.

Chapter 10

Rudolf Vrba & Erasing the Memory of the anti-Zionist Resistance

'Hier ist kein warum [here there is no why]' (Primo Levi on what he was told on arrival at Auschwitz) [1](#)

On 10 April 1944 Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler, two Jewish inmates who worked in the Canada section of Birkenau, escaped. They were intent on warning Hungary's Jews that preparations were being made to exterminate the last major Jewish community left in Nazi-occupied Europe. The railway spur in Birkenau had been extended right up to the gas chambers. On 24 April they reached Slovakia and made contact in Žilina with the Slovakian Jewish Council, UZ.

Vrba and Wetzler separately wrote what they knew about Auschwitz. Gradually their interrogators realised that there was no hope left for the Jews who had been deported in 1942.[2](#) The rumours of extermination had now become a certainty.[3](#) Their accounts became known as the AP or the VWR Report.[4](#) The VWR was the first first-hand account of Auschwitz and it provided details of its layout, including the gas chambers and crematoria. Recording transports from all over Europe they estimated that the total number of Jews murdered was about 1.75 million.[5](#) Completed on 26 April, the report was transcribed into German.[6](#)

Rendering Vrba and Wetzler Anonymous

Vrba and Wetzler were insistent that the VWR should be shared at once with the Jews of Hungary. Tragically this did not happen.[7](#) Rudolf Kasztner, the leader of Hungarian Zionism, arrived in Slovakia at the end of April and was immediately given a copy of the VWR. Kasztner's response was to suppress them.[8](#)

Bauer excused Kasztner's actions, arguing that the information was there all the time but Hungarian Jewry didn't want to know.[9](#) If that was true then why the need to suppress them? Gila Fatran argued that disclosure of the VWR would not have changed the behaviour of Hungary's Jews.[10](#) Neither Bauer nor Fatran could possibly know what difference their disclosure might have made. Theirs was a political not a historical judgement. The Zionist leadership denied Hungarian Jewry both the opportunity to escape and any choice over their fate.

Linn concluded that 'the claim that the Vrba-Wetzler Report had received widespread, albeit unofficial, publicity within Jewish Hungary seems quite problematic.'[11](#) Bauer accepted that even one and a half months after it had been

written, 'the details of the killings provided by the Vrba-Wetzler Report were still generally unknown.'¹² Samu Stern's post-war memoirs failed to mention it at all.¹³

Tivador Soros disagreed with Fatran. He was informed about the VWR by Jewish Council members who were in full possession of these facts. This is why most of the leaders escaped whilst the majority of Hungarian Jews died.¹⁴ George Soros confirmed that they were informed about their content while in hiding.¹⁵ According to Fatran, Vrba and Wetzler 'could have disseminated their testimony themselves.'¹⁶

Secrecy was essential to the Holocaust's success and Hungary's Jewish leaders 'handled the Protocols "confidentially" in order "not to create panic."' ¹⁷

If only 1% of Hungary's Jewish victims had been convinced by the Protocols and had not boarded the trains to Auschwitz, almost three times the numbers on Kasztner's train would have survived. According to Professor George Klein:

I was shown [the VWR] by one of the members of the Jewish Council in Budapest in greatest secrecy... It was this report that prompted me to escape. Only the definite knowledge of what was waiting at the other end of the railway line overcame my fear of being caught and shot. ¹⁸

Elie Wiesel described how their maid Maria came to them 'sobbing'. 'She begged us to come with her to her village where she had prepared a safe shelter.'¹⁹ Wiesel told how 'We were taken just two weeks before D-Day, and we did not know that Auschwitz existed... everyone knew except the victims.'²⁰ When he arrived at Auschwitz a Sonderkommando berated them: 'Didn't you know what was in store for you here in Auschwitz?' Wiesel admitted, 'True. We didn't know. Nobody had told us.'²¹ Wiesel accused Kasztner of failing to warn Jews and concentrating instead on secret negotiations with the SS. 'Many of us could have, would have found hiding places with Christian friends or in the surrounding mountains.'²² There were thousands of Jews who were in the same situation and would otherwise have escaped.

Eva Heyman, a native of Nagyvárad, a city of 93,000 people, 23% of whom were Jewish, described in her diary how Mrs Jakobi, a non-Jewish Hungarian who looked after her, offered to take her to her own place to keep her safe. Because the family had no intimation of the peril they were in she was turned down.²³ Haim Greenberg summed up Bauer and Fatran's morbid mentality:

There are among us Zionists who have accepted the idea that it is in any case impossible to halt the process of destruction and therefore the opportunity should be exploited to demonstrate to the world the Jewish tragedy of homelessness and reinforce the demand for a national home in Eretz-Israel...²⁴

In Northern Transylvania, where Wiesel and Heyman lived, just 14,000 or 8.5% of the Jewish population evaded capture. This was despite their proximity to

Romania.²⁵ An additional 44,000 returned from the camps after the war. Vrba wrote that:

I am a Jew. In spite of that – indeed because of that I accuse certain Jewish leaders of one of the most ghastly deeds of the war. This small group of quislings knew what was happening to their brethren in Hitler's gas chambers and bought their own lives with the price of silence. Among them was Dr Kasztner. ... I was able to give Hungarian Zionist leaders three weeks' notice that Eichmann planned to send a million of their Jews to his gas chambers ... Kasztner went to Eichmann and told him, 'I know of your plans; spare some Jews of my choice and I shall keep quiet.'²⁶

When Professor Jacob Talmon criticised Hannah Arendt for referring to this, Vrba asked:

Did the Judenrat (or the Judenverrat) in Hungary tell their Jews what was awaiting them? No, they remained silent and for this silence some of their leaders – for example Dr R Kasztner – bartered their own lives and the lives of 1684 other 'prominent' Jews directly from Eichmann.²⁷

These letters are not found in Hebrew history text books.²⁸ The Protocols were erased from Zionism's holocaust historiography because they did not accord with its narrative.²⁹ That was why Vrba described Israel as a 'state of the Judenrats and Kastners'.³⁰ For Fatran, Vrba could never be considered as credible as Zionist members of the Judenrat or Vaada.

It was not until 1997 that Vrba appeared in Bauer's writings as a reliable eyewitness and it was not until 1999, a year after Vrba's memoirs were published in Hebrew, that an account of his escape from Auschwitz was mentioned in Gutman's Hebrew writings for school students.³¹ Bauer had been forced to accept that the Protocols could be credited with making three major breakthroughs: changing the Allies' belief that Auschwitz was a huge labour camp, mainly for Poles; that it was the first detailed and reliable report of the extermination and thirdly 'it jolted the Swiss into undertaking wide publication of the German mass killing at Auschwitz.'³²

Linn, an Education Professor at Haifa University, first became aware of Vrba via his interview in Lanzmann's *Shoah*. Linn met Vrba by chance at the University of British Columbia.³³ Despite having been taught about the Holocaust, she had not heard of him. When Linn conducted a survey of her own students 98% were ignorant of the fact that any Jews had escaped from Auschwitz. Neither the escape nor the Protocols had formed part of Israeli schools' Holocaust curriculum.

Linn's explanation was that 'Vrba's escape contradict[ed] Bauer's thesis that the Jews didn't know, and that if they were aware, then they didn't really grasp the situation.' The Jewish leaders however 'did know and did grasp what was happening, because they saved themselves.' Linn reserved her main ire for

Gutman whose *The Holocaust and its meaning*, a basic text taught in Israeli schools did not mention Vrba and Wetzler's escape from Auschwitz.³⁴

Official Israeli holocaust history has erased the record of anti-Zionist Jewish resistance to the Nazis. This was not only because of the fiction that only Zionists represented the Jews of Europe but because some of the most prominent Jewish collaborators with the Nazis were Zionists.³⁵ In its place Israel's holocaust historians have substituted the heroic myth of Zionist resistance.³⁶

Vrba was first given academic legitimacy by a German journal. In 1996, he gave his views of the role of the Jewish Councils, in *Vierteljahrsheft fuer Zeitgeschichte*. Bauer responded, agreeing that the Hungarian Jews who were deported to Auschwitz were ignorant of their impending fate.³⁷

It was only after a dogged campaign by Linn that the Protocols and Vrba's memoirs were printed in Hebrew in 1998 and that Vrba received an honorary doctorate from Haifa University.³⁸ Linn asked whether a narrative of escape or resistance by a non-Zionist Jew could ever be made to harmonise with the national myths dominating Israel.³⁹ In 1963 Vrba published his memoirs, *I Escaped from Auschwitz*. They were published in virtually every language bar one – Hebrew. Publishers, including YV, weren't interested.⁴⁰ Marek Edelman's *The Ghetto Fights*, first published in 1945, suffered a similar fate, only being translated into Hebrew in 2001.

Like Vrba, Edelman never 'ascended' to Israel, refusing to become the 'dead and obedient hero who could be moulded along with the political order of that time.... extremely inconvenient for the creation of a heroic Zionist condensing and compensating myth... Israel was not their home.' ⁴¹

After the war Edelman insisted on living in Poland and refused to accept the Zionist claim to ownership of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.⁴²

Vrba and Wetzler were rendered anonymous. Oskar Neumann referred to 'two young Jewish chaps...' in his 1956 memoirs.⁴³ Oskar Krasniansky refers to 'two young people' ⁴⁴ and Rothkirchen to 'two young men.'⁴⁵ In Bauer's *The Holocaust - Some Historical Aspects* they are referred to as 'two Slovak Jews' ⁴⁶ Dina Porat wrote about 'two young Slovak Jews...'⁴⁷ Porat cited Martin Gilbert's *Auschwitz and the Allies* as her source, yet Gilbert named both.⁴⁸

In the 1990 edition of the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, Wetzler and Vrba are mentioned by name.⁴⁹ But in the 2001 edition they are referred to as 'two Jewish prisoners.' The USHMM and the Hebrew inscription of the Auschwitz escape in YV refers to 'two young Slovak Jews.'⁵⁰

Erich Kulka interviewed Vrba and Wetzler in Czechoslovakia, giving them full recognition.⁵¹ After he joined YV, Vrba was referred to as 'Rosenberg-Vrba.'⁵²

Whilst admitting that the Protocols had saved about 200,000 Jews from deportation he complained that Vrba had ‘attacked and humiliated’ former members of UZ.⁵³

In YV the Hungarian version of the Protocols can only be found in a file dealing with the Kasztner case, minus its authors’ names!⁵⁴ Nor is there an English or Hebrew version.⁵⁵ The escapees are referred to as ‘two young Slovak Jews.’ As John Conway noted: ‘energetic steps were taken for more than thirty years to prevent Vrba’s version of events from appearing in Hebrew’.⁵⁶

The silencing of Vrba and Wetzler was exploited by holocaust deniers such as Arthur Butz, author of *Hoax of the Twentieth Century*. Butz argued that if the content of the Protocols were true, Israeli historians would certainly know their names and publicise their report.’ ⁵⁷ Butz alleged that the Protocols were invented by the WRB. Another holocaust denier who adopted this line of argument was Robert Faurisson.⁵⁸

The five Jewish escapees from Auschwitz were airbrushed out of Zionist history. When Otto Kulka asked why Vrba and Wexler’s part in informing the UZ was missing from Rothkirchen’s presentation at a 1968 YV conference on Jewish Resistance, she replied, ‘I was speaking of the organised escapes. The escapes from Auschwitz were acts of individual heroism.’ This was both untrue and irrelevant. The Zionists played no part in the camp’s resistance.⁵⁹ As Porat conceded, ‘one notion remained unchanged in the Yishuv’, that the Jewish Resistance was primarily Zionist.’ ⁶⁰ The problem was that neither Edelman nor Vrba had even a ‘minimal layer of Zionist veneer.’ ⁶¹

In 1994, at a conference at the USHMM, Vrba asked who was the better historian, those who had direct experience of the Nazis or those who wrote about them? ⁶² Vrba’s crime was that he was neither a Zionist nor a historian.⁶³

A useful summary of how the experiences of those who were present during the Holocaust was marginalised is given by Conway.⁶⁴ Fatran described his allegations that the UZ concealed information about the Holocaust from Slovakian Jewry as being ‘blatantly contrary to the historical truth’⁶⁵ despite the fact that she had justified such concealment.⁶⁶

Kasztner and the Auschwitz Protocols – The Unanswered Questions

Randolph Braham found the failure to distribute the Protocols as soon as they were written as ‘one of the most baffling enigmas of the catastrophe in

Hungary.’⁶⁷

Why did the Jewish leaders in Hungary, Switzerland, and elsewhere not distribute and publicise the Protocols immediately after they had received copies of them...? Why did the Vaada leaders of Budapest, who continued to maintain contact with the Jewish leaders in Switzerland... fail to include copies of the Protocols in their lengthy reports on the conditions in Hungary and the status of their negotiations with the SS? Why did the leaders of the JDC, Jewish Agency, and Hehalutz, for example, fail to publicise the reports they had received from the Vaada leaders in Bratislava and Budapest, including the Weissmandel reports?... Why was the report on Hitler’s resolution to bring about the Final Solution handled as a top secret diplomatic communication?⁶⁸

The explanation is simple. As Gutman eventually conceded, Kasztner received a copy of the Protocols on 29 April but he had already made a decision, with other Zionist leaders, ‘not to disseminate the report in order not to harm the negotiations with the Nazis.’⁶⁹ The AP were in the hands of the Hungarian Jewish leadership by the latest early May.⁷⁰

Krausz, who ran the Palestine Office in Budapest from the Swiss Consulate, claimed that Kasztner had obtained a copy of the Protocols sometime in April 1944.⁷¹ Krasniansky, aware of Kasztner’s forthcoming visit to Bratislava, had quickly translated the German version of the original Report into Hungarian. He stated in one of three versions of his post-war testimony that he personally handed the translation to Kasztner toward the end of April.⁷² In another version, he recounted how the Protocols were sent to Budapest within two weeks.

According to Bauer, the report arrived in Budapest ‘perhaps through Kasztner’ at the end of April and was then handed over to leading members of the Judenrat.⁷³ The Jewish Council also learnt about their contents from Freudiger’s copy, which he had been sent by Weissmandel at the beginning of May.⁷⁴ Freudiger, despite receiving the Protocols, by 10 June at the latest,⁷⁵ did not pass on the information to Hungarian Jewry.⁷⁶

In 1946 Kasztner wrote a 300 page Report for the 22nd World Zionist Congress in Basel (9-24 December 1946).⁷⁷ Braham described it as ‘self-serving’. Kasztner was ‘silent about their failure to inform Hungarian Jewry.’⁷⁸ In the Introduction, Laslo Karsai and Judit Molnar claimed that Eichmann lied in his interview with Sassen about his relations with Kasztner.⁷⁹ They were disturbed that Hilberg believed him. But so too did the Israeli authorities who prosecuted Eichmann. Eichmann’s admissions were damning evidence and his interview was freely given.⁸⁰

In one long apologia for Kasztner, Karsai and Molnar fail to explain why, in the course of nearly 300 pages, Kasztner made no reference to the Protocols, suggesting perhaps that Kasztner ‘could perhaps have tried to inform more

people, faster and more convincingly' about their content.⁸¹ Despite not referring to the Protocols⁸² Kasztner quoted from them.⁸³

Braham outlined the facts about the Protocols as he saw them:

- i. Vrba and Wetzler told their story to the UZ leaders on 25-6 April 1944.
- ii. Freudiger admitted receiving the Protocols between May 5 and 10 1944.
- iii. Kasztner admitted that he knew of the destruction of Hungarian Jewry at Auschwitz.
- iv. The Hungarian Jews were not informed as to their fate.
- v. The deportation of the Jews began in Northern Transylvania and Carpathian Ruthenia May 15 and lasted till July 7 1944, though one train left on 16 April.⁸⁴
- vi. The Hungarian Jewish leaders were still translating and duplicating the Protocols on J 14-16 and didn't distribute them until the latter half of June.⁸⁵
- vii. The Hungarian Jewish leaders completely ignored the Protocols in their post-war memoirs and statements.⁸⁶

Braham advances a number of 'plausible and to a considerable extent convincing' claims:

- Oscar Krasniansky's contention in 1964 that he handed a copy of the Protocols to Kasztner during his visit to Bratislava in late April 1944.
- Oskar Neumann's contention that the Protocols were sent to Hungary, Switzerland and the Vatican 'shortly' after completion.
- Vrba's claim that he was told by Neumann and Krasniansky that the Protocols were handed to Kasztner on 26 April.
- Kasztner remained silent in accordance with an agreement with Eichmann which allowed him to save a few thousand 'prominent' Jews, including his own family and friends.⁸⁷

To whom were the Auschwitz Protocols distributed?

Kasztner testified that he had received the Protocols at the end of April.⁸⁸ The Protocols were also sent to the Zionist liaison office in Istanbul almost as soon as they were written, as well as to Nathan Schwalb.⁸⁹ Kasztner testified that

I learned that the JA and JDC representatives in Switzerland, Schwalb and Saly Mayer, did not give out information to the press about the mass killings... I informed them almost daily by cable about the pace of extermination. My cables were never published anywhere.

Schwalb was 'reluctant... to publicize the news about Auschwitz.' This reluctance probably stemmed from his desire not to upset Kasztner's negotiations with the SS.⁹⁰ Lichtheim wrote on 23 June complaining that Schwalb was not cooperative. Schwalb claimed that he had sent the VWR on to Wise, the JA in Jerusalem and Selig Brodetsky in London.⁹¹

Kasztner gave a copy of the Protocols to Carl Lutz on 5 May [92](#) and showed a German translation to Eichmann.[93](#) Vrba claimed that the reason the Nazis wanted to capture him at any price was because Eichmann feared that his operation in Hungary might be jeopardised.[94](#)

Jerzy Tabeau, a medical student known as the 'Polish Major', escaped from Auschwitz on 19 November 1943. Between December 1943 and January 1944 he wrote a 19-page report on Auschwitz⁹⁵ giving a detailed description of the extermination process.⁹⁶ Gilbert described how he sent his report first to the underground in Slovakia and then to the Czech Embassy.⁹⁷ On 26 November 1944, the VWR, Arnošt Rosin and Czesław Mordowicz's Report and Tabeau's Report, were published by the WRB as the "Auschwitz Protocols."⁹⁸ Czesław Mordowicz and Arnošt Rosin, who had escaped from Auschwitz on 27 May, reached Slovakia on 6 June.⁹⁹

According to Frank Baron, the VWR first arrived in Geneva by 10 June although it is not clear by what route. Dr. Jaromir Kopecky, the Geneva representative of the Czechoslovakian Government-in-exile, had received them from the Slovak underground in Bratislava. Shortly after a more complete version of the Protocols came to Switzerland from the Czech underground (19-20 June). It was delivered to Kopecky who immediately contacted Gerhard Riegner and other Jewish organisations.¹⁰⁰ Gilbert suggested that a combination of the Vrba-Wetzler and Mordowicz-Rosin Reports was sent by Krasniansky to Geneva where it was received by Kopecky on 13 June.¹⁰¹

Roswell McClelland of the WRB in Bern cabled the information about Auschwitz, which he received from Alan Dulles, to John Pehle, the WRB's Executive Director in Washington, on 16 June.¹⁰² Dulles, who had been given the information by Kopecky and Riegner, wired the entire VWR to Washington on 23 June. Kulka states that McClelland received the information directly from Mario Martilotti, a Vatican diplomat, and wired Pehle on 24 June.¹⁰³

Regardless of the route, the AP became public on 24 June and 383 articles about Auschwitz appeared in the Swiss press.¹⁰⁴ As Kulka admitted, ever since 1942 similar reports from Jewish organisations in Switzerland had been passed by the American legation to the State Department but it was only the AP that 'removed any doubt about the extent of the mass extermination of Jews in Auschwitz.'¹⁰⁵ Shortly after the BBC broadcast news of the extermination camps.

Krausz claimed he received the AP from József Reisner, a Jewish employee of the Turkish legation in Budapest on 18 June.¹⁰⁶ An abbreviated copy of the Report, together with an additional report on the ghettoisation, concentration

and deportation processes in Zones I-III, was taken by Florian Manoliu, a member of the Romanian delegation in Berne, to Switzerland on 19 June. It was given to George Mantello, a Hungarian Jewish businessman, a member of the El Salvador consulate, at the request of Pozner. Ben Hecht alleges that Pozner failed to publish the Report.¹⁰⁷ It was this Report that was publicised by the Swiss press.

Freudiger testified at Eichmann's trial that on 19 June the Protocols were first translated into English and sent out of Hungary through Krausz's connections.¹⁰⁸ He emphasized that prior to this date 'no one had any idea about Auschwitz.'¹⁰⁹ On 19 June a summary of the Protocols was sent by Richard Lichtheim in Geneva to the JA in Jerusalem.¹¹⁰ On 4 July the Protocols reached the British Foreign Office via Kopecky and the Czech Government-in-exile.¹¹¹

A copy of the original German version of the Protocols reached Géza Soos, of the Hungarian Independence Movement, a small resistance group. 'For the history of Jews in Hungary this particular report was decisive.'¹¹² Soos gave his copy to Rev. József Éliás, head of the Good Shepherd Mission, during the first few days of May. Copies were made and distributed to the leaders of the Christian churches and the Hungarian state shortly before the start of the deportations. Among those who received a copy were Horthy's daughter-in-law, Catholic cardinals, Lutheran bishops and Erno Peto, a prominent Judenrat member.¹¹³ According to Bauer it was Peto who handed a copy of the Protocols to the Horthy family in early June.¹¹⁴

It was only during the second half of June that the Judenrat began distributing copies of the Protocols to members of the Hungarian Government including Miklós Horthy, for transmission on to his father. Because multiple copies of the Protocols were printed, Kasztner's decision to suppress them was finally overcome but not before over 400,000 Hungarian Jews had died.

The Vatican received a copy at the end of April via Guiseppe Burzio.¹¹⁵ On 15 May the Pope submitted the first official protest against the deportations.¹¹⁶ The Vatican, however, did nothing more until 20 June when Martilotti interviewed Vrba and Mordowicz in Slovakia.¹¹⁷ As a direct result of this meeting, Pius XII, on 25 June made 'an unprecedented appeal' in an open telegram to Hungarian Regent, Admiral Horthy, calling on him to 'spare so many unfortunate people further sufferings,' without explicitly mentioning the Jews.¹¹⁸ On 6 July the Pope 'gave vent to his outrage with Sztójay.'¹¹⁹ Kasztner believed that Becher had played a part 'not understand(ing) that Horthy acted in his own right in July' when he put a stop to the deportations.¹²⁰

The WJC was also complicit. When confronted at their annual meeting by Jewish survivors from Poland as to why they had refused to publicise the exterminations, the executive candidly stated that: 'The opinion of the executive board was that it was inadvisable because of our diplomatic ties with these governments.'¹²¹ Zionist diplomacy was more valuable than Jewish lives. 'No price was too high to pay; one was forbidden to calculate the cost' of the Jewish state.'¹²²

Perfidy

In 1961 Ben Hecht wrote *Perfidy*. Based on transcripts of the Kasztner Trial, Hecht accused not only Kasztner but the JA and Mapai of having abandoned Europe's Jews. Hecht had played a key role in garnering support for Peter Bergon's ECSJE, which had rebelled against the inaction of America's Zionist leaders.

The book was greeted by a storm of Zionist accusations of anti-Semitism. My copy includes an article, 'Ben Hecht's Kampf' which begins: 'It is an evil book, in every sense of the word.' The Zionist response carefully avoided discussing *Perfidy's* contents.¹²³

YV, who have been Kasztner's principal defenders, have been unable to explain Kasztner's testimony at Nuremberg on behalf of Nazi war criminals or come to terms with the fact that his accusers were Hungarian holocaust survivors. By accepting Kasztner's archives YV cleared his name. The Chair of its Board of Directors, Tommy Lapid, stated that 'There was no man in the history of the holocaust who saved more Jews and was subjected to more injustice than Israel Kasztner.'¹²⁴ It would be nearer the truth to say that there was no Jew who had so much blood on his hands as Kasztner.

Paul Bogdanor, who specialises in McCarthyist denunciations,¹²⁵ began researching a book on Kasztner with the aim of clearing him but ended up confirming the assertion of Shmuel Tamir, who represented the defendant in the Kasztner Trial, that Kasztner had been a Nazi agent.¹²⁶ Bogdanor concluded, as anti-Zionists had always argued, that Kasztner had not only kept the secret of Auschwitz hidden from those boarding the trains to Auschwitz but had reassured those boarding them that they would be taken to a safe place.¹²⁷ However Bogdanor, a fanatical Zionist ideologue, tried to prove instead that whilst Kasztner was a collaborator, he represented no one but himself.

Kasztner was the representative of the JA in Hungary. After the war, the JA cleared Kasztner of Krausz's accusations of collaboration. Instead, Krausz was

sacked. Neither the JA nor the WJC have ever disowned Kasztner and the testimony he gave.¹²⁸

Bogdanor blamed the Jewish Council for collaboration with the Nazis, describing it as 'anti-Zionist'. In fact the Council included Otto Komoly and Nissan Kahan, another Zionist. The Council was a bourgeois body and in helping to round up Jews for deportation it behaved in exactly the same way as the Judenrate elsewhere in Europe.

No excuse can be made in respect of the Zionist movement outside Europe. They refused to publicise what was happening in Hungary. For Ben-Gurion 'there were no "personal" cases, no individual Jews, there was only 'the Jewish people.'¹²⁹ In Ben Gurion's eyes the war was 'a rare opportunity to achieve the "Zionist solution"... to the problem of the Jewish people.' ¹³⁰

Perdition

An article that appeared in *Ha'aretz* less than four weeks after the German surrender asked: 'Did the Jews also have a hand in the horrible bloodshed committed against our nation?' ¹³¹ It was sentiments such as these that led to the staging of *Perdition*.

Based on the Kasztner Trial, *Perdition* was the subject of a ferocious Zionist campaign to ban it. It was due to be shown at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs in January 1987. After pressure was put on its artistic director Max Stafford-Clarke, it was cancelled because 'it would cause distress to members of the [Jewish] community.'¹³² In other words it would have upset Britain's powerful Zionist lobby.

Martin Gilbert and David Cesarani supported this campaign, claiming that *Perdition* was historically inaccurate.¹³³ But when Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* was published, the British Establishment and its tame press cried 'free speech'. It was irrelevant that Rushdie's book distressed many Muslims. When Charlie Hebdo mocked the Prophet Muhammad, free speech was again prioritised. The double standards were all too clear.

Jim Allen, who wrote the play, gave some indication of the tactics used when describing how Stephen Roth of the ZF told Stafford-Clarke that he could imperil the Royal Court's funding by contacting friends in New York and London. One London producer was told that 'I own nine theatres, my friend owns six. Put the play on and you're finished.'¹³⁴ Ken Loach, the play's director, wrote,

Perdition was stopped by public abuse and private manipulation organized by a political tendency, Zionism, that will not acknowledge its past because of the light it sheds on the

present.¹³⁵

According to Cesarani the play 'purported to reveal a gigantic conspiracy by powerful Jews (to) ... mercilessly sacrifice(d) fellow Jews.' Even the most erudite of Zionist holocaust historians refused to come to terms with the fact that the play was based on an actual trial in Israel. ¹³⁶

However the ban backfired and *Perdition* was shown at Conway Hall for six nights as well as at the Edinburgh Festival fringe.¹³⁷ It was the subject of letters and articles for weeks in the mass media and set off a far wider debate over Zionism and its role during the Holocaust.

The controversy in *The Guardian's* letter columns continued for over two months. For *The Times* the issue was 'the right to travesty the past and to slander a nation.' The idea that there is only one version of history and that any others are 'travesty' or that nations can be 'slandered' is indicative of the pernicious standards of *Perdition's* critics.¹³⁸

The genie was out of the bottle. Both Cesarani, who described *Perdition* as a 'calumny',¹³⁹ and playwright Arnold Wesker, came to regret the Zionist campaign.¹⁴⁰ Cesarani asked:

Was it worth all the fuss?... Had the play gone on it would have been seen by around 2,000 people.... We need to master the art of exposing and debunking, instead of instantly branding antagonists as anti-Semites...¹⁴¹

Professor Robert Wistrich of Tel Aviv University, an ardent Zionist ideologue, went further and condemned 'as unwise' the attacks on the play as anti-Semitic. Wistrich held that 'the entire Jewish leadership of that generation – including the Zionists – failed the test of the times.' Wistrich conceded that 'the major priority of the Zionist movement at the time was indeed building Palestine' and that the Holocaust took second place. He accepted that 'a reasonable case' could be made that Zionists did not fight anti-Semitism before 1939 'with the appropriate vigour' and further 'that some Zionists wanted to develop a 'special relationship' with the Nazis.... To deny these points... is not only stupid but unnecessary.'¹⁴² Professor Wistrich however was one of that rare breed, an honest Zionist.

Channel 4 staged a debate between Lenni Brenner, Marion Woolfson and Jim Allen on the one side and the opponents of the play led by Churchill biographer Martin Gilbert, Stephen Roth of the Institute of Jewish Affairs and Rabbi Hugo Gryn on the other. Gryn confessed he was 'deeply depressed by the discussion'.¹⁴³ The Zionists had argued for censorship to hide their inability to substantiate their claims that *Perdition* was historically inaccurate.

I interviewed Jim Allen.¹⁴⁴ At the time his wife was dying with cancer and the *Perdition Affair* was not something he wanted to devote his time to. Jim Allen,

who had written *Days of Hope*, *Big Flame* and other TV plays, was one of Britain's finest socialist playwrights. All through his life he had stood on the side of the working class and the oppressed. The attacks on him as anti-Semitic by establishment toadies like Martin Gilbert were nauseating. *Perdition* was attacked for what it didn't say. According to Bernard Levin in *The Times*, Ben-Gurion 'smiled on the Holocaust'.

The Kasztner Trial

In 1953 a libel case was brought against Malchiel Gruenwald, a 69-year-old Hungarian Jew who alleged that Kasztner had collaborated with the Nazis. He depicted the JA as 'the Judenrat of Palestine' and accused them of complicity in the annihilation of Hungarian Jewry.¹⁴⁵

The trial began on 1 January 1954. Kasztner was a senior Mapai official and a candidate in the forthcoming Knesset elections.¹⁴⁶ Attorney General Haim Cohen insisted that Kasztner sue Gruenwald and the state would finance the action. Cohen unwittingly opened up a can of worms.

Why did the Israeli State insist on a libel action on behalf of Kasztner? Clearly it believed that it could bury the rumours of collaboration between the JA and the Nazis. But they had not foreseen Shmuel Tamir's devastating cross-examination and the uncovering of evidence concerning Kasztner's testimony in favour of an SS officer, Kurt Becher.¹⁴⁷

Instead of exonerating Kasztner the trial achieved the exact opposite. Kasztner effectively became the Defendant. Kasztner's boasting of a special relationship with the SS and his stay as a guest of the Gestapo in Vienna was seen as particularly 'repulsive'.¹⁴⁸ He told how:

Luckily for me, Becher is in Vienna. He is at Hotel Imperial... I get a room in Grand Hotel via Dr. Ebner, the deputy chief of the Vienna Gestapo. I have a German alien's passport... with no indication of racial origin. ¹⁴⁹

Hungarian holocaust survivors testified that if they had known the truth about the Holocaust then they would have tried to escape.¹⁵⁰ Thousands could have escaped across the border to Romania, which in May was a place of refuge for Jews, or been hidden in Hungary.¹⁵¹ It was estimated that 4,000-4,500 Jews escaped across the Romanian border in any event.¹⁵²

Kasztner and his associates actively dissuaded the Jews of Kolozsvár from escaping.¹⁵³ Joseph Katz, a lawyer from Nodvarod, four miles from the Romanian border, testified that its Jews knew nothing of Auschwitz.

Tamir: Did you know how to use arms?

Katz: Yes. It was easy to escape into Romania. Jews were safe in Romania at that time. Some skeptics did escape—because they didn't like the Nodvarod atmosphere.¹⁵⁴

When Benjamin Halevi, President of the Jerusalem District Court, questioned Kasztner about this, his response was that the witnesses who had testified against him 'don't represent the true Jewry of Kolozsvár... there was not a single important figure among them.'¹⁵⁵ When Freudiger was told by Wisliceny that he should depart, he left Hungary with 80 members of his family on 9 August. They all reached Romania safely.¹⁵⁶

On visits to his home town of Kolozsvár, a town less than five miles from the Romanian border, Kasztner was accused of failing to disclose what he knew about Auschwitz to all except a few members of the Jewish Council.¹⁵⁷ People were told that they were being taken to Kenyermezo, a fictitious place of 'resettlement' in Hungary, where they would have work, food and shelter.¹⁵⁸

The Jewish Council leaders, however, did not accompany the Jews on the trains.¹⁵⁹ Instead they joined those who were taken to the Columbus Street Camp in Budapest from where they would later leave on a train for Bergen-Belsen.

The camp at Columbus Street was guarded by five SS men, who were 'ordered to deal humanely with the camp inmates.' Kasztner described the camp as 'a mysterious, surreal island of tranquillity and safety' a 'camp for the privileged.'¹⁶⁰ Up to 3,000 people stayed there. Kasztner saved 388 members of his family and the Zionist movement from Kolozsvár.

The rest of Hungary's Jews were concentrated in brickyards, which offered no shelter from the elements and from which escape was almost impossible.¹⁶¹ They were subject to torture from the gendarmes in order to reveal any valuables they had before boarding the cattle trucks to Auschwitz.

Jacob Freifeld testified that he had asked Kasztner's friend and journalist, Hillel Danzig, for the truth about the letters that Kohani [a Kasztner associate] had read out. 'He told me, "Yes, they are true." And he gave me a tip. I should try to go to Kenyermezo as soon as I could, because the first arrivals there would get the best places.'¹⁶² Danzig denied that he even knew Freifeld but under cross-examination he admitted that he knew that he was being taken 'to a safe place' and that people like Freifeld would be taken to 'a place much worse.'¹⁶³ Dr Imre Kertész, who won the 2002 Nobel Prize for Literature confirmed this.¹⁶⁴

All of Freifeld's family bar himself were gassed in Auschwitz. Danzig left on Kasztner's ToTP.¹⁶⁵ Yechiel Shmueli Levi Blum and David Rozner testified to similar effect.¹⁶⁶ When Rozner was asked why Kasztner would have been killed if he had set foot in Kolozsvár after the war, he replied, 'Because he was the man who misled the Jews to believe in the good intentions of the Germans.'¹⁶⁷

On 11 July 1954 Moshe Krausz testified against Kasztner claiming that ‘Had it not been for Kasztner’s collaboration with the Nazis, tens of thousands of Jews could have been saved.’ Krausz claimed that Kasztner ‘was at the Germans’ disposal even though he knew that they were using him for their plans to annihilate the Jews.’ [168](#) The communist *Kol Ha-am* claimed that hundreds of thousands of Jews died because of Kasztner.

When the trains arrived at Auschwitz the Nazis forced the Jews to write postcards saying they were well, postmarked ‘Waldsee’, shortly before their deaths.[169](#) Krausz testified that Kasztner ordered the Judenrat to distribute these postcards.[170](#) Kasztner also sent a letter to Joseph Schwartz, the European head of the JDC, referring to ‘employable people’ having been taken to Waldsee and postcards having been sent from there. [171](#)

Yet Kasztner had boasted that ‘We had, as early as 1942, a complete picture of what had happened in the east to the Jews deported to Auschwitz and the other extermination camps.’[172](#)

A glimpse into Kasztner’s outlook was provided by his answer to Halevi’s question as to Rudolf Höss’s view of the Death March from Budapest to Vienna. ‘Hoess said he thought the whole thing was swinish...’ [173](#) and that Höss ‘would take immediate steps to have the Death March stopped.’ At which point Halevi ‘who seems to feel he wasn’t hearing alright’ asked who Höss was, to which Kasztner replied that ‘he was Commander of Auschwitz.’ Höss was not the only one concerned with the plight of the Jews.

Tamir:	Becher helped you save Jews?
Kasztner	Yes.
Tamir:	And Himmler helped you save Jews?
Kasztner:	(firmly) Yes. 174

Apart from Hitler and Eichmann, all the leading Nazis had become the saviours of the Jews.

The Affair of the Parachutists

One of the most damaging aspects of the trial for Kasztner, was the affair of the three parachutists – Hannah Szenes, Yoel Palgi and Peretz Goldstein – who were parachuted into Yugoslavia by the British in March 1944. They first joined Tito’s partisan fighters and in June they crossed into Hungary. Szenes was almost immediately arrested. When the other two arrived in Budapest Kasztner informed the Gestapo of their arrival and ‘persuaded’ them into handing themselves in.

Despite repeated requests from her mother, Katharine, Kasztner refused to help Hannah or find a lawyer. This was revealed when both Kasztner and her mother were cross-examined.¹⁷⁵ Hannah Szenes became the embodiment of the myth of Zionist resistance to the Nazis. Kasztner's refusal to help her contributed to the public hostility towards him. Kasztner claimed that Vaada had 'entrusted the protection of the Palestinian paratroopers to a retired Hungarian colonel.' ¹⁷⁶

The parachutists were members of Haganah and British agents. Their arrival threatened Kasztner's relationship with the Nazis, hence he abandoned them. Szenes was executed on 7 November, aged 23. If he had tried Kasztner could possibly have obtained her release under the Lakatos regime. Goldstein was sent to Oranienberg concentration camp where he died. Palgi was the only one who survived, escaping from a train to Germany. He testified in the Kasztner trial.

The Zionist movement claimed that the purpose of the parachutists' mission was to 'organize resistance and rescue attempts.' ¹⁷⁷ This is untrue. The 32 agents who were sent to Europe were unlikely to have any effect on the capabilities of the already extant resistance. Their true purpose was 'to reconstruct the crumbling Zionist youth movements there after the war.' ¹⁷⁸ When asked by Yoel Palgi what their central task was Ben-Gurion replied, 'that Jews should know that Eretz Israel is their land and their stronghold.' ¹⁷⁹

Their primary goal was in effect to influence the survivors to choose Palestine as their ultimate destination. This point is corroborated by testimonies from that period.¹⁸⁰

Selling his Soul to the German Satan

Halevi formulated 'Gruenwald's rambling diatribe' into four charges:

- (a) collaboration with the Nazis;
- (b) preparing the ground for murder of Hungary's Jews;
- (c) sharing the monies and valuables looted from Hungary's Jews with Becher and
- (d) saving a war criminal (Becher) from punishment after the war.

On 21 June 1955 Halevi found all except the third charge proven:¹⁸¹

Eichmann did not want a second Warsaw. For this reason, the Nazis exerted themselves to mislead and bribe the Jewish leaders....

The Nazi patronage of Kasztner, and their agreement to let him save six hundred prominent Jews, were part of the plan to exterminate the Jews. Kasztner was given a chance to add a few more to that number. The bait attracted him.... He considered the rescue of the most important Jews as a great personal success and a success for Zionism.¹⁸²

Kasztner possessed at that moment the first news about the preparation of the gas chambers in Auschwitz for Hungary's Jews... (he could)... warn the leaders and the masses about the real danger of the imminent total deportation facing Hungary's Jews, and

immunize them against Nazi deceptions.... The other way opened for Kasztner by Krumez was the method of rescuing Jews by the Nazis themselves ...[183](#)

... Kasztner understood very well... that the prominents as a whole and his friends in Kluj in particular would not be rescued from the holocaust if the mass heard a hint about the real purpose of the operation; ...

The association with the heads of the SS on which Kasztner placed the entire fate of the rescue forced him to withhold his information about the extermination plans from the majority of Hungary's Jews.[184](#)

Halevi concluded with an ancient proverb: '*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*' (I fear the Greeks even when they bring presents). 'By accepting this present Kasztner had sold his soul to the devil.'[185](#) Kasztner, as the leader of Vaada,[186](#) 'didn't want to destroy by his left hand what he built with his right...'[187](#) It was a damning verdict, not just on Kasztner but the Jewish Agency.

The leaders of Mapai did not forgive Halevi for this verdict. They feared that 'he might probe too closely into the behaviour of Jewish leaders during the Holocaust.'[188](#) Which was why Ben-Gurion did his best to stop him being a judge in the Eichmann trial.[189](#)

The Kasztner Trial transfixed Israeli politics. On 28 May 1955 the government of Moshe Shertok fell on a confidence vote as a result of the verdict and the Government's decision to appeal.[190](#) Just after midnight on 4 March 1957, Kasztner was shot and injured by Ze'ev Eckstein, one of three assailants who were associated with Lehi. On 15 March Kasztner died of his injuries, or did he?

Shortly before the assassination Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, had withdrawn his personal protection guards. Isar Harel, the Head of the Intelligence Services, told Israel's Cabinet that Eckstein had been an informer. In his book *Quilt Blanket* Eckstein alluded to another person, a professional killer, who fired the shot from the shadows. This was backed up by Kasztner's daughter Suzi. Seven years later all the killers were pardoned.[191](#)

In February 2020 a historian and retired colonel, Nadav Kaplan, applied to Israel's High Court for the release of classified files on the murder. Kaplan during his research gained access to Kasztner's medical records at the Hadassah Hospital. A nurse found Kasztner dead in his bed with a pillow over his face, showing that a struggle had taken place. According to a laboratory assistant who worked there, Kasztner's condition was improving. The strong suspicion is that having botched the first assassination attempt Shin Bet then had Kasztner murdered whilst he was recovering.[192](#)

The High Court denied Kaplan's application on the grounds of 'national security'. The Court preferred to green light the Israeli state's cover up of the murder of one of its own citizens. 'National security' being a euphemism for

keeping the State's dirty secrets well hidden.¹⁹³ What possible reason can there be for keeping the files confidential after more than 60 years than protecting the Israeli State from embarrassment? This speaks volumes to the independence of the Israeli judiciary.

Haim Cohen based the Appeal to the Supreme Court, on 20 January 1957, on political rather than legal grounds. If Kasztner were convicted, then the Zionist leadership also stood condemned.¹⁹⁴ It was a powerful argument which struck a chord with Judge Shneur Zalman Cheshin in particular. Israel's Supreme Court was effectively being told that if they turned down the Appeal they were questioning the legitimacy of the state which had created the court:

If in Kasztner's opinion, rightly or wrongly, he believed that one million Jews were hopelessly doomed, he was allowed not to inform them of their fate; and to concentrate on the saving of the few. He was entitled to make a deal with the Nazis for the saving of a few hundred and entitled not to warn the millions ... that was his duty... It has always been our Zionist tradition to select the few out of many in arranging the immigration to Palestine ... Are we to be called traitors? ¹⁹⁵

Eichmann, the chief exterminator, knew that the Jews would be peaceful and not resist if he allowed the Prominents to be saved, that the Train of the Prominents was organized on Eichmann's orders to facilitate the extermination of the whole people. ... if all the Jews of Hungary are to be sent to their death he is entitled to organize a rescue train for 600 people. He is not only entitled to it but is also bound to act accordingly. ¹⁹⁶

Ladislau Löb, a child on Kasztner's train, accepted that the Nazis sought to make Kasztner 'a more efficient tool in their own hands'¹⁹⁷ yet he still described him as 'The Jew who had saved more Jews from the Holocaust than any other Jew.'¹⁹⁸ Löb also admitted that the TOTP 'was top-heavy with the elite of Hungarian Jewry.'¹⁹⁹ The official statistics were inaccurate. Löb's own father, a businessman, was listed as a 'farmer' because Palestine required farmers not businessmen.²⁰⁰ There were Orthodox Jews, 'outstanding personalities' and 150 places were sold to rich Jews in order to purchase the remaining places, at a cost of \$1,000 each.²⁰¹ The leadership of the group remained in the hands of the Zionists.²⁰² The Red Cross nutrient Starkosan was reserved for the leadership headed by Joseph Fisher, Kasztner's father in law.²⁰³

In January 1958 five judges of the Supreme Court unanimously upheld the charge that Kasztner lied about giving testimony on behalf of a war criminal, Becher. But they rejected the charge of having collaborated with the Nazis by 4-1, Moshe Silberg dissenting. Halevi's factual findings were not challenged. The judgment was overturned on legal and political grounds.²⁰⁴ What persuaded David Goiten, who refused to exonerate Kasztner, to uphold the Appeal, was a legal point that if one charge was not upheld you couldn't uphold the other points.²⁰⁵ Silberg took issue with Haim Cohen's argument that if Kasztner

believed that there was no hope for Hungary's Jews and kept the secret of Auschwitz from them:

then he acted innocently and cannot be charged with collaboration with the Nazis in facilitating the extermination of the Jews, even if he, de facto, contributed to this result.

I must say that I cannot accept this argument. Is this 'innocence'? Is there 'representation' of despair? Can a single individual, even jointly with some friends, despair on behalf – and without the knowledge – of 800,000 people? ... The burning question of 'By what authority' and 'quo warranto' is an adequate answer to such a claim of Bona Fide.[206](#)

Silberg's judgment recalled Kasztner's statement to 80 Zionist youth in 1943: 'The problem is whether we have the right to act like God, namely to decide who is to be saved and who is not.' [207](#) Dr Gerta Vrbova, the wife of Rudolf Vrba, commenting on the film *Killing Kasztner*, observed that:

What Kasztner did was unbelievable and unforgivable because people had the right to have this information ... Rudolph was very bitter about the fact that Kasztner was regarded as a hero in Israel while he and Wetzler went unrecognized, even to this day.[208](#)

Silberg emphasised that 'the shocking success of the Nazis in exterminating the Jews easily and peacefully was the direct result of the concealment of the horrifying truth from the victims.'[209](#) Cheshin voiced the fears of the Zionist Establishment:

... if we rule that Kasztner collaborated with the enemy because he failed to inform those who boarded the trains in Kluj that they were heading for extermination, then it is necessary to bring to court today also Danzig, Herman, Hanzi Brand, Rahbes and Marton and many other leaders and halfleaders who also kept silent in times of crisis, who didn't inform others about what they knew.[210](#)

Shimon Agranat gave the leading opinion for the Supreme Court.[211](#) He agreed that Kasztner 'had the right to keep silent' and that his decision to include a high number of Zionists on the train was 'perfectly rational.'[212](#) The Zionists were no more than 5% of Hungary's Jews yet they took upon themselves the authority to withhold news from the masses of what awaited them.[213](#)

Michal Shaked described Halevi's judgment as 'judicially and morally more appropriate' than that of the Supreme Court.[214](#) Shaked questioned the 'experts' discourse' during the Kasztner trial and described Bauer's thesis that revealing the information would have served no purpose, as a hegemonic narrative.[215](#)

Kasztner's Testimony on behalf of Nazi war criminals

On 13 September 1945 Kasztner flew to London to give two affidavits to Warren F Farr, chief military attorney of the American Committee for the Investigation of War Crimes. The first affidavit detailed the murderous role of Eichmann and Krumei, the latter having been head of the killing operations in Hungary, Austria and Poland.[216](#) The second affidavit alleged that Kurt Becher

and Wisliceny's actions at the end of the war were designed to save their skins and 'to provide themselves with alibis'²¹⁷ Becher had emphasised on 13 April 1945 that 'I hope that the Allies will have the sense to appreciate my efforts and achievements.'²¹⁸

In October 1945 a letter was sent by Kasztner and Moshe Schweiger to Yitzhak Gruenbaum. Kasztner referred to Becher as 'a rescuer of Jews' falsely alleging that Becher had saved the Jews of the Budapest Ghetto and that Bergen-Belsen, Mauthausen, Neuengamme and Theresienstadt were handed over to the Allies without a battle because of him.²¹⁹

A joint statement was made with Schweiger in January 1946.²²⁰ Schweiger had been released by Becher from Mauthausen in April 1945. Kasztner declared that Becher '... courageously attempted to induce Himmler to halt the process of destruction'²²¹ and that Krumei had acted 'in a comparatively humane way'²²² and that he deserved credit for the fact that the majority of the 18,000 Hungarian Jews sent to Austria remained alive. Shoshana Barri claims that there was no evidence that the JA needed Krumei's services and that Kasztner's statements are 'unexplained.'²²³

Yet in his 1946 Report to the JA, Kasztner reaffirms his original two affidavits in London.²²⁴ In the words of Shoshana Barri, 'Krumei, Wisliceny and Becher in particular were described as actors in the Nazi killing machine' who were only willing to save Jewish lives in the final stages of the war in order that 'they might be judged favorably after the war.'²²⁵ Bogdanor does not refer in this respect to Kasztner's Report to the JA. Bogdanor also failed to mention, still less explain, why to this day, the JA have not distanced themselves from Kasztner's testimony at Nuremberg.

Bogdanor maintained that Kasztner changed his position between September 1945, when he said Becher's motive was simply to save his own skin, and October 1945/January 1946 when Becher had suddenly become a courageous rescuer of Jews, because Kasztner had come under increasing attack in Israel as a collaborator.²²⁶ Bogdanor argued that in order to rebut these allegations, he had decided to testify in favour of Nazi war criminals, including Krumei and Wisliceny.²²⁷

What this brilliant theory fails to explain is why Kasztner thought that the best way of refuting allegations of collaboration was to testify *in favour of* and not *against* these Nazi war criminals. Testifying for them was definitive proof that Kasztner **was** a collaborator.

In February 1947 Kasztner wrote to Krumeý asking how he could help him. He offered to testify on his behalf. On 5 May 1948 Kasztner swore an affidavit affirming that Krumeý had acted:

with commendable goodwill towards those who depended, decisively, on the manner in which he interpreted his orders. [228](#)

This resulted in Krumeý's release from Allied custody, where he had been held since May 1945. Kasztner attributed to him the saving of the Jews at Strasshof as well as 30,000 Jews in Theresienstadt, 29 Jews in Bratislava, including Weissmandel and 22 from Vienna.[229](#)

In July 1947 Kasztner appealed unsuccessfully for Wisliceny to be transferred from Czechoslovak to American custody to save him from the hangman. Barri suggested that 'Kasztner's appeal was... a continuation of the JA's attempts to locate Eichmann.' In February 1948, Gideon Raphael (Ruffer) one of the founders of Israel's Foreign Ministry, wrote to Murray Gurfein (assistant to Robert Jackson) in New York asking 'whether it was feasible for the United States authorities... to accept Wisliceny's offer' to provide them with information regarding Eichmann's whereabouts.[230](#) This is unlikely to have been the real reason. In an interview Raphael stated that the JA had turned down an offer by Wisliceny to help locate Eichmann in return for his own life.[231](#)

Michael Sells provided a more likely reason for Zionist interest in the fate of Wisliceny. Wisliceny had, in an attempt to save his neck, signed and attested an affidavit of 6 January 1946 by Andre Steiner, a Zionist activist in Hungary, to the Nuremberg war crimes investigators. The affidavit alleged that the Mufti 'had been the protagonist of the idea of their [the Jews] annihilation.'[232](#) Kasztner also mentioned the testimonies of Eichmann and Wisliceny regarding the Mufti.[233](#)

Wisliceny organised the deportation of over 50,000 Greek/Salonikan Jews to Auschwitz, participated in the extermination of nearly half a million Hungarian Jews as well as the deportation of 57,000 Slovakian Jews.[234](#) Yet Wisliceny too had become a rescuer of Jews. 'He talked nostalgically of the evenings he had spent in Budapest's night-clubs with Kasztner.' [235](#) Wisliceny claimed that until the spring of 1942 the Judenkommando hadn't known about the gas chambers, remarking that 'I wish to God that these methods never be used against us.' [236](#)

On 11 August 1947 Kasztner gave an affidavit in favour of Becher at Nuremberg:

Becher did everything within the realm of his possibilities and position to save innocent human lives from the blind fury of killing of the Nazi leaders. [237](#)

Barri suggested that 'the Agency was probably aware of all the interventions on behalf of Nazi war criminals by Kasztner.'[238](#) They were made on behalf of

Becher, Juttner, Krumei (5.2.47), Wisliceny, Kettlitz (13.10.47)²³⁹ and possibly Wilhelm Eggen. Between London in 1945 and 1948 there had been a ‘spectacular change in Kasztner’s attitude’.²⁴⁰

In 1948 Wisliceny had become ‘the first SS officer who obtained concessions, however minor, that breached the principle of total annihilation.’²⁴¹ While Becher had not been part of the destruction process, Wisliceny and Krumei had been key players in the Judenkommando.²⁴²

Throughout the period when he was testifying, Kasztner received financial assistance from the JA.²⁴³ On 25 July 1948 Kasztner wrote to Eliezer Kaplan boasting that Becher had been released because of his testimony. Yet under cross-examination Kasztner asserted that it was a lie.²⁴⁴ Halevi held that Becher, far from opposing the deportations, merely obeyed Himmler’s orders.

There is no truth and no innocence in his statement ‘I did not doubt for one moment the good intentions of Kurt Becher. That statement by Kasztner was a deliberate lie given on behalf of a war criminal.’²⁴⁵

Bauer defended Kasztner’s testimony in favour of Becher alleging he was ‘a convinced if superficial and opportunist Nazi’²⁴⁶. In fact Becher was an ardent Nazi. On 5 November 1944, driving back from the meeting with McClelland, Becher described Himmler as ‘a kind-hearted man, not a mass murderer’. People simply didn’t recognize how difficult it was for Himmler ‘when he wants to issue some order or other to ease the Jews’ situation.’²⁴⁷

During OB, Becher’s cavalry brigade operated with the Einsatzgruppen in Russia. It conducted executions of civilians, mainly Jews, in the Pripet Marshes during the summer and autumn of 1941.²⁴⁸ Becher received the Iron Cross, second and first class, for valour.²⁴⁹ On 1 August Himmler had sent an order that all the Jews were to be shot and Jewish women were to be driven into the swamps.²⁵⁰ In the summer of 1941, Becher’s unit murdered at least 15,000 Jews.²⁵¹

In May 1982, after Karla Muller-Tupath published the book *The Reichsführer’s Most Obedient Becher: A German career*, a judicial inquiry began into Becher, based on the testimonies of two witnesses. Both witnesses died before charges could be laid.²⁵²

Krumei murdered 86 children in Lidice in retaliation for the assassination of Heydrich.²⁵³ ‘Krumei had commanded the special Nazi detachments created in Warsaw, Lemberg, Amsterdam and Paris for the purpose of liquidating the Jews.’ Krumei boasted that he was ‘the greatest authority on the various extermination camps.’²⁵⁴

Krumey spent his post-war years in Germany as a free man.²⁵⁵ It was only after a trial in Frankfurt in 1965, at which Vrba testified, that he was condemned to five years' hard labour. On 29 August 1969 this was increased to life imprisonment.²⁵⁶ He was released in 1973.

The Kasztner Trial was unaware of his testimony on behalf of the other SS war criminals. Kasztner had told Joel Brand that he never defended members of Eichmann's staff, since 'these were nothing but murderers of the worst kind.' ²⁵⁷ As Brand commented: 'Nobody knew better than Kasztner that Krumey was the immediate deputy of the mass murderer Eichmann.' ²⁵⁸

Brand's explanation for Kasztner's behaviour was that 'In Nuremberg he regained the feeling of power – picking up the phone,... a written statement – these were enough to save human lives.'²⁵⁹ Barri suggests that Kasztner's mental state was 'cognitive dissonance' ²⁶⁰ citing US Prosecutors Walter Rapp and Robert Kempner that 'he desired to remain in his position of power after the war ended.' A cable that Kasztner sent to Palestine said that the end of the war had frustrated his rescue activities!

Psychological explanations, however, do not explain why the JA and the WJC allowed Kasztner to testify on their behalf and took no steps to rectify this after the event.²⁶¹ In July 1944, the JA had advised him to promise future assistance to SS officers in return for their co-operation. 'Kasztner did in 1947 what the JA had envisaged in 1944.'²⁶²

The Jewish Agency's Attitude to Testifying on Behalf of Nazi War Criminals

According to Kasztner, Maurice Perlsweig and Riegner of the WJC, and Chaim Barlas and Eliahu Dobkin of the JA, agreed to his testifying on behalf of Becher.²⁶³ Kasztner claimed that he was given permission by both the JA and the WJC to give a favourable opinion in support of Nazis who had been helpful.²⁶⁴

Dobkin denied that the JA had given Kasztner any such authorisation.²⁶⁵ He denied on oath even having heard of Becher.²⁶⁶ Kasztner claimed that he must have known since Dobkin had been involved in JA rescue work and had been scheduled to meet Becher in Lisbon during the war, before it was cancelled at the last moment. Barri describes Kasztner's claim as 'quite plausible.'²⁶⁷

In October 1991, during an interview with Haim Cohen, correspondence between Becher and Pozner, was shown to him. Cohen said that if the Court had known about this correspondence it would have believed Kasztner rather than

Dobkin.²⁶⁸ The correspondence concerned the purchase of machinery for making weapons. It appears that there were other economic contacts between Israel and Becher via the German reparations delegation.²⁶⁹

The question as to whether Dobkin had approved Kasztner's testimonies was not asked of Barlas, Riegner or Maurice Perlzweig. They were all in Israel at the time of the trial but were not called to the stand. Brand told how one of Dobkin's main duties, as joint head of the Relief and Rescue Committee in Jerusalem, was to meet with Becher. Brand described how 'The name of SS Colonel Becher was one of the names mentioned more than others.'²⁷⁰ Becher's name appeared frequently in Kasztner's Report and in correspondence dealing with the "Becher Deposit". Barri concluded that Dobkin must have been familiar with Becher's name and Kasztner's testimony and that the JA must have approved it: 'An atmosphere prevailed that encouraged that testimony.'²⁷¹

Although the JA had known and almost certainly approved of Kasztner's testimony in 1948, this was hard to defend six years later. Raphael, who was a member of the JA's Political Department, confirmed that Dobkin had known Becher's name and that both of them knew in advance of Kasztner's decision to testify in favour of Nazis.²⁷²

Throughout the Kasztner Trial the question of who had authorised Kasztner's testimony on behalf of Becher was never investigated. The state could not admit that it had approved testimonies on behalf of Nazi war criminals. Kasztner had enough enemies without adding the JA to the list.

According to Raphael, Kasztner informed him and Dobkin that he was going to testify on behalf of Wisliceny, Becher and Krumej and that both of them expressed their opposition.²⁷³ If true why did the JA not take steps to prevent Kasztner testifying on its behalf? Why did Dobkin deny having heard of Becher? Kasztner clearly believed that he was authorised to make the statements.²⁷⁴ Kasztner mentioned them in his July 1948 letter to Kaplan, Israel's first Treasury Minister.²⁷⁵

Deputy Chief Prosecutor Kempner regretted inviting Kasztner to be a witness for the Prosecution as he 'roamed the Nazi prison camp for Nazi Officers searching for those he could help by testimony or intervention on their behalf'. The Americans had initially treated Becher as a war criminal.²⁷⁶ The failure to prosecute Becher was solely on account of Kasztner's pleadings.²⁷⁷

Raphael worked in intelligence and directed efforts to recover stolen Jewish property.²⁷⁸ Becher, as Chief of the Economic Department of the SS in Hungary, had stripped Hungarian Jews of their remaining wealth. His 'extortion machine

could not have functioned without Eichmann's murder machine.' [279](#) In exchange for their lives, Becher acquired from four Jewish families Hungary's massive Manfred Weiss steel combine.[280](#) Raphael clearly had a motive for keeping Becher alive.

Barlas stated that 'We will not forget those who stand beside us today, and that is more important than money.' As Barri noted, 'The alibi that the JA could provide Nazi war criminals was a desired commodity in the final stages of the war.'[281](#)

The Saving of the Budapest Ghetto

Kasztner suggested that Becher was responsible for saving the Jews of the Budapest Ghetto.[282](#) Becher himself had no recollection of this until 'after repeated prompts by Kasztner.'[283](#)

It was Pál Szalai, the Nyilas liaison with the Budapest Police, who protected the 70,000 Jews in the Ghetto, a role which was recognised by the post-war Peoples' Tribunals.[284](#) Anna Porter claimed it was Major-General Gerhard Schmidhuber, the last German commander of Budapest, who forbade the destruction of the ghetto and who posted soldiers outside the wooden walls. Kasztner claimed that Becher had instructed the SS Commander, Gen. Winkelmann, to safeguard the ghetto.[285](#)

Ninety-two medical staff and patients at two Jewish hospitals in Maros Street and Vasosmajor Street were massacred. It was 'one of the blackest deeds of the Nyilas terrorism.'[286](#) Only the patients and staff of the hospital protected by Nyilas officer Ara Jeretzian, between 300 and 400 people, survived.[287](#)

The Becher Deposit

One explanation for Kasztner's testimony on behalf of Krumej was that he had information on the whereabouts of what became known as the Becher Deposit.[288](#) In January 1946 Kasztner and Schweiger gave statements at the US Consulate in Geneva regarding the Deposit,[289](#) which consisted of a large proportion of the stolen wealth of Hungarian Jewry.[290](#) Nine million Swiss Francs had been received from Jews seeking to escape Hungary although Kasztner described the value of what Becher had handed over to Schweiger as being 'several hundred thousand dollars.'[291](#)

It was widely believed that Becher enriched himself from the money extorted from Hungary's Jews.[292](#) In March 1947, when the US released the money that

Becher had given them, it came to only \$65,000, a fraction of the monies that Becher had extorted.²⁹³ An interesting light on what may have happened to the Deposit was what Kasztner said to Professor George Nador, who spoke to Kasztner a year after the war. Nador recalled hearing Kasztner state that 'Everybody's chance comes only once in life. My chance came in 1944 in Budapest. And I made it.' ²⁹⁴

- 1 Primo Levi, *If This is a Man*, p. 24.
- 2 Rudolf Vrba, *I Cannot Forgive*, p. 249.
- 3 Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, pp. 144-6, cites a report, probably by Gisi Fleischmann informing Geneva about Auschwitz but in the belief that it was a labour camp. In March 1943 Fleischmann informed Geneva about Auschwitz-Birkenau and Lublin, saying that no Jews remain in the entire GG. YV Archives, M-20/93.
- 4 Strictly speaking the former also comprised the testimony of Arnošt Rosin and Czesław Mordowicz who escaped from Auschwitz on 27 May and Jerzy Tabeau (the 'Polish Major's Report'). They were also later filed as documents NG-206Int at the Nuremberg trials.
- 5 Vrba's estimate of those killed was 1.765 million, which excluded the 400,000 Hungarian Jews. Rudolf Hoess, p. 194, in his affidavit at Nuremberg on 5.4.46. estimated that at least 2.5 million people were exterminated and half a million succumbed to starvation and disease. Bauer, in the *Jerusalem Post* of 22.9.89, estimated that 1.323m died. Jerzy Tabeau, who escaped in November 1943, estimated that 1.5 million had died, which accords with Vrba's figures in April 1944. Hermann Langbein collected numerous estimates from ex-SS officers, all of which agreed that it was between two and three million. See fn. 12, p. 97, Rudolf Vrba, 'Preparations for the Holocaust in Hungary,' *The Nazis Last Victims: the Holocaust in Hungary*, Eds. Braham and Scott Miller.
- 6 Baron, 'The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust' p. 13.
- 7 *Vierteljahreshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 53:3, 2005, pp. 461-72, John Conway, 'Escaping Auschwitz: Sixty years later,' University of British Columbia Vancouver, B.C., Canada.
- 8 Levai, p. 267.
- 9 Linn, p. 100, citing Holocaust in Historical Perspective
- 10 Ibid., citing Fatran, *Struggle for Survival*, p. 237 (tr. Hebrew). Possibly she meant Hungarian Jews.
- 11 Ibid., p. 45 citing Bauer, *Anmerkungen zum 'Auschwitz-Bericht'* von Rudolf Vrba, pp. 297-307.
- 12 Ibid., p. 46 citing Bauer, Conclusion: The Holocaust in Hungary, p. 196.
- 13 Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p. 92.
- 14 Linn, p. 100. See Orr, *Perdition*, pp. 84-5, citing Vrba, 'Footnote to Auschwitz Report,' *Jewish Currents*, March 1966, p. 22.
- 15 Ibid., p. 101 citing Soros, *Masquerade*, 65, 3.3.01.
- 16 Ibid., p. 89 citing Fatran, *Struggle for Survival*, p. 237 (translation from Hebrew).
- 17 Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, p. 712.
- 18 Linn, p. 47-8, citing Klein, G. *Sentenced to Live: A Survivor's Memoir* (NY: Holocaust Library, 1988), p. 494.
- 19 Elie Wiesel, *Night*, London: Penguin Books, 2008, p. 20,
- 20 Braham & Miller, *The Nazis' Last Victims: The Holocaust in Hungary*, fn.18, p. 98. <https://tinyurl.com/Sehys733> Braham accused Bauer of using 'questionable psychological arguments' when suggesting that Hungary's Jews had been informed about the Holocaust without having internalized it. Bauer 'cites selectively the recollections of survivors, including some young Zionist couriers and local community leaders who were allegedly involved in "rescue and warning activities."' The problem was that the survivors were not only 'left in the dark about the secrets of Auschwitz, but in fact were misinformed while

most of the leaders escaped...’ Braham criticises Bauer for failing to cite the memoirs of Hungarian Holocaust survivors from Kolozsvár ‘let alone cite the views of many survivors including Elie Wiesel, who testified that they had no advance warnings about Auschwitz.’ *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, fn. 5, p. 27.

[21](#) Wiesel, *Night*, p. 30.

[22](#) Istvan Deak, Review of *The Holocaust in Hungary, Sixty Years Later*, Braham and Brewster.

[23](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 301.

[24](#) Iddisher Kempfer, *Brecht di Blockade!*, February 19, 1943 cited in Beit Zvi, p. 282.

[25](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 313.

[26](#) Hecht, *Perfidy*, p. 261, fn 68. citing *The Daily Herald* February 1961 <https://tinyurl.com/yxr5tevs>

[27](#) *The Observer*, 22.9.63. Strictly speaking, Kasztner was not a member of the Judenrat.

[28](#) Linn, p. 13.

[29](#) Linn, p. 4., ‘What do our students know about Holocaust Heroes?’ (Unpublished paper, University of Haifa, Israel, 1998).

[30](#) Uri Dromi, ‘Deaf ears, blind eyes,’ Jan. 28, 2005 <http://www.haaretz.com/deaf-earsblind-eyes-1.148553>

[31](#) Linn, p. 66, citing Bauer, Anmerkungen zum ‘Auschwitz-Bericht’ von Rudolf Vrba, pp. 297-307 (p. 297)

[32](#) *Ibid.*, p. 30, citing Bauer, *Conclusion: The Holocaust in Hungary*, pp. 193-209.

[33](#) <https://tinyurl.com/y46rxdfn>

[34](#) Dromi, ‘Deaf ears, blind eyes,’ Jan. 28, 2005 <https://tinyurl.com/yy8bbsk9>.

[35](#) Peter Adler, ‘A conspiracy of silence,’ *Jerusalem Post*, 2 June 2005. Review of *Escaping Auschwitz: A Culture of Forgetting*, Ruth Linn, <https://tinyurl.com/ra9xwck>

[36](#) John Conway, Review: Linn – *Escaping Auschwitz: A Culture of Forgetting*, Newsletter, November 2004, Association of Contemporary Church Historians, <https://tinyurl.com/wygu9j3>

[37](#) Linn, p. 112.

[38](#) Which Yehuda Bauer claimed to have lobbied for!

[39](#) Linn, p. 86 citing Diner, *Cumulative Contingency*, 164.

[40](#) *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[41](#) *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[42](#) Zertal, *Israel’s Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, pp. 34-6.

[43](#) Linn p. 58. Neumann, *Im Schatten des Todes*, pp. 166, 178, 181.

[44](#) Krasniansky, A Declaration under Oath.

[45](#) Linn p. 58, citing Rothkirchen, L. ‘The Role of the Czech and Slovak Jewish Leadership in the Field of Rescue Work,’ in *Rescue Attempts during the Holocaust*. Proceedings of the 2nd Yad Vashem International Historical Conference, Jerusalem. April 8-11, 1974. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1974) pp. 423-34.

[46](#) *Ibid.*, p. 58, citing Bauer, ‘The Holocaust in Historical Perspective.

[47](#) *Ibid.*, p.59, citing Porat, ‘The Greek Jews – an Example for the Relation between Awareness to Rescuing during the Holocaust 1939-1945’ *Dapim: Studies on the Shoa* 8 (1990): pp. 123-34, 130.

- [48](#) Gilbert, Auschwitz and the Allies, pp. 190-98.
- [49](#) Linn, p. 92.
- [50](#) Ibid., p. 64.
- [51](#) Kraus and Kulka, The Death Mills of Auschwitz. Erich Kulka, Five Escapes from Auschwitz, pp. 212-37.
- [52](#) Kulka, Attempts by Jewish Escapees to Stop Mass Extermination, p. 300 et seq. Linn, p. 67.
- [53](#) Ibid., p. 304.
- [54](#) Linn, p. 71 citing Ben Ami, *Hashitka*.
- [55](#) Ibid., p.71.
- [56](#) Conway, Review: Linn – *Escaping Auschwitz: A Culture of Forgetting*, Newsletter, November 2004.
- [57](#) Linn, p. 61.
- [58](#) Ibid., p. 62 citing Conway, J.S. ‘Der Auschwitz-Bericht von April 1944’ *Zeitgeschichte* 8:pp. 413-42.
- [59](#) Ibid., pp. 85-6. See Garlinski, J. *Fighting Auschwitz: The Resistance Movement in the Concentration Camp* (London: Julian Friedmann Publishers, 1975).
- [60](#) Porat, p. 245.
- [61](#) Linn, p. 85.
- [62](#) Ibid., p. 108, citing Braham and Miller, *Nazis’ Last Victims*, p. 17.
- [63](#) Ibid., pp. 88-9, citing Bauer, *Conclusion: The Holocaust in Hungary*, pp. 193-209.
- [64](#) Conway, *Escaping Auschwitz: Sixty years later*.
- [65](#) Fatran, ‘The ‘Working Group’ Holocaust & Genocide Studies 8, 1994, p. 187. and ‘Letters to the Editor,’ *Holocaust & Genocide Studies* 9, 1995, pp. 269-76.
- [66](#) Linn, p. 89.
- [67](#) Braham, p. 632.
- [68](#) Ibid., pp. 715, 718-19.
- [69](#) Israel Gutman, *Shoah Vezimaron*, cited in Linn, p. 72.
- [70](#) Linn, p.4. See for example Richard Breitman, *Why Auschwitz was never bombed* p.1.
- [71](#) Porter, p.445, citing Tschuy, *Dangerous Diplomacy*.
- [72](#) Linn, p.27. Braham, p. 712. Braham cites Eric Kulka as claiming that Kasztner frequently quoted from the Protocols without divulging the source, fn. 81 p. 729. ‘Auschwitz Condoned’ *The Wiener Library Bulletin*, London, Vol.23:1 (Winter 1968-9). Bauer fixes the date as April 27, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 231.
- [73](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale?* pp. 156-7.
- [74](#) Braham, p. 729, fn. 78. Bauer says that ‘in 1972 Freudiger told Braham that he had received the Protocols between June 5 and 10, but he had been given the essential information in them earlier.’ *Rethinking*, p. 232.
- [75](#) Linn, p. 27.
- [76](#) Ibid., pp. 37-8.
- [77](#) *The Kasztner Report*, The Report of the Budapest Jewish Rescue Committee 1942-1945.
- [78](#) Braham, *The Politics of Genocide*, Vol. 2. Columbia University Press, 1981, p. 706.
- [79](#) *Kasztner Report*, pp. 20-1.

- [80](#) Sergio Minerbi, *The Eichmann trial Diary*, p. 122. Eichmann's Defence objected to the interview being entered into the record claiming it was made under the influence of alcohol! The objection partly succeeded. The interview was repeatedly quoted by the Prosecution, p. 152. In *An Antisemitic Hoax: Lenni Brenner on Zionist 'Collaboration' With the Nazis* <https://tinyurl.com/y74pory8> Paul Bogdanor objected to Brenner's use of Eichmann's interview because it was 'a transparently worthless source'. In 'Tony Greenstein's House of Cards' <https://tinyurl.com/y9wkr1u1> Bogdanor wrote 'Is he unaware that Nazi mass murderers – and Eichmann above all – were pathological liars?' I was accused of treating Eichmann "as a credible witness?" Imagine my surprise when Bogdanor's *Kasztner's Crimes*, also quoted from Eichmann's interview, fn. 1, p. 27!
- [81](#) Introduction to *The Kasztner Report*, pp. 21-3.
- [82](#) Introduction to *Kasztner Report*, Karsai and Molnar pp. 22-3, 29. Braham p. 711. Nor do Stern or Freudiger mention them in their subsequent reports.
- [83](#) *The Kasztner Report*, p. 122, Jerusalem. 'One of the NCOs is said to have remarked: "Soon we will be eating fine Hungarian Salami." See p. 198, Vrba, *I Cannot Forgive*.
- [84](#) Braham, p. 539.
- [85](#) Yahil L, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry, 1932-1945* Yahil suggests that it was only during the second half of June that the Hungarian Jewish leaders started disseminating copies of the report to the Hungarian authorities and Swiss representatives.
- [86](#) Braham, pp 718-19.
- [87](#) *Ibid.*, p. 719.
- [88](#) Kulka, *Attempts by Jewish Escapees to Stop Mass Extermination*, p. 301.
- [89](#) Baron, p. 14, stated that the Protocols were sent immediately to Kasztner, Schwalb and the Zionist office in Istanbul. Bogdanor, fn 24, p. 145, says that the Report reached Schwalb on May 17 and that he forwarded it to Eliahu Dobkin two days later but 'apparently Schwalb did not show his copy to Lichtheim'.
- [90](#) Baron, p. 21.
- [91](#) *Ibid.*, fn. xli, p. 32.
- [92](#) Porter, pp. 164-5.
- [93](#) *Ibid.*, p. 192. Gilbert claimed that 'an intercepted copy reached Eichmann.' *A Dupe not a Villain*, 17.6.09.
- [94](#) Braham, p. 729.
- [95](#) Jerzy Tabeau, <https://tinyurl.com/y23v8oc8>, Baron, *The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust*, fn. liv, p. 33.
- [96](#) Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p. 234.
- [97](#) *Ibid.*, p. 262.
- [98](#) 'This Day in Jewish History 1944, *Ha'aretz*, 7.4.13. <https://tinyurl.com/y5v24d4t>
- [99](#) 'Another Escape from Auschwitz,' *Jewish Currents*, 30.5.13. <https://tinyurl.com/yypqort4>
- [100](#) Braham, pp. 713, 1125. Baron pp. 21-2. The Swiss newspapers by breaking the news of the exterminations helped build the pressure that led to Horthy ordering an end to the deportations. Hilberg, p. 911, places the date as July 6th. Jaross boasted that he had defied Horthy's order and completed the Zone V deportations and those in the suburbs of Budapest.
- [101](#) Gilbert, p. 232.

- [102](#) Baron, *The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust* p. 21. David Wyman, *Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed*, p. 4, states that it was June 24th that McClelland cabled the WRB.
- [103](#) Kulka, 'Attempts by Jewish escapees to stop mass extermination', *Jewish Social Studies* Vol. 47, 1985, p. 302.
- [104](#) Baron, *The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust*, p. 22. Bauer says the copy that reached the Swiss press came from the Sternbuch brothers, *Rethinking the Holocaust* p. 234. Switzerland had abolished censorship in the second half of June 1944.
- [105](#) Kulka, *Attempts by Jewish Escapees*, p. 302.
- [106](#) Braham, p. 712.
- [107](#) Hecht, fn. 99, p. 263. Bogdanor, p. 142, says that Pozner was the 'intended recipient' without mentioning his failure to distribute the Protocols. They were also passed to Mantello
- [108](#) Tsvi Erez, 'Hungary: 6 Days in July 1944' pp. 37-53.
- [109](#) Freudiger, *5 Months*, p. 257. In Freudiger's case, this is almost certainly untrue as he had already received a copy.
- [110](#) Linn, p. 31 citing Barkai, Leo Baeck: *Leadership & Thought 1933-1945*.
- [111](#) Gilbert, p. 262.
- [112](#) Baron, *The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust*, p. 16.
- [113](#) Linn, pp. 31-3, notes that Yad Vashem refused to honour Maria Szekely posthumously as a righteous Gentile. Szekely, Elias's secretary, translated the report into Hungarian and English.
- [114](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* p. 233.
- [115](#) Braham, p. 1067. Baron, p. 14. Gilbert, p. 204 states that Burzio sent a copy of the Protocols to the Vatican on May 22nd but that it was only received five months later.
- [116](#) Braham, p. 1067-8. *The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust*, p.14.
- [117](#) See Braham, *Remembering and Forgetting*, p. 238.
- [118](#) Linn p. 28. See also Kulka, *Attempts by Jewish Escapees*, p. 302. According to Conway, two years earlier, Monsignor Burzio had sounded the alarm in Rome when he had called for and received a strong message from the Pope concerning the deportation of Slovakia's Jews, which he then delivered to Tiso.
- [119](#) Braham, p. 1072.
- [120](#) Introduction to *Kasztner Report*, p. 33.
- [121](#) *Perfidy*, p. 93 citing *Davar*, January 12 1945.
- [122](#) Sternhell, *Founding Myth*, p. 329.
- [123](#) Shlomo Katz, reprinted from *Midstream*, *A Quarterly Jewish Review*, Winter 1962. The other article is 'Ben Hecht's "Perfidy" – An Analysis of his rewriting of history,' New York 1962, American Section of the Executive of the WZO and the JA.
- [124](#) Elliot Jager, 'Power and Politics: "Perfidy" Revisited,' *Jerusalem Post*, 31.7.07. <https://tinyurl.com/y564gvv8> Yad Vashem Hopes Kastner Archive Will End Vilification <https://tinyurl.com/y99x9y3y> *Ha'aretz*, 23.7.07.
- [125](#) See *The Top 100 Chomsky lies* published by the Islamophobic [Frontpagemag.com](http://frontpagemag.com) <http://tinyurl.com/y35yct34>. For a full list of his far-right conspiracy articles see <https://tinyurl.com/ybatSoct>

- [126](#) Weitz, *The Herut Movement and the Kasztner Trial*, p. 355.
- [127](#) 'On quest to clear Kasztner, historian "shocked" to prove Nazi collaboration,' *JC* 15.11.16. <https://tinyurl.com/yy4abw2d>
- [128](#) Lob p. 231; Braham, p. 971; Hecht fn. 133, p. 266.
- [129](#) Teveth, pp. 855, 857.
- [130](#) Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy during the Holocaust*, p. 355.
- [131](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 181 citing 'The Jews among the war criminals' *Ha'aretz*, 3.6.45. p.2
- [132](#) *The Guardian*, Leader, 23.1.87.
- [133](#) *The Guardian*, 21.3.87. This was untrue.
- [134](#) *Perdition*, p. 142. Jim Allen, Letter to *The Guardian*, 18.3.1987.
- [135](#) Ken Loach, letter to *The Guardian*, 19.3.1987; *Perdition* p. 142.
- [136](#) Cesarani, *Anti-Zionism in Britain, 1922-2002*, p. 147.
- [137](#) See *The Guardian* letter 26.4.99, Barbara Smoker of the South Place Ethical Society which ran Conway Hall <https://tinyurl.com/y3pgysyc>
- [138](#) *The Times*, 23.1.87. and see letter from Andrew Hornung 28.1.87.
- [139](#) Cesarani, *Genocide & Rescue: The Holocaust in Hungary*, p. 151, Oxford 1977.
- [140](#) Arnold Wesker, 'Why I changed my mind,' *JC* 24.3.89.
- [141](#) *JC* 3.7.87.
- [142](#) Wistrich, *Between Redemption & Perdition: Modern Antisemitism and Jewish Identity*, p. 244. Routledge 1990, <https://tinyurl.com/y76gdvda>
- [143](#) *JC* 20.3.87, the debates can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/5n7nw7t5> and <https://tinyurl.com/mvuh79d>
- [144](#) 'Why *Perdition* should be shown.' *Tribune*, 27 February 1987. '
- [145](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*. p. 271.
- [146](#) Noah Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, London, 1975, p. 327.
- [147](#) Braham, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 281; Porter, p. 416, tells how Malchiel Gruenwald, the defendant, rarely attended the trial. One day, when he did attend, he was stopped by security as he was not recognised.
- [148](#) Porter, p. 369.
- [149](#) Kasztner Report, p. 277.
- [150](#) Porter, pp. 420-1.
- [151](#) Lob, p. 80.
- [152](#) Bauer, p. 160. According to Bertrand Jacobson, Bucharest representative of the welfare organisation HIAS-HICEM, some 1,500 Jews crossed the border. Braham, '*Rescue Operations in Hungary*' p.57. Kasztner also estimated that 1,500 escaped to Romania, *Kasztner Report* p. 110. According to Menachem Keren-Kratz, p. 9 fn. 55, more than 10,000 escaped over the border to Romania. *Hast Thou Escaped and Also Taken Possession? The Responses of the Satmar Rebbe*.
- [153](#) Bogdanor, pp. 50-6. Kasztner was sent by Wisliceny to Kolozsvár, near the border with Romania, to warn the Jews that the guard had been increased and that it was too risky to cross.
- [154](#) Hecht, p. 109.

- [155](#) Porter, pp. 423-4. *Perfidy* pp. 117-8, citing C.C. 124/53 in the D.C. Jerusalem.
- [156](#) *Ibid.*, p. 278, Braham 929.
- [157](#) *Ibid.*, p. 407.
- [158](#) Linn, pp. 103, 105.
- [159](#) Braham said that 'for reasons of his own, Bauer is also silent on this issue.' *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p. 192. *Politics of Genocide*, pp. 972-3.
- [160](#) *Kasztner Report* pp. 141, 154-5, Linn, p. 44.
- [161](#) Braham, p. 546.
- [162](#) Hecht, p. 106.
- [163](#) *Ibid.*, p. 107.
- [164](#) Linn, p. 82 citing Kertesz, I. *Sorstalansag* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishing, 2002), p. 44.
- [165](#) Hecht, pp. 106-7.
- [166](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 105-10.
- [167](#) *Perfidy* p. 109. Edith Polak, a daughter of holocaust survivors, in her criticism of Gaylen Ross's film *Killing Kasztner*, said he would've been 'torn to pieces' if he had returned to Kolozsvár. <https://tinyurl.com/5sSt2ejd>
- [168](#) Weitz, The Herut Movement and the Kasztner Trial, p. 353.
- [169](#) In the province of Wurttemberg, 20 km north-east of Ravensburg. *Kasztner Report*, p. 123.
- [170](#) Kasztner Trial Testimony 2 and 8 July 1954, Bogdanor, *Kasztner's Crime*, pp. 189-90.
- [171](#) Bogdanor, p. 131.
- [172](#) Hillberg, p. 881. Braham, p. 707. *The Politics of Genocide*.
- [173](#) Hecht, p. 154.
- [174](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 152, 154.
- [175](#) Hecht, *Perfidy*, pp. 127-32.
- [176](#) Kasztner Report, p. 220.
- [177](#) Bogdanor, p. 159.
- [178](#) Yoel Palgi, 'What Did Really Happen in Hungary? Review of *The Memoir of a Jewish Paratrooper Behind Nazi Lines*' Rutgers University Press. Judith Baumel, *Ha'aretz* 13.6.03. <http://tinyurl.com/y339k8ug>
- [179](#) Weitz, The Positions of David Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Tabenkin, p. 195.
- [180](#) Yechiam Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy*, p. 359. Even Lenni Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*, p. 260, described their purpose as to 'organise Jewish resistance and rescue'.
- [181](#) Lob, p. 260. Though see letter from Prof. George Nador, *JC*, 9.9.83.
- [182](#) *Perfidy* pp. 179-80.
- [183](#) Orr, *Perdition*, pp. 88-9.
- [184](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 91-2. The Judgement of the District Court of Jerusalem pp. 54-5.
- [185](#) *Ibid.*, p. 87, citing *Criminal Case 124: The Greenwald Kasztner Trial* by S Rosenfeld, Tel Aviv: Karin Publishing Company, 1955, p. 101. Lob, p. 259; *Perfidy*, p. 180. Biss, p. 42, called the TotP the 'test convoy'.
- [186](#) Porter, p. 61. Kasztner's job was co-funded by the JDC and the JA. The JA had sought to set up a Relief and Rescue Committee in Budapest only to find that one had already been established. Orr describes Kasztner's Committee as 'affiliated' to the JA Relief Committee

in Palestine., *Perdition* p. 81. Braham said that the Rescue Committee of Budapest was established early in 1942, under the auspices of the Rescue Department of the JA for Palestine. Braham, *Patterns*, p. 281).

[187](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 90.

[188](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 343. Linn, p. 51, cites Idith Zertal as claiming that Israel was not cleansed from the Dybbuk of the Holocaust and the Judenrat question was not, and probably never would be, resolved. *Death and the Nation*, p. 133.

[189](#) Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million*. p. 343.

[190](#) Lucas, p. 327. <https://tinyurl.com/y2k44xxq>

[191](#) *Ha'aretz*, 9.1.15, 'Declassified: Shin Bet Knew Israel Kastner Was Targeted,' <https://tinyurl.com/ybgtjnxr>

[192](#) *Ha'aretz*, 10.2.20., 'What Is Shin Bet Hiding About Killing of Israeli Accused of 'Selling His Soul' to the Nazis?' <https://tinyurl.com/yarlzbas>. Ofer Aderet, *Ha'aretz* 21.3.21, 'An Israeli Suspected of Nazi Collaboration Was Murdered. What Is Israel Hiding?' <https://tinyurl.com/25pkw4am>. The High Court, as is normal, turned down the application on grounds of 'national security.' <https://tinyurl.com/7h24r3p9>

[193](#) *Ha'aretz*, 21.5.21., 'An Israeli Suspected of Nazi Collaboration Was Murdered. What is Israel Hiding?' <https://tinyurl.com/yckmjsay>

[194](#) Although technically he was suing Gruenwald, in reality Kasztner was the Defendant, although by this time he had been assassinated.

[195](#) Hecht, p. 195. <https://tinyurl.com/bnycybb>

[196](#) Hecht fn. 160, p. 268. See also Judge Cheshin, Orr. *Perdition* p. 101.

[197](#) Lob, p. 185.

[198](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1.

[199](#) *Ibid.*, p. 270.

[200](#) *Ibid.*, p. 117. Officially the ToTP was not a rescue mission but Aliyah, emigration to Palestine.

[201](#) Edith Polak suggest that the price of a seat was \$40,000 not \$1,000. <https://tinyurl.com/5s5t2ejd>

[202](#) Lob, p. 137. Porter likewise accepts that Zionists '*dominated our entire group*' p. 100, p. 146.

[203](#) *Ibid.*, p. 139.

[204](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 84.

[205](#) Braham, p. 975.

[206](#) *Criminal Case 124 Perdition* p. 100 see also Hecht, p. 273.

[207](#) Linn, pp. 43-44, citing Weitz's *Man Who Was Murdered Twice*, p. 23 (author's translation from Hebrew).

[208](#) JC 24 November 2016

[209](#) Braham, pp. 720-21.

[210](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 102.

[211](#) The Supreme Court unanimously accepted the facts as found by Judge Halevi, but they refused to accept his interpretation.

[212](#) Lob, p. 280.

[213](#) Linn, p. 40.

- [214](#) Braham, *'Rescue Operations in Hungary* p. 50. citing *Alpayyim* (Hebrew) (2000) Number 20.
- [215](#) Shaked, 'History in the court and the court in history: verdicts in Kasztner's trial and the narrative of memory,' *Alpayyim* 20 (2000): pp. 36-80 (p. 71) (Hebrew)
- [216](#) Shoshana Barri, p. 142, *Perdition*, p. 98.
- [217](#) *Ibid.*, p. 142. Porter, p. 374.
- [218](#) Kasztner Report, 315.
- [219](#) Barri, p. 146.
- [220](#) Linn p. 43. Barri, pp. 142-3.
- [221](#) Barri, p. 143.
- [222](#) *Ibid.*, p. 143. Separate 'joint' statements by Kasztner and Dr. Nikolaus (Moshé) Schweiger, January 20, 1946, CZA, Eliezer Kaplan's Office Files S53/2128.
- [223](#) Barri, pp. 162-3.
- [224](#) Kasztner Report p.324.
- [225](#) Barri, p. 142. See Kasztner Report p. 324 and p. 283 for Krumej.
- [226](#) Bogdanor pp. 257-9.
- [227](#) Bogdanor, pp. 254-59 'Why Did Kasztner Help the Nazis at Nuremberg?'
- [228](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 98. Statement on behalf of Krumej given to Benno H. Seletetf, Director Evidence Division, Office of Chief Counsel for War Crimes at the court in Nuremberg.
- [229](#) Barri, p. 144. Porter p. 385. Biss, p. 195, suggests that these 29 people, who were hiding in intolerable conditions formed a convoy! 'In the cellar of a villa located outside Bratislava I meet Rabbi Weissmandel. There are 17 persons in this bunker.' Kasztner puts the number at 28 who travel in the 'convoy'. *Kasztner Report* pp. 299, 308.
- [230](#) Barri pp. 155-6, Ruffer to Murray Gurfein, February 6, 1948; Friedrich Steiner to Ruffer, May 9, 1947.
- [231](#) Barri, p. 154 citing Orit Galili, 'Interview with Gideon Raphael' (Hebrew), *Ha'aretz*, December 2, 1994.
- [232](#) Michael Sells, *Holocaust Abuse*, pp. 727-8.
- [233](#) Kasztner Report. p. 324.
- [234](#) Beit Zvi, p. 293.
- [235](#) Porter, p. 338.
- [236](#) Kasztner Report, p. 280.
- [237](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 97, citing Judgments of the Supreme [Appeal Court] Court in Israel, Vol. 79 p. 2210, State Publishing House, Jerusalem 1958. *Perfidy*, p. 67. Linn p. 43, Affidavit before Mr. Benno H. Selcke, Jr., of the American Evidence Division of the IMT in Nuremberg on August 4, 1947. Lob, pp. 230-1 dates the affidavit as 14.8.47. Walter Laqueur, *The Kasztner Case*, dates it as August 4 1947.
- [238](#) Barri pp. 145, 151-2.
- [239](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, p. 250.
- [240](#) Barri, p. 142; Lob pp. 228-9.
- [241](#) Lob, p. 229. See also *Kasztner Report*, p. 66.
- [242](#) Barri, p. 145.
- [243](#) *Ibid.*, p. 149.

- [244](#) *Perfidy* pp. 62-3. Orr, *Perdition*, p. 97, *Judgments of the Supreme [Appeal] Court in Israel* Vol 79, Hebrew, State Publishing House, Jerusalem, p. 2210. This was entered into the record by Tamir during the trial, Hecht pp. 72-3, *Exhibit 22*, CC 124/53 in the D.C. Jerusalem.
- [245](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 97.
- [246](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, p. 211.
- [247](#) Kasztner Report p. 235.
- [248](#) Porter, pp. 158-9.
- [249](#) Becher alleged in his testimony for the Prosecution in the Eichmann trial that he received his medals for having taken part in 'heavy fighting' in Russia. <http://tinyurl.com/y3relzqc>.
- [250](#) Hilberg, p. 294, citing notation in file of Mounted Battalion of the SS Cavalry Regiment, T354, Roll 168.
- [251](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, 208.
- [252](#) Porter, p. 393.
- [253](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 99.
- [254](#) Levai, p. 109.
- [255](#) Barri, p. 145. Kasztner wrote to Krumey, 5.2.47: 'I do not easily forget those who showed understanding toward us at certain moments.'
- [256](#) Linn, p. 47.
- [257](#) Orr, *Perdition* p. 99, citing *Satan & the Soul*, Joel Brand and Hanzi Brand. Hebrew. Tel Aviv: Ledor Publishing Company 1960, p. 107.
- [258](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 98.
- [259](#) Lob, p. 270.
- [260](#) Barri, p. 141, citing Kasztner's cable of 12.5.45., CZA S26/1569.
- [261](#) Lob p. 230-1. Orr, *Perdition*, p. 98. citing Hanzi Brand and Joel Brand, *Satan and the Soul*, Hebrew, Ledor Publishing Company, Tel Aviv, 1960 p. 107. Barri, p. 164.
- [262](#) Lob, p. 276
- [263](#) *Ibid.*, p. 252. Barri, p. 150.
- [264](#) Orr, *Perdition*, pp. 103-4.
- [265](#) Barri, p. 150, citing Kasztner and Dobkin's testimony in court on June 4 and 28, 1954 respectively. Lob, p. 222. Orr, *Perdition*, pp. 103-4.
- [266](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 103.
- [267](#) Barri, p. 150.
- [268](#) *Ibid.*, p. 161. Haim Cohen interview with Shoshana Barri 7 October 1991.
- [269](#) Barri, p. 161. Porter p. 392.
- [270](#) Orr, *Perdition*, p. 104 citing, Joel Brand, *Satan and the Soul* p. 146.
- [271](#) Barri pp. 150-2.
- [272](#) Barri, p. 151 citing Orit Galili, 'Interview with Gideon Raphael,' (Hebrew), *Ha'aretz*, December 2, 1994.
- [273](#) Barri, p. 151.
- [274](#) Hecht, p. 79. Barri, p. 164. Bogdanor, p. 256, argued that 'some weight should be attached' to Ruffer's assertion that he and Dobkin had objected to Kasztner's plan to testify on behalf of Becher, Krumey and Wisliceny. However, he fails to say why, if that is the case, Dobkin denied ever having heard of Becher.

- [275](#) Barri fn15, p. 144. Kasztner's statement was appended to the report on the destruction of the Jews of Hungary of August 4, 1947, Prosecution Exhibit 73, Trial Boxes 515.
- [276](#) Statement by Walter Rapp given in Tel Aviv, February 6, 1957, STA; Joel Brand's account of his meeting with Kempner, Joel and Hani Brand, p. 107, Barri, pp. 141, 153. See also Linn, p. 51, Orr, *Perdition*, pp. 97-8.
- [277](#) Lob, p. 239.
- [278](#) Gideon Rafael, 85, a Founder of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, <https://tinyurl.com/4kuk99zd>
- [279](#) Lob, pp. 232-4.
- [280](#) Arendt, p. 142, Hilberg, p. 886.
- [281](#) Barri, p. 162.
- [282](#) Lob, p. 209. Created at the end of November, the Budapest Ghetto had a short but precarious life.
- [283](#) Porter, p. 381. Braham suggested that Kasztner appeared 'to coach' Becher in corroborating many of his 'rescue' activities whilst under interrogation. *Rescue Operations in Hungary* p. 34.
- [284](#) Braham, p. 986. According to Biss, p. 203. It was because of Becher that up to 84,000 Jews were saved. *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p. 40.
- [285](#) See *Kasztner Report*, pp. 273-4; Porter p. 351; Biss p. 175. Even Szálasi took credit for the ghetto's safe deliverance!
- [286](#) Levai, p. 419.
- [287](#) Porter wrongly describes Jerzian as an SS officer, p. 349. See *Battle for Budapest: 100 Days in World War I*, I Krisztián Ungváry London: IB Tauris, 2003, p. 245.
- [288](#) Porter, p. 396.
- [289](#) Barri, p. 143, citing separate 'joint' statements by Kasztner and Dr. Nikolaus (Moshé) Schweiger, 20.1.46.
- [290](#) Barri, p. 156.
- [291](#) Kasztner Report, p. 323.
- [292](#) Porter, p. 377, Kasztner and Schweigger, citing CZA 20.1.45. Edith Polak wrote that 'with the profits left after handling money over to Eichmann, he moved to Israel'. <https://tinyurl.com/Ss5t2ejd>
- [293](#) *Ibid.*, p. 379.
- [294](#) Letter to JC, 9.9.83.

Chapter 11

Countries under Nazi Occupation or Influence

‘Zionism, not having saved the Jews of Europe found itself after the Second World War without a useful objective. To give a moral justification to the existence of their country, the Zionists looked for a way to “save” other Jews, regardless of their wishes. The only Jews with whom this would be possible were the Jews of the Arab world’. (Baruch Nadel) ¹

The primary reason why large numbers of Jews survived the Holocaust, even in Eastern Europe where anti-Semitism was more intense and embedded than in the West, was because of the opposition of non-Jews to anti-Semitism. Bundist Shmuel Zygielbojm told how, having been refused entry by the Netherlands, exhausted and hungry, he offered a hotel owner his watch in lieu of payment. Just then a passer-by went past and the hotel-owner shouted ‘Don’t haggle with me, Jew’. When the passerby was gone, the hotel owner returned the watch and a Reichsmark telling him ‘Good luck. One day, if you get the chance, you’ll pay me back.’²

Goebbels complained of ‘a number of regrettable scenes at a Jewish home for the aged, where a large number of people gathered and even took sides with the Jews.’³ Even in the Nazi inferno the Zionist idea that anti-Semitism was inherent in non-Jews and that Jews can only rely on themselves was untrue.

The number of Jews who were saved from extermination varied enormously and depended on a variety of factors, including the attitude of the local populace, historical opposition to anti-Semitism, the strength of the Left, topography and the severity and nature of the Nazi occupation. In Albania 100% of the Jews were saved and in Denmark it was 99%, whereas in the whole of Bohemia and Moravia, just 424 Jews in hiding were reported to have survived.⁴

Russia not Palestine was the Jewish place of refuge

Out of the approximately 9.5 million Jews in Europe,⁵ the Nazis murdered between five and six million.⁶ The husk of a socialist revolution in the Soviet Union had created a place of refuge. The number of Jews who escaped from the Einsatzgruppen has been estimated at between one and a half and two million.⁷

When Nazi Germany and Stalin’s Russia divided up Poland, approximately 1.87 million Jews found themselves in the Soviet sector, 1.25 million Jews in the Nazi sector and 125,000 in Vilna.⁸

Even as dedicated an anti-communist as Menachem Begin wrote that ‘no Jew should forget... Thanks to the Soviet Union hundreds of thousands of Jews were

saved from Nazi hands...'⁹ Of the four million Jews in the area of operations of the German army during the first sweep of the Einsatzgruppen during OB, about one and a half million had fled, half a million were killed and at least two million were bypassed and still alive. 'When Einsatzgruppe C approached the Dnepr, it noted that rumours of killing operations had resulted in mass flights of Jews.'¹⁰ By the middle of September a report of Einsatzgruppe C noted that 70 to 90% of Jews were fleeing deep into Soviet territory.¹¹ In Kiev two-thirds of the population, about 100,000, escaped into the Soviet Union.¹²

Einsatzgruppen C considered the movement of hundreds of thousands of Jews free of charge beyond the Ural an 'indirect success'.¹³ When the Nazis captured Vilna, up to a third of the Jewish population of the region had fled but most were caught.¹⁴ In 1945-6, some 200,000 Polish Jews returned from the Soviet Union to Poland.¹⁵ Because of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the Stalinist policy had been to remain silent about the Nazis' anti-Jewish policies. Consequently, many Jews remembered that in the First World War the Germans had come as liberators. They did not expect that the Germans would now come as killers.¹⁶ The Jews in Poland were, from the Bug eastwards, more afraid of Stalinism than the Nazis.¹⁷

Although a million Soviet Jews perished another million survived or 'were pulled to safety by the Soviet state.'¹⁸ Bauer doubted Hilberg's estimate that 1.5 million Jews escaped into Russia: 'There is simply no proof to justify such a sweeping statement.' He also doubted that 100,000 escaped from Bessarabia and Bukovina or that up to a third escaped the Vilna region.¹⁹

Bernard Wasserstein writes that hundreds of thousands of Jews in the Baltic states and in the area of Poland occupied by the Soviet Union had been 'fortuitously saved' by being deported to the eastern provinces of the Soviet Union in 1940 and 1941.'²⁰ Konrad Kwiet writes that 5-6,000 Jews and 25,000 Lithuanians were deported to Russia on the eve of the Nazi invasion.²¹ In towns from Smolensk to Moscow, the Einsatzgruppen reported that the Soviet army had evacuated all Jewish inhabitants. It wasn't Palestine but Russia which saved the Jews.²²

Eastern Europe

Everywhere in Eastern Europe the Zionists formed separate Jewish parties rather than joining with secular parties, like the National Peasant and Radical Peasant Parties in Romania or other oppressed nationalities like the Poles in Czechoslovakia, in order to fight anti-Semitism. Zionism was not interested in

opposing anti-Semitism but in emigration. The result was that when the Nazis came to power and the tide swung in favour of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe, the Jews were left isolated.

Yet it was possible to fight anti-Semitism with non-Jewish parties, as was shown in Poland, where the Bund allied with the Polish Socialist Party. Anti-Semitism was a weapon in the hands of the state. One example was in Romania where the dairy farmers of Dudesti-Cioplea sent messengers to the Jewish quarter that those who could escape to their village would be protected. When the Iron Guard launched an attack the peasants repulsed them with hunting rifles.²³

Inciting the different Eastern European nationalities to stage pogroms was part of a strategy of reducing the burden on the Nazi police. The Nazis aimed to make it appear as if the pogroms were spontaneous and an expression of 'a popular will to self-cleansing.'²⁴

Yet even in Lithuania Einsatzgruppe A found that 'surprisingly it was not easy at first to set in motion a pogrom against the Jews on a large scale.'²⁵ Franz Stahlecker wrote to Heydrich on 15 October 1941 regarding the pogrom in Kaunas:

In the first hours after the entry of the forces we also persuaded, not without considerable difficulties, local anti-Semitic elements to start pogroms against Jews.... It was desirable, outwardly, to show that the first steps were made by the local population on its own initiative. ²⁶

The popular image of the Baltic states as being nations of pogromists is an oversimplification. When members of the 2nd Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion were ordered to shoot Jews in Rudensk, Belorussia, a young man said he could not do so. The company commander then asked all those who could not shoot to step back and 15-17 men did this. A similar event took place in Order Police Unit 101 in the Lublin District when Major Wilhelm Trapp invited those who could not shoot women or children to step back.²⁷

The reaction of the non-Jewish population of White Russia and the Ukraine to the Final Solution was described by Hilberg as 'a tendency towards passivity'. In the Slav countries, unlike in the West, there was no political restraint on Nazi violence. The population stood 'estranged and even aghast' at what was happening but there was only one reported pro-Jewish act during the occupation. Sonderkommando 4b shot the Mayor of Kremenchug, Senitsa Vershovsky, because he had tried to protect the Jews.

Whole communities from the traditional reservoir of Jewry in Ukraine and Eastern Galicia, where up to two million Jews had been living, simply disappeared. In Western Ukraine approximately 24,000 Jews were murdered by

Ukrainian nationalists.²⁸ Belorussia, which contained about a million Jews, 'became the graveyard not only of local Jews but also of Jews transported there from other parts of Europe.' There are contradictory reports about the attitude of the local population towards the Nazis' anti-Jewish policies. Rein speaks of their 'lack of readiness to commit acts of physical violence against the Jews' although there were widespread denunciations of Jews during the first months of the occupation and the active participation of local police forces.²⁹

Although Einsatzgruppe C boasted of having killed 75,000 Jews it was overwhelmed at the enormity of the task: 'The Bolshevik work is done by Jews, Russians, Georgians, Armenians, Poles, Latvians, Ukrainians; the Bolshevik apparatus is by no means identical with the Jewish population.' It warned of the danger of replacing the 'main task of destroying the Communist machine with the relatively easier one of eliminating the Jews.'³⁰ As Hilberg noted:

Not often have Nazis made such a clear separation between Jewry and Communism... the killing operations... opened the eyes and the minds of even the most indoctrinated Nazi elements.³¹

One consequence was the formation of Jewish ghettos, of which Kaunas was one of the first.

Einsatzgruppe C had some success in areas of Galicia with a largely Ukrainian population, especially Lvov. It made use of pre-existing Ukrainian militia and also organised a Selbstschutz of several thousand ethnic Germans: 'Einsatzgruppen D discovered that the local Germans were eager volunteers during the shootings.'³² Einsatzgruppe B complained that 'the population is simply not capable of acting against the Jews.' Hilberg drew three conclusions:

- i. That spontaneous pogroms did not take place without the influence of the Einsatzgruppen
- ii. All pogroms were implemented shortly after the arrival of the Einsatzgruppen.
- iii. Most pogroms occurred where the threat of a Soviet return could be discounted, but in territory where anti-Semitism was apparently greatest.³³

In Brest-Litovsk the population, both White Russians and Poles, expressed their disgust at the anti-Jewish violence and their pity for the Jews. There was a reluctance to initiate pogroms in the Zhytomyr region of Ukraine. Reports of similar attitudes were conveyed in Wehrmacht reports.³⁴

On 19 July 1941, Einsatzgruppen B reported that in White Russia the population were 'apathetic' in regard to the anti-Jewish killings and in Ukraine, Einsatzkommando [EK] 6 of Einsatzgruppe C complained that 'Almost nowhere can the population be persuaded to take active steps against the Jews.' Einsatzgruppe C complained that the inhabitants did not betray the movements of hidden Jews. Only the ethnic Germans collaborated.³⁵

But even if elements of the local populations were supportive of the murder of the Jews this soon faded as they ‘perceived the true nature of the German racial ladder. The lowest rung was already on fire, and they were but one step above it.’³⁶ In Borisov, Belorussia, the local populace, despite wanting to get rid of ‘Jewish troublemakers’ were indignant after a local *Aktion*: ‘Who ordered such a thing? How can 6,500 Jews be killed in one go? It’s the Jews now, when will our turn come?’³⁷

Lithuania

The pre-war Jewish population of Lithuania was estimated at 150,000, in addition to 80,000 in Vilnius who became Lithuanian when the Soviet Union invaded.³⁸ With the German invasion there began the genocidal stage of the Holocaust. Up to 95% of Lithuania’s Jewish population were murdered.³⁹ Saulius Sužiedėlis states that ‘Many bodies of the local administration contributed, at times with zeal, to the destruction of Lithuanian Jewry.’⁴⁰ Jurgen Matthaues argued that the holocaust could not have taken place in Lithuania ‘if imported German violence had not harmonized with residual anti-Jewish sentiment among the local population.’⁴¹

The Lithuanian holocaust can be divided into three overlapping stages. Late June to late August 1941 consisted of terrorisation, mid-July to late August was one of concentration and from late August to December, mass extermination.⁴²

Even before the Germans entered the capital, Kaunas, on 24 June, the nationalist LAF had entered. These Lithuanian irregulars were fiercely anti-Semitic and hostile to the Soviet occupation. They immediately embarked on murder.⁴³ Between 23 and 27 June some 3,800 Jews were killed.⁴⁴

EK3, which operated in Kaunas numbered only 139, including 44 secretaries and drivers, yet between June and December 1941 it managed to kill 114,856 Lithuanian Jews. Clearly, the work of killing was done mainly by native Lithuanians: the Nazis ‘had as many helpers as [they] needed.’⁴⁵ The army high command [OKH] had issued orders not to hinder “cleansing operations” in Lithuania.⁴⁶

In Kovno on 25th June Franz Stahlecker, the Commander of Einsatzgruppen A, contacted the leader of one of the local militias, Klimatis, who organised the first pogrom that night, killing 1,500 Jews over the next two days in what became known as the Lietūkis Garage Massacre. Jews were savagely clubbed to death with staves and shovels.⁴⁷

Lithuania’s Provisional Government, which the Nazis soon displaced, were discomfited if not shocked by what happened. Archbishop Juozapas Skvireckas, who supported the Nazi belief in a world Jewish conspiracy, was nonetheless

horrified by the Lietukis killings and sent his assistant Msgr. Kazimieras Saulys to intercede with the Kaunas authorities to prevent such occurrences.⁴⁸

Over 15,000 were massacred by the proto-fascist Lithuanian irregulars. Stahlecker later boasted that this had been achieved 'without any visible indication to the outside world of a German order.' Stahlecker's men took photographs and films of what happened in Kaunas to 'prove' that the Lithuanians had acted spontaneously.⁴⁹ Although no Lithuanian agency was involved in the decision making of the Final Solution 'there is no doubt that their collaboration was significant in helping to facilitate all phases of the genocidal program.'⁵⁰

In the wake of OB there were pogroms in over 40 cities and villages encompassing a quarter of all Jewish communities.⁵¹ However, 'readiness to instigate and participate in the pogroms was by no means universal. At various places Lithuanians condemned the acts of violence... and even stood up in defense of Jewish lives.'⁵² The Lithuanian Police Department in Kaunas commanded by Col. Vytautas Reivytis 'played a fateful role in the destruction of Lithuanian Jewry' even though the Nazis masterminded it.⁵³

In early July 1941 EK3, commanded by Karl Jager, entered Kaunas. EK3 operated mainly in western and central Lithuania while EK9A of Einsatzgruppe B operated briefly in eastern Lithuania.⁵⁴ The vast majority of the 76,000 Jews killed in Lithuania by early September, of whom 60,000 perished between mid-August and mid-September, were at the hands of Jager's unit.⁵⁵ Jager kept exact records of executions carried out between 2 July and the end of November. A total of 133,346 Jewish men, women and children were murdered.⁵⁶

EK Tilsit was formed on the day of the invasion from ordinary police officers and civil servants and was responsible for murdering about 6,000 Jews amongst a host of towns and villages.⁵⁷ Although a small number refused to kill women and children none objected to killing male Jews.⁵⁸

In 1942, with the disbandment of the Provisional Government and the banning of the LAF, disillusionment set in. The Nazi attempt to recruit a Lithuanian SS legion in the spring of 1943 caused open conflict to break out. 'Some of the most militant nationalists, including those involved in the killing of Jews, were also the most belligerently anti-German.'⁵⁹

Grant Gochin, an American Jew, launched a campaign to expose those lauded as heroes who had played a role in the Holocaust. In 2016 he sought to remove the plaque of Jonas Noreika, commander of the LAF, from the library of the Academy of Science building in Vilnius.⁶⁰ The government refused to remove the

plaque and a Lithuanian court refused to order them to do so.⁶¹ It was only in April 2019 that it came down when it was it was publicly destroyed by a Lithuanian human rights attorney with a sledge hammer.

Grant Gochin's cousin Sonia Beder testified that armed Lithuanians prevented 6,000 Jews in her village from escaping to the Soviet Union three days before the Germans arrived. Sonia saw boys from the local school being recruited to help shoot these Jewish victims. She managed to escape and survive a ghetto that had been created under orders from Noreika.

Neither Netanyahu nor any Israeli leaders made any objection to the plaque. What was more important was Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis promise to consider moving his embassy to Jerusalem. On a visit in August 2018 to Vilnius, Netanyahu praised Skvernelis for taking 'great steps to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust' and for his 'commitment to fighting anti-Semitism wherever it rears its ugly head.'⁶² Nazi hunter Efraim Zuroff described Netanyahu's comments as being 'like praising the Ku Klux Klan for improving racial relations in the South.'⁶³ Netanyahu's comments were made despite the Lithuanian Government pushing for legislation to prohibit the sale of books that documented collaboration of the local population with Nazis.⁶⁴

Sylvia Foti is an American journalist who researched Noreika, who was her grandfather.⁶⁵ Foti found that her grandfather was complicit in the Holocaust but what shocked Jolanda Tamosiuniene, a teacher and librarian at the J Noreika Basic School in Sukioniai, was not Foti's discovery 'but that a member of a patriotic émigré family had gone public and turned a private family matter into a public national shame.' Despite the revelations, Noreika remains a national hero.⁶⁶

A large holocaust memorial is in a forest outside the town of Plungė where the LAF cheered the Nazis as liberators. Plungė's entire Jewish population of more than 1,800, half the town's population, were murdered within three weeks of the invasion, mostly by local people. Foti believes that Noreika sanctioned the murders of the Jews of Plungė, 5,500 Jews in Šiauliai and 7,000 in Telšiai. Noreika did not pull the trigger himself but was a 'desk killer.'⁶⁷

Latvia and Estonia

When the Nazis conquered Latvia in early July 1941 some 70,000 Jews out of 100,000 remained.⁶⁸ Up to 16,000 fled to Russia and several thousand had been deported a week before the Nazi invasion as politically unreliable.⁶⁹ Two thirds of these survived. Additionally 4,000 Jewish men served in the Red Army. The

Holocaust in Latvia was more complete than in any other country and only 1.6% survived the depredations of Einsatzgruppe A.⁷⁰

The Nazis complained that the Latvians, unlike the Lithuanians, had been ‘absolutely passive in their anti-Semitic attitudes.’⁷¹ Heydrich had hoped that the Latvians would institute ‘cleansing actions’ of their own accord but there is no credible evidence that this happened. There was a Soviet attempt to downplay Nazi involvement in Latvia’s holocaust whilst magnifying the role of local collaborators.

The Riga massacre of 27 November was carried out under the command of SS Higher Police Leader Friedrich Jeckeln with the active collaboration of the 300 strong Arājs Kommando. Viktors Arājs was ‘the most sinister Latvian figure of the holocaust.’⁷² In December a further 10,000 Jews from Riga were driven to Rumbula and murdered there by Arājs.⁷³ The Rumbula massacre of 30 November and 8 December 1941, when at least 25,000 Jews were killed, eliminated 80% of Latvia’s Jews. ‘Relentless German propaganda’ coupled with the ‘pernicious charge’ that the Jews had betrayed them to the Soviets turned Arājs’s commandos into Jew haters.⁷⁴

There was no history of pogroms in Latvia and President Kārlis Ulmanis (like Antanas Smetona in Lithuania) condemned anti-Semitism. Sužiedēlis argued that there was no equivalent in the Baltic countries of the Romanian Iron Guard and that it was the Soviet occupation that destroyed Latvia’s political and cultural elite which had kept anti-Semitism in check. When Latvian auxiliaries shot 200 communists and Jews in the town of Rēzekne on 1 August 1941, it caused ‘indignation’ among troops of the 281 Security Division.⁷⁵

Three-quarters of the tiny Jewish community of Estonia are estimated to have fled to the interior of the Soviet Union in 1941.

How Many Jews Survived?

Historians tell us how many Jews were exterminated but they rarely ask how it was that between three and four million Jews survived the Nazi dragnet. Estimates of the numbers of Jews who survived differ by over a million, primarily because it is impossible to know exactly how many Jews there were in pre-holocaust Europe and how many escaped to Russia.⁷⁶ [Table 1](#) lists those who are estimated to have survived.⁷⁷

Romania

Romania was the most anti-Semitic country in Europe. Its leaders saw Romania as a Christian state and were therefore ambivalent about its Jews remaining full citizens.⁷⁸ On 8 August 1940 the first two anti-Jewish laws were passed.⁷⁹ Monsignor Andrea Cassulo, the Papal Nuncio to Romania, protested about these provisions and won concessions in respect of baptised Jews.

The first mass murder of Jews occurred in the Dorohoi pogrom of 1 July 1940 when up to 200 Jews were murdered by the Romanian army.⁸⁰ On 2 September 1940 Marshall Ion Antonescu was appointed as Prime Minister by King Carol. Antonescu forced Carol to abdicate two days later.

Antonescu assumed power at the head of a 'regime of legionnaires', so-called because of the number of Iron Guard (Legion of the Archangel Michael) ministers it contained, including Deputy Prime Minister Horia Sima. The anti-Semitic ideology of the Legion harnessed feudal Christian anti-Semitism to modern racism. Hatred of Jews was the basis of their Christianity.⁸¹

Antonescu dreamed of 'purifying' Romania of its ethnic minorities, especially the Jews. 'Cleansing' Bukovina and Bessarabia of its Jews was the first step towards achieving this aim. Despite their later conflict, Antonescu was close to the Iron Guard ideologically. 'Romanisation' of the economy i.e. the removal of the Jews, constituted the main plank of his domestic policy.⁸²

On 14 January 1941 Antonescu met with Hitler in Obersalzberg, where he was told of the plan to invade Russia, with the expectation that Romanian troops would take part. Antonescu was also told that 'the most serious problem comes from the elements who do not realize that the revolution should not be permanent'. Referring to the Night of the Long Knives, Hitler told him that he should get rid of his fanatics, i.e. the Legionnaires.⁸³

On 21 January 1941 the Iron Guard launched a rebellion and within three days it was put down by the army. Although Hitler supported Antonescu, Himmler and Goebbels were sympathetic to the rebellion. Their leaders, including Sima, escaped to Germany. This was not however before they initiated a pogrom in Bucharest, murdering up to 200 Jews, slitting their throats and hanging them from butchers' hooks. The military government of Antonescu invoked universal Christian principles in attacking the Iron Guard yet his government was equally anti-Semitic.

On 12 June, just 10 days before OB, Antonescu met Hitler again, this time in Munich, where he was told of the Nazis' plans for the Final Solution of the Jewish question.⁸⁴ The first massacres were of 15,000 Jews in Jassy between 29-30 June

1941. Their savagery and barbarity led Hans Frank to remark that the Nazis ‘use the art of surgery, not of butchery!’⁸⁵

Table 1

The Number of Jews Who Survived the Holocaust by Country (% in brackets)					
Country	Ha'aretz ⁸⁶	Lucy Dawidowicz ⁸⁷	USHMM ⁸⁸	Raul Hilberg⁸⁹	Yad Vashem ⁹⁰
Albania					
Austria	135,185 (73)		119,567 (65)	7,000 (11.7)	135,000 (73)
Belgium	40,789 (62)	25,000 (40)	65,613 (73)	40,000 (61.5)	36,800 (56)
Bulgaria	50,000 (100)	50,000 (78)		47,000 (94)	50,000 (100)
Denmark	7,940 (99.25)	8,000 (100)	7,416 (98)	5,500 (84.6)	7,740 (99)
Estonia	2,545 (56)		3,537 (79)	3,500 (77.8)	2,520 (56)
Latvia	22,105 (24)		23,479 (25)	25,000 (26.3)	20,750 (22.7)
Lithuania	28,674 (17)		23,000 (15)	15,000 (10.3)	26,500 (15.8)
Baltic States		25,000 (10)			
Bohemia & Moravia	40,182 (34)	10,000 (11)		44,000 (14)	40,160 (33.9)
Finland	2,277 (99.65)	2,000 (100)			1,993 (99.65)
France	179,666 (70)	260,000 (74)	241,550 (76.8)	200,000 (74.1)	272,680 (78)
Germany/Austria		30,000 (10)			
Germany	426,000 (75)		72,523 (31)	80,000 (33.3)	431,500 (76)
Greece	9,713 (13)	16,000 (23)	9,711 (9)	12,000 (16.2)	10,059 (13)
Hungary (inc. Ruthenia)	283,333 (34)	200,000 (30)	260,500 (31.6)	200,000 (50)	255,750 (31)
Italy	36,617 (83)	32,000 (80)	50,554 (87)	41,000 (82)	36,935 (83)
Luxembourg	2,571 (72)	4,000 (80)	3,800 (76)	1,000 (33)	1,550 (44.3) ⁹¹
Netherlands	40,845 (29)	35,000 (25)	38,245 (27)	20,000 (14.3)	40,000 (28.6)
Norway	931 (55)	900 (50)	1,046 (58)	1,000 (50)	938 (55.2)
Poland	296,703 (9)	300,000 (10)	366,666 (10)	50,000 (1.5)	350,000 (10.6)
Romania	343,636 (56)	300,000 (50)	499,733 (66)	430,000 (57.3)	330,000 (54.2)
Slovakia	17,750 (20)	15,000 (17)	15,000 (17)		19,450 (21.9)
SSR Ukraine		600,000 (40)			
Russia/Soviet Union	2,030,303 (67)	868,000 (89)	1,688,538 (56)	2,500,000 (82.8)	1,970,000 (65.2)
SSR White Russia		130,000 (35)			
Yugoslavia	17,922 (23)	17,000 (40)	15,014 (18)	12,000 (16)	21,800 (27.9)
Total	4,015,687	2,927,900	3,505,492	3,734,000	4,062,125

LD= Lucy Dawidowicz *War Against the Jews*, Appendix B, p. 480;

RH – Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Table 11-1 (p. 1128), Table B-2 (p. 1321)

On 17 June Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Mihai Antonescu announced a policy of the violent and complete removal of ‘alien elements.’ The latter included Ukrainians, Greeks and Gagauz. The Jews were intended to be the first targets, followed by the Slavs.

In the 1940 census of Jews in Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, the number of Jews totalled 278,000.⁹² On the eve of OB, the Romanians formed an equivalent to the *Einsatzgruppen*, the Special Echelon.⁹³ In June and July 1941 at least 55,000 Jews were massacred in the recaptured Southern Moldavia, Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina.⁹⁴

On 17 July 1941 Romanian and German units, including Einsatzgruppe D, began systematic shootings of the Jews of Kishinev, the capital of Bessarabia. Survivors of the initial massacres, about 11,000 people, were herded into a ghetto and conscripted to perform forced labour.

At the beginning of August 1941 the Romanians forced 25,000 Jews who had fled the ‘cleansing’ of Bessarabia and Bukovina across the Dniester river into what became known as Transnistria, which was then part of Nazi-occupied Ukraine. The Nazis massacred about a third and forced the rest back across the Dniester.⁹⁵ The Nazis agreed at the end of August 1941, to handing over the area between the Bug and Dniester rivers, Transnistria, to Romania.

Between July and October 1941 the Romanian army, gendarmes and police units massacred tens of thousands of Jews in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina with the support of local collaborators. In October 1941 Antonescu ordered the deportation of the remaining Jews to Transnistria. 147,300 survivors were deported to Transnistria in the autumn of 1941.⁹⁶

Only 135,000 Jews even reached the Dniester.⁹⁷ They were distributed over 100 villages and towns. Only about 16,000 Jews remained in Bukovina for economic reasons.⁹⁸ However, at least one third of the 207,000 Jews in Bessarabia escaped with the retreating Soviet army in July 1941.⁹⁹

The senior clergy of the Catholic church supported the Antonescu regime. Although a few attempted to save the Jews, none publicly condemned the massacres. The Patriarch Nicodim had even adopted the Nazi’s racial ideology.¹⁰⁰ Despite this, after an impassioned plea by Romania’s Chief Rabbi Alexander Safran, Nicodim intervened with Antonescu and Queen Mother Elena, but he was unable to obtain any relief.¹⁰¹ In December 1941 Safran set up an underground Jewish Council. Safran also pleaded with the Metropolitan Nicolae

Bălan, who again agreed to intercede but without any success. Although the ideological pretext for the deportations and massacres was religious, their cause was the alliance with the Nazis.¹⁰² In Transnistria the Young Zionists set up kibbutzim.¹⁰³

The Zionist movement and indeed the whole of the Zionist organisation... was looked upon quite favourably by the Romanian authorities, for they tended in the long run to diminish the numbers in the Jewish community.¹⁰⁴

The Romanian army captured Odessa from the Soviet Union on 16 October 1941 following a bomb explosion which killed many Romanian and German troops. The army, on Antonescu's order, murdered over 30,000 Jews between October 22 and 24.¹⁰⁵ Some 65,000 Jews were deported to Transnistria and some 28,500 were massacred in the town of Berezovka by ethnic Germans.¹⁰⁶

In Transnistria the Romanians established four concentration camps,¹⁰⁷ where thousands were murdered and where most inmates died.¹⁰⁸ The rest of the Jews were herded into ghettos of which Bogdanovka in Golta District, the "Kingdom of Death" on the west bank of the Bug river, was the most notorious. From late December 1941 to early January 1942 all its 48,000 Jews were shot by Romanian troops.¹⁰⁹ Jean Ancel estimated that between September 1941 and November 1943, at least 180,000 of the existing 200,000-300,000 Ukrainian Jews in Transnistria were killed and 140,000 Bessarabian and Bukovinian Jews were murdered. Ancel estimated that in total 410,000 Romanian Jews were exterminated, far higher than most figures.¹¹⁰ Hitler praised Antonescu for pursuing much more radical policies than the Nazis themselves.¹¹¹ Dennis Deletant suggested that the largest proportion of Ukrainian Jews to survive Axis rule was in Transnistria.¹¹²

Despite this, on 18 July 1942 the First Secretary of the Romanian legation in Berlin, Valeanu, pointed out that Hungarian Jews were not affected by the deportations and as a matter of prestige Romania could not very well consent to worse treatment of its Jews than other countries.¹¹³

In December 1941 the Romanian Government dissolved the Federation of the Jewish Communities Union, which was replaced by the *Centrala Evreilor din Romania*.¹¹⁴ The initiative came from the Nazis, but its implementation was Romanian.¹¹⁵ The Centrala's nominal head was Henry Streitmann but its actual leader was Nandor Gingold. M.G. Willman, a former Zionist who was considered a Nazi agent, was appointed as President of Centrala and he urged the exodus of Romanian Jews to Transnistria. Gingold, 'an extreme anti-communist', did not object.¹¹⁶ The Jewish masses labelled the leaders of the Centrala as 'Hitlerjuden' and 'Jewish legionnaires'.¹¹⁷

When in 1942 students of the Jewish high school in Bucharest were arrested because of distributing bills on which there were anti-war and anti-governmental slogans, Gingold asked for the hardest punishment of the students to serve as an example for all that refuse to obey. Three of the students were sentenced to death and executed. He also made a list of hostages in order to frighten the Jewish population to obey the orders given by the government.¹¹⁸

On 23 January 1942, two days after the Wannsee Conference, Gustav Richter of the RSHA asked Antonescu not to allow the emigration of Jews from Romania.¹¹⁹ At the beginning of February 1942, the Romanians deported 10,000 Jews across the Bug. They were the Odessa Jews from Berezovka. On 14 April 1942 Eichmann demanded that the German Foreign Ministry inform the Romanian government that they would stop all “illegal” transports across the Bug. Such actions went against the Nazi concept of an orderly and methodical extermination.¹²⁰ Those Jews already across the Dniestr were shipped back to Odessa.¹²¹ By the middle of August 1942 half of Romania’s Jewish populace, around 300-350,000 people, had been murdered, as well as thousands of Roma. ‘No country, besides Germany, was involved in massacres of Jews on such a scale.’¹²²

In the spring of 1942 Dr Loewenstein-Lavi, a Zionist of Ichud, joined the Centrala ‘with the approval of his friends in the Zionist leadership.’ He stayed until September 1942. In Romania proper, despite Nazi pressure,¹²³ there were no ghettos or even a single all-embracing definition of a ‘Jew’. Up to 60,000 male Jews were made to do forced unpaid labour in 31 labour camps yet ‘only a “faint rumble” from these men was heard by the Centrala.’¹²⁴ The Nazis intended to use the Centrala to facilitate the deportation of Romanian Jews. The Romanian Government saw it as a way to enable the financial exploitation of the Jews.¹²⁵

As preparations were being made to hand Romania’s remaining Jews over to the Nazis, Antonescu got cold feet. As Germany grew weaker militarily, the Romanians refused to part with their Jews. Over 300,000 Jews survived, mainly in the territories west of the Pruth, dividing Romania from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The Jews became a symbol of Romanian independence.

Radu Lecca, an early supporter of the Nazis, a convinced anti-Semite and double agent, became Commissioner General for Jewish affairs in October 1941.¹²⁶ Apparently when he visited Berlin in August 1942 he was snubbed by German Foreign Office and RSHA officials and he became unwilling to cooperate in the deportation of the Jews.¹²⁷ Romanian officials resented German

attempts to micro-manage internal Romanian affairs. Antonescu asserted Romanian independence by refusing to agree to the deportation of the Jews.¹²⁸

Ancel suggested that the primary reasons for refusing to hand over the Jews to the Nazis were German disregard for Romania's desire to recover Northern Transylvania and a fear that the Nazis were likely to lose the war.¹²⁹ Olivia Simion concurred with the latter but also attributed it to the slight that Radu Lecca had suffered in Berlin and 'last but not least' the opposition of Queen Mother Elena who actively supported the Jewish population.¹³⁰

At the instigation of Chief Rabbi Safran, Monsignor Cassulo interceded repeatedly with the Antonescus concerning the deportation of the Jews. On 24 September 1942 Martin Luther of the German Foreign Office informed Ribbentrop that the Antonescus had agreed to the deportation of Romanian Jewry. However this was premature. Antonescu halted the deportations to Transnistria and they did not resume.¹³¹

By the end of 1942 Himmler decided the situation was hopeless after a particularly pessimistic report by Gestapo chief Heinrich Muller.¹³² As the war drew to a close Antonescu and his aides 'were engaged in feverish activity to improve their image from the Jewish vantage point.'¹³³ A commission established by Gingold visited Transnistria in January 1943.

In March 1944 Ira Hirschmann of the WRB met the Romanian Ambassador in Ankara, Alexander Cretzianu. He asked him to immediately disband the concentration camps in Transnistria. A week later they were disbanded. Hirschmann recalled Cretzianu remarking that if this meant so much to the United States, 'Why didn't you come sooner? You could have saved more lives.'¹³⁴ It is a damning indictment of Stephen Wise, who did his best to prevent the establishment of the WRB. A final attempt by the Nazis to annihilate Romanian Jewry was prevented by Romania's leaders without help from the Centrala.¹³⁵

One curious aspect of this was the affair of 70,000 Transnistrian Jews for Sale. Ben Hecht recalls how his friend Kurt Weill read him a Swiss newspaper clipping concerning:

an offer made by the Romanian Government to the American and British Governments to allow seventy thousand Trans-Dniestria Jews to leave Romania, at the cost of fifty dollars each for transport to the border.

The British and American had known of the offer but had sat upon it, as had the JA which discussed it at its meeting of 23 December 1942.¹³⁶ C.L. Sulzberger reported on this story on 12 February in the NYT. Ben Hecht wrote a full-page ad which appeared on 16 February announcing 'FOR SALE 70,000 JEWS AT \$50 APIECE GUARANTEED HUMAN BEINGS'.¹³⁷

Wise issued a statement on 23 February speaking of an 'alleged offer of the Romanian Government' for which no confirmation had been received. 'Therefore no collection of funds would seem justified.' By January 1943 Lecca had dropped the scheme because of Nazi opposition.¹³⁸

Wise's denial was cabled to American newspapers, and carried by them. Peter Bergson phoned Undersecretary of State Adolph Berle and asked him to confirm or deny the Romanian offer. Berle confirmed that it was true.¹³⁹ Helen Fein attributes the failure of the plan to delays by the State Department and the 'initial repudiation of the exchange' by Wise, who had 'used his personal influence' to oppose the campaign to raise funds for the Romanian Jews because 'the offer was unconfirmed and that the cost was too high.' ¹⁴⁰

Until the end of 1943 the State Department under Breckenridge-Long did their best to prevent the issuing of a license to Riegner to transfer funds despite the support of the US Treasury. It was this episode that convinced Henry Morgenthau, the Treasury Secretary, that rescue activities must be removed from the control of the State Department.¹⁴¹

The census of 1 September 1943 showed that just 50,741 of the deportees to Transnistria were left out of the original 135,000. Antonescu was now afraid, as the Russians crossed the Dnieper River, that the Germans would kill the remaining Jews and arrangements were made to take them back. Antonescu told General Vasiliu to warn the Germans that he didn't tolerate interference in this matter. When the surviving Jews were sent back to Romania, just 43,065 deportees remained including 31,141 from Bukovina, 11,683 from Bessarabia and 241 from Old Romania.¹⁴²

The Centrala was only officially closed on 31 October 1944, despite the successful Romanian coup of 23 August. Their leaders were put on trial and they were imprisoned. They were branded a 'bureau of the Gestapo'. The Communists considered them traitors. The Zionist Congress, however, in April 1946 exonerated Dr Lavi 'reiterating that he had joined the Center with the consent of a clandestine ZE.'¹⁴³ Antonescu and his government saw their handling of the Jewish question as a test of their own independence from the Nazis, which is why, although half of Romanian Jewry died, half survived.

France

On 22 June 1940 the French Government capitulated to the Nazis and on July 10 the French National Assembly voted 569-80 to give Marshal Pétain full dictatorial powers. The Vichy state was thus established in the unoccupied part of

southern France with the spa town of Vichy as its capital. It had jurisdiction over the French colonial empire.

In 1939 there were about 350,000 Jews in France, of whom 10% had fled from Belgium and the Netherlands and about 8,000 who were expelled from Germany. At least 170,000 were refugees. To Prime Minister Pierre Laval the Nazi occupation gave France an opportunity to get rid of its foreign Jews. This was largely fulfilled. Only 16% of those deported were native French Jews.¹⁴⁴

Vichy passed a series of anti-Jewish laws beginning with the denaturalisation of Jews on 16 July 1940 and on 3 October 1940 they issued the Statut des juifs, authorising the internment of foreign Jews and the progressive exclusion of Jews from the army, the professions, commerce and industry. These laws were more severe than the Nuremberg laws.

The second Statut des Juifs of 2 June 1941 drove Jews out of virtually every profession and included a harsh racial definition of who was a Jew.¹⁴⁵ It culminated in the exclusion of Jewish doctors on 11 August 1941. The French Catholic Church failed to oppose this legislation.¹⁴⁶ During its four year existence, Vichy issued some 400 laws, decrees and police measures directed at Jews in both Vichy and Nazi-occupied areas.¹⁴⁷

Theodor Danneker, head of the Judenreferat (Department of Jewish Affairs) arrived in September 1940. Everywhere in Western Europe the Nazis relied on local civil servants and police remaining at their posts. Less than 3,000 Germans could be spared for occupied France and just over that for the Netherlands.¹⁴⁸ In no other occupied territory were the Nazis as dependent upon the local administration as in France.

On 20 January 1941, the SD and the Military Administration decided to establish the *Commissariat général aux questions juives*. Xavier Vallat was appointed Commissaire. Danneker however was unhappy with Vallat, who although an anti-Semite was a French nationalist.¹⁴⁹ In May 1942 Vallat was replaced by Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, a fanatical anti-Semite.¹⁵⁰

Danneker had the Paris police compile a card index of every Jew. It was used in the first round up on 14 May 1941 when 6,500 foreign Jews were invited to report to the police. Some 3,700 who did so were promptly arrested and placed in camps. Between 20 and 23 August more than 4,300 Jews were arrested in Paris. Some of the arrests led to protests by foreign consuls in Paris and after pressure from Ernst von Weizsäcker of the Foreign Office, that detaining Jews of various American nationalities might lead to reprisals against Germans living abroad,

Ribbentrop agreed to their release.¹⁵¹ On 27 March 1942 there was the first deportation of 1,112 Jews from Drancy.¹⁵²

UGIF – The French Judenrat+

Unlike most other countries there was no organisation which united French Jewry. One of the consequences of this was that there was no population register which could be used to round up the Jews. Being a secular state, official documents made no mention of a person's religion.¹⁵³

Danneker pressurised Jewish leaders to establish one central Jewish organisation, a Judenrat for Greater Paris, to include all Jewish charitable organisations. However, the Jews refused to accept its authority. Only 6,000 of Paris's 90,000 Jews were dues-paying members of the Parisian Consistory, the national Jewish synagogue organisation. This meant there was no comprehensive information on who was a Jew for the Nazis to seize.¹⁵⁴

In the summer of 1942 massive deportations began. Despite having been warned of the round-up of foreign Jews in Paris, the General Union of French Jews [UGIF] northern council hesitated for two weeks without warning the Jewish population. Its reasons were that 'it wanted to maintain the confidence of the authorities in charge.' André Baur, Vice-President of UGIF, wrote thanking Pétain for obtaining the exemption of French citizens but he 'made no mention of the cruel fate of foreign Jews.'¹⁵⁵

UGIF's southern leader, Raymond-Raoul Lambert, saw Laval on 31 July but didn't even raise the issue of the deportations. When Lambert saw Jacques Helbronner, President of the Consistory on 2 August, the latter declared that he was willing to see Laval, but that he was going on holiday till 1 September. There is good reason to believe that UGIF knew of the round-ups and when André Baur, Vice-President of UGIF, appeared at the Vel d'Hiv stadium on the 16 July, he was booed.¹⁵⁶ The wives of the prisoners staged public protests at the Paris offices of UGIF's predecessor, the *Commite de Coordination*. Between the summer and autumn of 1942, 27,000 stateless Jews – including 9,000 from Vichy France – were deported to Auschwitz.¹⁵⁷ The Jews knew that UGIF personnel had been exempted from arrest.¹⁵⁸ In April 1943 Lambert turned down the suggestion of warning the Jews of Marseilles to scatter.¹⁵⁹

The Deportations and the Yellow Star

On 7 June 1942 Jews were required to wear the Yellow Star. The Vichy government rejected the Star.¹⁶⁰ This provoked the first open and extensive

resistance by French people against the anti-Jewish persecution.¹⁶¹ Many Jews simply didn't wear it and a number of non-Jews did wear it or something like it. On the streets of Paris were dozens of non-Jews 'wearing six pointed stars.' ¹⁶² They even put the Yellow Star on dogs. 30 non-Jews were arrested and interned at Drancy and forced to wear a yellow badge inscribed with 'Jew-lover.' They were released on 1 September.¹⁶³

Jewish children were integrated into the French school system and when they were forced to wear the Yellow Star their teachers were shocked. Teachers became an important part of the network to save Jewish children.

On 27 June 1942 Danneker indicated that he wanted to deport 50,000 Vichy Jews. Laval agreed and suggested that the Nazis take children under sixteen.¹⁶⁴ When the Nazis tried to include French Jews in the deportation trains they faced an adamant refusal. Danneker needed the help of the French police. The French Police Chief had instructed the police not to participate in roundups of French Jews and Laval likewise asked all police prefects not to help with their arrest.¹⁶⁵

Laval was offered a 'compromise' – help round up the stateless Jews and French Jews would be left alone. Vichy agreed to sacrifice the Jewish refugees to save the French Jews. Himmler when informed agreed that for the time being no French Jews were to be deported..¹⁶⁶

The Gestapo found it difficult to fulfil the quotas. A train due to leave Bordeaux on 15 July 1942 had to be cancelled because only 150 stateless Jews could be found.¹⁶⁷ By 1 September 1942, the Vichy authorities had handed over 5,000 Jews and arrested another 7,100. During 1942, nearly 42,000 Jews were deported from France.¹⁶⁸

On 16 and 17 July 1942 during La Grande Rafle du Vel d'Hiv, a total of 12,884 Jews were caught, including 4,051 children, all of whom were sent to Auschwitz. It was still a disappointment to the Nazis, who had intended to detain 28,000 Jews.¹⁶⁹ George Wellers, a French Jewish scientist who was deported to Auschwitz in July 1944, testified at the Eichmann trial that Vichy police enabled many Jews to escape and sabotaged the round-ups.¹⁷⁰

The French authorities tried to conceal the arrests from the public 'but almost immediately critical responses followed in the French press and public protests were issued by Church authorities.' ¹⁷¹ The US chargé d'affaires protested to Laval about the deportation of the stateless Jews and in particular the children. On 28 September Cordell Hull was willing to issue 1,000 children's visas immediately and another 5,000 could be authorised but by then the children had been deported. The Swiss Minister in Vichy, Walter Stucki, protested to Pétain.¹⁷²

Seventy-five per cent of French Jews survived, two-thirds of whom lived in Paris.¹⁷³ But of the 80,000 who were deported just 2,700 returned.¹⁷⁴ The ultimate authority was the military administration under General Stülpnagel, who refused the army's help to round up Jews, not the SS and Danneker.¹⁷⁵

In 1980 Maurice Rajsfus, a left-wing journalist whose immigrant parents died in the Holocaust, published *Des Juifs dans la collaboration*, 'a harsh indictment of established Jewry' whom he accused of sacrificing foreign Jews whilst pursuing their own class-based interests.¹⁷⁶

Jewish communists began organising resistance in Paris, in particular amongst Jewish immigrants who were 'hotbeds of communist propaganda.' They were part of the FTP-MOI groups which had been formed by the Communist Party. Four units were created in Paris in spring 1942 in which Jews were heavily represented. The group which transported weapons consisted entirely of Jewish women. Young Jews were responsible for about two-thirds of military operations in Paris between July 1942 and July 1943. Until three mass arrests they were active until November 1943.¹⁷⁷

The Jewish Resistance, of which the Communists formed the most active part, fought particularly to save the Jewish children.¹⁷⁸ The Jewish section, *Solidarité*, began in September 1940. At the trial of the 'terrorists' of L'Affiche Rouge, 12 of the 23 Resistance fighters sentenced to death were Jewish.¹⁷⁹ 160 of the 1,000 who were executed at Fort Mont-Valérien prison were Jewish.¹⁸⁰

Other groups included the semi-legal *Comité Amélot*, which was set up by immigrant Jews in Paris. It consisted of Zionists and Bundists, who sought to provide welfare assistance and refuge for children in particular. As the Jewish population of Paris dwindled so the *Comité* faded away. In August 1943, as a result of the arrest of its directors, the *Comité* went underground.¹⁸¹

With the first deportations to the East and the *Vel D'Hiv* round-ups, there began an exodus of French Jews to the south of France. A year later there were just 60,000 Jews left in Paris.¹⁸² 50,000 Jews sought refuge in the South of France, which was under Italian occupation, as did many Belgian Jews.¹⁸³ 22,000 Jews were relocated to the interior of the Italian Zone.

In the new Italian occupation zone, the Jews were to enjoy complete sanctuary. As the Germans turned towards the Pyrenees, Spain too became a place of refuge for Jews.¹⁸⁴ When, in November 1942, Italian and German forces moved into Vichy France, 'thousands of Jews descended on this new Canaan.'¹⁸⁵

When the French Intendant de Police in Lyon started arresting Jews in February 1943, the Italian general in Grenoble protested and demanded their

release and the Italian army 'blockaded' the hundred Jews that French police had arrested 'with their weapons at the ready'. In Annecy they surrounded the French gendarmerie barracks until the Jewish captives were released.¹⁸⁶ Rohlff Muhler, chief of the Marseilles SD, protested that repeatedly the French police had been forced to release Jews.¹⁸⁷ The Nazis depended upon the French police, which gave French Jews, including those naturalised, some immunity. Even among the stateless Jews there were privileged Jews. *Standartenführer* Knochen, Chief of the SS in Paris, wrote to Gestapo chief Muller that

the French government which approaches the solution of the Jewish question unwillingly enough, is actually strengthened in this attitude by the measures of the Italian administration.

On 18 March 1943 German Ambassador Hans Georg von Mackensen saw Mussolini about what had happened and a Commissioner for Jewish affairs, Police Inspector Guido Lospinoso was appointed. On 20 March Lospinoso met with Col. Cesare Cremese of the Fourth Army in the Italian zone, according to whom, 'the purpose of the operation was to save the Jews.' In May the Nazis discovered that Lospinoso's chief assistant, Angelo Donati, was a half-Jew who planned to transfer 50,000 Jews to Italy, which the Communist Jews opposed because they didn't trust the fascists.¹⁸⁸

It was only on 8 September 1943, after the Allied armistice with Italy, that the Germans took over the Italian zone and moved into Nice to seize the Jews. They expected to seize 15,000 Jews but they only managed to locate 1,820.¹⁸⁹ Eichmann was fooled into believing that up to 15,000 Jews were hiding out in Monaco and engaged in a fruitless search there. On 11 November, after the Allied landing in French North Africa, the German army occupied Southern France.¹⁹⁰

The survival of three-quarters of France's Jewish population was testimony to the aversion of the French people to the deportations. The French Protestant mountain village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, under its pastor André Trocmé, took part in collectively hiding nearly 2,500 Jewish refugees. The rescue of Jews in Chambon 'was conducted virtually in public with virtually no German attempts to stop it.' It constituted itself 'as a kind of underground railway to assist hunted Jews and others to escape the Nazi and Vichy police.'¹⁹¹

When no deportation trains left for Auschwitz during April and May 1943 Eichmann sent 'one of my best men', Alois Brunner, to France in late June 1943. Brunner took charge of Drancy and expelled the French personnel. During the period up to and including August 1944, Brunner was able to deport 23,471 Jews. The final train for Auschwitz from Drancy, containing 1,300 people, left on 31 July and a train left Lyon on 11 August with 430 people.¹⁹² From the Netherlands

the last train left on September 3. Brunner particularly concentrated on the deportation of Jewish children, whom he termed 'future terrorists.' [193](#)

Vichy agreed in August 1943 to cancel the naturalisation of Jews born after 10 August 1927. However, when he heard of the intention of the Nazis to seize these Jews immediately, Laval withdrew his agreement.[194](#) Brunner was then given authorisation after the rejection of the law to organise round-ups and manhunts independent of the French authorities.[195](#)

From now on the spouses of Aryans with no children lost their exemption from deportation. Mixed marriages contracted after 1940 were dissolved. Almost all categories of non-deportable people were now being deported to Auschwitz.[196](#) On 14 April 1944, Knochen and Brunner signed an order for the SD to carry out the deportations. Only Jews in mixed marriages were exempt.

But as the Germans came out into the open, the Jews, with the aid of French organisations, began to disappear. Jews by the tens of thousands were hiding in Paris, the Metro or under bridges. Another 30,000 were living openly in Paris. 6,000 were caught up in the final deportations. Despite the attempts of the Gestapo and French police, the percentage of Jewish children deported was less in France than in Belgium.[197](#)

Between 1943 and 1944 thousands of Jewish children went into hiding and hundreds were smuggled into Switzerland.[198](#) The Zionists believed that it was futile to fight anti-Semitism, yet it was the successful battle for Dreyfus which had helped to immunise France from anti-Semitism, notwithstanding the terrible record of the Vichy government.[199](#)

Belgium

Unlike the Netherlands and Luxembourg, which were considered Germanic states, Belgium and France were 'Romanic' states which were not intended to be incorporated into a Greater German Reich. The military administration under General Alexander von Falkenhausen saw their main task as security and economic exploitation. The Jewish question was secondary. The number of Jews in pre-war Belgium was estimated to be 65,000 of whom 8,000 were forced into France. Another 1,078 were in mixed marriages, 90% of whom were not even Belgian citizens.[200](#)

A registration order defining a Jew was initiated on 28 October 1940 but the secretaries-general of the Belgian ministries refused to issue the order and the Germans issued the order directly.

In September 1942 the *Comité de Défense des Juifs* [CDJ] was established by the *Front de l'Indépendance* [FI], a major resistance group headed by the Communists. It was assisted by the official Belgian childcare organisations and all the resources of the Catholic Church.²⁰¹ Rescue of Jews was seen by the Belgian resistance as part of its resistance activities. The CDJ, which incorporated all Jewish groups, including Left Poale Zion, was responsible for the rescue of between 3,000 and 4,000 children and up to 10,000 adults.²⁰² Six of the eight senior officials of its children's department were communists. At the beginning of 1944 a letter from the Zionist parties complained of being under represented. The Zionists' main concern was that the children remain Jewish whilst the Communists' concern was with preserving their lives.²⁰³

A Judenrat, the *Association des Juifs de Belgique* [AJB] was established on 25 November 1941.²⁰⁴ The Jewish leadership had already escaped, leaving Rabbi Ullman to head it.²⁰⁵ The AJB dispatched messengers instructing the Jews to report for forced labour.²⁰⁶

In March and April 1942 Jews were instructed to enroll in the AJB. Thousands refused to do so.²⁰⁷ There was also concerted resistance to the Nazis' Jewish policy from non-Jews. Mayors started marrying Jewish women to Belgian men so as to give them Belgian nationality.²⁰⁸

The children's department of the AJB was under the control of the Gestapo and they shared their lists of children with them. Towards the end of 1942 the CDJ began to transfer children from AJB institutions to hiding places. The children's houses under the AJB were a trap.²⁰⁹

Organised resistance sprang up in left-wing circles despite Zionist hostility. In Antwerp Professor Leopold Flam attempted to organise resistance despite the opposition of certain Zionist group leaders.²¹⁰

The Immigrant Workers Association of the Communist Party distributed thousands of pamphlets revealing the persecution of the Jews. It advocated refusing to pay taxes to the AJB. The CDJ effectively paralysed the AJB which 'was considered absolutely subservient to the Nazis.'²¹¹ Belgian rail workers either left train doors unlocked or arranged ambushes of the trains. On 19 April 1943 a Jewish resister and two non-Jewish colleagues halted a train, unlocked several doors and freed 200 deportees.²¹² By the time of liberation, 25,000 had been sent to Auschwitz.²¹³ Belgians demonstrated an aversion to the acquisition of Jewish property and the President of the Belgian stock exchange refused to accept papers for securities in the absence of their owners.²¹⁴

On 11 June 1942 Eichmann called together the Jewish Sections of SiPo in Paris, the Hague and Brussels. 10,000 Jews from Belgium were scheduled for deportation. The AJB had declined to distribute the Yellow Star which the military administration had to undertake. The star 'evoked within the non-Jewish population a movement of sympathy and solidarity.'²¹⁵ According to Foreign Office representative Werner von Bargaen, the Belgians had no understanding of the Jewish question.²¹⁶

After 13 June 2,252 Belgian Jews were deported to the work camps of Northern France from where 1,792 were sent on to Auschwitz. As the Jewish section of SiPO began implementing the order for the deportation of 10,000 Jews, the AJB continued its collaboration, implementing the work orders. On 25 July Jewish communists attempted to destroy the work orders and partially succeeded.²¹⁷

From April 1943, the Jewish Section of SiPO used the AJB to maintain a semblance of legality among the Jews who believed the assurances of the occupying forces.²¹⁸ Despite the AJB's reassurance, the Jews were not fooled by the labor orders.²¹⁹ Twice the *Armée Belge des Partisans* attacked the AJB.²²⁰ They attacked their headquarters and set fire to their card index. On 29 August they executed the head of the AJB, Robert Holcinger.²²¹ As the AJB leadership was arrested, so relations between SiPO and the Military Administration deteriorated.

The CDJ commissioned Victor Martin to find out about the destination of the deportations. He reached Auschwitz and returned to Belgium on 15 May 1943. His report was published in the resistance papers of the CDJ and *Front de l'Indépendance*, a left-wing faction of the Resistance.²²²

With continued allied military progress, the greater part of the Jewish population escaped by going underground. Out of 30,000 Jews SiPO's Jewish section had less than 5,000 under its control. The deportations ended on 31 July 1944. Belgian institutions and homes hid thousands of Jews and the SD plenipotentiary estimated in June 1944 that 80% of Belgian Jews had fake ID cards.

The reason for the disparity in the survival of Belgian compared to Dutch Jews was a combination of both the spontaneous resistance of the population and the activity of the resistance organisations led by the Belgian Communist Party.²²³

Despite the fact that Belgian Jews were more visible than Dutch Jews (90% of them were refugees), they had twice the survival rate. Why? Because the AJB had been rendered ineffective by the Resistance's terror. Tragically the *Joodsche Raad*

was not terrorised. Dutch Jewry paid a terrible price for the collaboration of the Netherlands' leading Zionists.²²⁴

Steinberg argued that the AJB did not cooperate in the extermination but that 'legality became a trap, since it did not allow for resistance to the occupiers.'²²⁵ These are semantics. Because of the opposition of the vast majority of Belgians and the refusal to work with the AJB, over half the Jewish community survived. Less than 1,500 of those deported returned.²²⁶

Other factors contributing to the relatively high rate of survival of Belgium's Jews included the opposition of the Catholic Church under Cardinal Van Roey. The Protestant Church however 'neither issued any proclamations nor gave any instructions to its members.'²²⁷

Luxembourg

The Duchy of Luxembourg was quickly overrun by the Nazis on 10 May 1940. The Nazis were helped by a "fifth column" of ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*).²²⁸ Luxembourg was semi-incorporated into the Reich and placed under Gauleiter Gustav Simon. The Nuremberg Laws were introduced on 5 September and on 14 October 1941 the Yellow Star was made compulsory.²²⁹

The 1935 census totalled 3,141 Jews although subsequently over a thousand German Jews sought refuge in Luxembourg. It is believed that about 3,500-4,000 Jews resided in Luxembourg when war broke out, of whom 2,500 were permanent citizens and the rest refugees.²³⁰ Many Jews fled during the invasion and occupation and by July 1941 less than 800 remained.²³¹

The Jewish community was headed by the *Consistoire* and Chief Rabbi Dr. Robert Serebrenik, who emigrated to the United States in May 1941. His successor Alfred Oppenheimer was appointed by Eichmann. On 23 March 1941 Serebrenik was ordered to report to Eichmann in Berlin who told him that Jewish emigration could no longer be allowed unsupervised.²³²

In August 1941 many Jews, mainly the elderly, were interned in the cloister of Fünfbrunnen in the Abbey of Cinqufontaines prior to deportation. On 16 October the first train with 334 Jews set off for Lodz in Poland. Just eleven survived.²³³ In total between October 1941 and April 1943, 674 Jews were deported in eight transports to Lodz, Auschwitz and Theresienstadt.²³⁴ Just forty-two returned.²³⁵

Attempts were made to incite pogroms against the Jews and Jewish shops were marked with a yellow label for this purpose but the population remained indifferent to the Germans' actions.

Until 15 October 1941 the official Nazi policy towards the Jews was emigration.²³⁶ Of Luxembourg's four synagogues, two were destroyed and two were severely damaged. 700 Jews were put on transports to France from where 300 proceeded to Lisbon and from there to the United States. Many of the remaining Jews in France were later deported to Auschwitz. Only a few Jews managed to survive by hiding out in Luxembourg. A single anti-Nazi German, Eugen Gruenberg, hid five Jewish families on his own. About 900 Jews returned to Luxembourg after the war.²³⁷

Apart from a small Nazi party most Luxembourgiens were hostile to the Nazi occupation.

A large number of Luxembourg's citizens invested a great deal of effort in assisting their unfortunate countrymen. In times of hardship they gave them food, clothing and money and when necessary even hid them.²³⁸

Despite its size Luxembourg boasted a resistance whose main function was countering German propaganda and hiding Jews, anti-Nazi priests and Allied airmen. On 19 October 1941 a census was held in which the inhabitants were called upon to declare themselves German nationals. 95% registered as Luxembourgers. This resulted in mass arrests. In August 1942, Germany formally annexed Luxembourg.²³⁹

On the 20 August 1942 male Luxembourgers were ordered to enlist in the Wehrmacht. This edict was met with mass resistance and a general strike, to which the Germans reacted with executions.²⁴⁰ Thousands were arrested and tortured. Hundreds were murdered in the concentration camps. 1,410 families were deported to eastern Germany and replaced by German colonists. 5,700 Luxembourgers, 2% of the population, died, the highest in Western Europe.²⁴¹

Luxembourg was liberated on 9 September 1944. Of the 3,500 Jews who had been living there in 1939, 1,555 were saved by fleeing, hiding or surviving in the camps. The rest were murdered, a third in the extermination camps and the rest in the Duchy itself or in other occupied countries.²⁴²

Netherlands

Germany invaded the Netherlands on 10 May 1940. In January 1941 they decreed a register of Jews. Of the 140,000 Jews in the Netherlands, 14,500 were 'half-Jews' and 6,000 were 'quarter Jews.' They were exempt from deportation.²⁴³ About 4,000 Jews in special categories survived.²⁴⁴

There was neither a Dutch Quisling nor Pétain. Instead there was a Nazi civilian administration, headed by an Austrian Nazi, Arthur Seyss-Inquart. This

was why, despite the sympathy and support of the vast majority of the population, the Final Solution was successful in the Netherlands. Unlike France no *Judenreferent* was set up within the SD.²⁴⁵ The higher death rate among Dutch Jews was because the Netherlands had a civil not military administration.²⁴⁶ Other factors included the almost complete registration of the population, the hard-to-forge identity cards and the topography. The country is largely flat and without forests.²⁴⁷

Seyss-Inquart's decree of 10 January 1941 obliged Jews to register, even if they had only one Jewish grandparent. In May 1943, Seyss-Inquart exempted all intermarried Jews from anti-Jewish measures and even wearing the Yellow Star if they could prove they were sterilised. Despite opposition from the Gestapo, deportations of Jews in mixed marriages stopped. The last of the large-scale round-ups took place in the spring and summer of 1943.²⁴⁸ By February 1944, 8,610 Jews in mixed marriages remained in the Netherlands.

The deportation of the Dutch Jews produced the only known remonstrance with Hitler by a senior member of the Nazi Party. In 1943 Henrietta von Schirach, the wife of the Gauleiter of Vienna, Baldur Benedikt von Schirach, on a visit to the Netherlands heard screaming outside her window. It was Jewish women and children being prepared for deportation. When she asked a German soldier what was happening he told her that it was wrong and he advised her to raise it with Hitler directly. When she did so she was told that she was 'sentimental'. Neither she nor her husband were ever invited to see Hitler again.²⁴⁹

The Netherlands was the only country where there were strikes over the Nazis' Jewish policy. Students went on strike at the end of 1940 over the dismissal of Jewish professors, beginning with Leiden and Delft universities and a General Strike broke out against the first deportation of Jews.²⁵⁰ On 24 February 250 municipal workers, the majority communists, assembled to hear passionate condemnation of the arrests of Jews.²⁵¹ The next day a wave of strikes broke out in Amsterdam, Utrecht and North Holland. 'The trolleys stopped in Amsterdam, utilities went dead, shipyards were deserted' as well as other major private industries. 18,300 workers walked out of the armament industries alone. On the second day of the strike German Order Police clashed with crowds 'as Dutchmen hurled "insults" at the German Wehrmacht.'²⁵²

The army commander, General Friedrich Christiansen, declared martial law in the two northern provinces and the death penalty. Within three days the strike was broken. 389 Jews were deported to Mauthausen.²⁵³ On 29 April 1942 all Jews had to wear a Yellow Star.²⁵⁴ According to a Nazi report the Dutch openly showed

their sympathy for the Jews by wearing yellow flowers on their coat lapels, and in Rotterdam signs were plastered on walls to remind Dutch people to show respect if they should see a Jew with a star on the street.²⁵⁵

Responsibility for Jewish questions was in the hands of Higher SS and Police leader Hans Fauter, who was executed after the war, and his assistant Ferdinand aus der Funten, whose sentence was commuted, allegedly after the intervention of the German Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer.

The Dutch national-socialist party won 8% of the vote in the 1935 provincial elections but this was reduced by half in the general election of 1937.²⁵⁶ On 11 February 1941 Dutch Nazi Party [NSB] formations attacked the Jewish quarter. They were met by workers and young Jews. One uniformed Dutchman was trampled to death by a band of Jews. Ernst Cahn, an ice-cream cafe owner, was the first to be executed for resistance, after an SD raid on his cafe was violently attacked. Nonetheless resistance, including Jewish resistance, continued. The resistance organisation Vrij Nederland forged papers. One Resistance group in which the Jews played a prominent part was led by a young neurologist Geerit Kastein, a militant communist.²⁵⁷

However, there was considerable collaboration in anti-Jewish measures from the Dutch state – from the participation of the banks in disposal of Jewish assets, the assiduous registration of Jews by the civil service and the complicity of the Dutch “blue police” in the deportations, only two of whom are known to have refused to participate.²⁵⁸ The Secretaries-General of the various ministries cooperated in distributing the Nazis’ ‘Aryan declaration.’²⁵⁹ About 20 Germans administered the deportation of 100,000 Jews. They relied on the cooperation of the Dutch civil service.²⁶⁰

When in November 1940 the Nazis decreed the dismissal of all Jewish government employees (including judges and teachers) the Dutch Supreme Court ruled, by twelve to five, that there were no grounds to refuse to sign the Aryan Declaration.²⁶¹ But for this cowardly decision the civil service could not have made any distinction between Jews and non-Jews. If the civil servants had not signed the Declaration, the Nazis would not have been able to dismiss Jewish employees²⁶² and they would have found it impossible to liquidate 75% of Netherlands’ Jews.²⁶³

On 1 November 1941 the Nazis asked the Secretaries-General what they would do if Dutch Jews were to be deported. They replied that they would immediately resign. When in late February 1942 the Nazis informed the

Secretaries-General that Dutch Jews were no longer Dutch citizens and therefore outside their jurisdiction, they protested but did not resign.²⁶⁴

Dr Loe de Jong, Head of the Netherlands' State Institute for Documentation explained: ²⁶⁵ 'The persecution was carried out not with the cudgels of the Nazi storm troops... but by decrees... .. which the *Joodsche Weekblad* was forced to carry.' ²⁶⁶

From mid-July 1942 onwards, the deportation of Jews from Westerbork began.²⁶⁷ The Nazis took advantage of the divisions between Dutch and foreign Jews. 103,000 Jews were deported to the extermination camps and just 519 returned alive. Some 20-25,000 Jews went into hiding and 10,000 of them, including the Judenrat, survived. The other half were betrayed, like Anne Frank, or discovered. Most of those who were deported to Theresienstadt returned alive.²⁶⁸ 75% of those who survived were foreign Jews.²⁶⁹

A score of specially trained Dutch Nazis on the Hague police force uncovered nearly 2,000 Jews. In 1943 a similar team in Amsterdam tracked down 3,000 hidden Jews. Captured Jews often became collaborators including one woman who betrayed 600 Jews, including her own family.²⁷⁰

Although only 27% of Dutch Jews survived there were wide variations.²⁷¹ In Utrecht 51% of its almost 4,000 Jews survived. In Amsterdam, where 57% of the Jews lived and where the Judenrat was most effective, very few Jews survived. Marnix Croix puts this down to the intensity of the search by the SD and the priority they put on it. Croix estimates that 16,100 Dutch Jews survived in hiding.²⁷² In Nieuwlande a Dutch-Calvinist community of 800 rescued approximately 250 Jews. Michael Gross attributes this to 'intense religious motivation.' Rescue ran 'parallel to resistance activity.'²⁷³

The Nazis set up a Judenrat for Amsterdam, the *Joodsche Raad*, under Abraham Asscher and David Cohen. Cohen was a leading official in the Dutch Zionist Federation.²⁷⁴ Asscher was a supporter of Chaim Weizmann.²⁷⁵ They aimed to preserve the Jewish community's elite.²⁷⁶

The *Joodsche Raad* was an office for the transmission of German orders.²⁷⁷ It was treated by Jews with contempt.²⁷⁸ It presided over the deportation of Jews to the death camps as well as 5,000 to Theresienstadt. They urged the Jews to report for the deportations until they were the only ones left alive.²⁷⁹ When letters telling Jews to report to the local German authorities were first sent out, there was 80% non-compliance.²⁸⁰ Co-operation with the Nazis led to annihilation.²⁸¹

The *Joodsche Weekblad*, which was published by the Judenrat from 11 April 1941 to September 1941 became the 'compliant house organ' of the Final

Solution, preaching submissiveness and warning its readers of dreadful penalties if they tried to disobey the German decrees.[282](#)

Staff of the *Joodsche Raad* received temporary exemptions whilst organising the deportations. However, once they had accomplished their task they too were deported. In October 1941 the *Joodsche Raad* dispatched 50 Jewish typists to Nazi headquarters where they produced a complete file of all Jews living in the Netherlands. Once their work was done they too were deported:[283](#)

Joseph Michman of YV tried to rehabilitate the reputation of the *Joodsche Raad* because they had played an active part in securing the passage to Palestine of a prominent group of Zionists. Michman wrote that ‘the notion that the Jewish people was abandoned by its leaders in a craven and selfish manner cannot be accepted. There was nothing to abandon, no one to betray.’ It was a strange way to describe a community of some 140,000 people.[284](#)

Others, however, were not so kind. Former Supreme Court Judge Lodewijk Visser ‘could not understand’ how Cohen and Asscher could submit to the Nazi demand that Jews were not to have contact with their national officials.[285](#) Professor Pieter Gerbrandy, a former Minister of Justice and Prime Minister of the Netherlands declared:

The Jewish Council let itself be used for the liquidation of Dutch Jewry. They collaborated with the Germans by compiling registers [of deportees]... and in many other ways. [286](#)

Visser, who had been removed from the bench because he was Jewish, refused to co-operate with Nazi demands that he register as a Jew. He was unremittingly hostile to the *Joodsche Raad*. He wrote on 18 November 1941:

The attitude of the Jewish Council is to oblige the occupier, to obey his orders meekly ... to be subservient to him, hoping thereby “to prevent worse to come”, a hope which has not been fulfilled....

It is possible that in the end, the occupier will achieve his goal concerning us, but it is our duty as Dutchmen and as Jews to do everything to hamper him in achieving that goal and refrain from doing anything which might smooth the way for him. That is not what you are doing. [287](#)

Visser died of a heart attack in February 1942. The representative of the Coordination Committee of Jewish organisations, J. Kish, resigned from the *Joodsche Raad* on 21 September 1941 accusing it of becoming an unresisting instrument of the Germans. Its one working-class member, the head of the Dutch Diamond Workers Union, quit after two months.[288](#)

After the war Willy P.F. Lages, Commander of the German Security Police in the Netherlands, was asked ‘How was the Jewish Council used?’ to which he replied, ‘In every possible way.’ To the question ‘Did you find them easy to work with?’ he responded, ‘Very easy, indeed.’ [289](#)

Cohen and Asscher, both of whom survived in Theresienstadt, 'went ever further' in their cooperation with the German authorities. Yet Henry Mason maintained that they 'were not "quislings" but legitimate members of the Dutch Jewish establishment.'²⁹⁰

Finland

Germany's anti-Jewish policy was so unpopular in Finland that rumours in October 1942 about the forcible expulsion of a handful of Jews undermined the position of the pro-Nazi Minister of the Interior, Toivo Horelli.²⁹¹ Finland was allied with the Nazis, though the Jewish question was barely raised by them. Wipert von Blucher, the German Minister in Helsinki, wrote to the Foreign Office that Nazi Jewish policy was alienating the Finns.²⁹²

William Cohen, in a polemic against Hannu Rautkallio's *Finland and the Holocaust* argued that the level of state collaboration was considerable and that the Nazis put considerable pressure on the Finns to deport their Jews. Cohen argued that Finland was not a victim of Soviet aggression 'but a Nazi partner driven by irredentist goals.' In April 1942 Arno Anthoni, the head of Valpo, the Finnish State Police, visited Gestapo Chief Heinrich Muller, in Berlin and reached an agreement that Germany would accept anyone Finland deemed 'politically suspect.'

In October 1942 it was intended to deport 20 Jews and the same number of non-Jews. Because of the scandal just eight Jews and some nineteen non-Jews were deported. The Nazis shot seven of the Jews.²⁹³

Norway/Sweden

When Norway was occupied by the Nazis, Vidkun Quisling, the leader of the small Nazi party, was installed as leader. When Eichmann ordered the deportation of Norway's 1,700 Jews, even some of Quisling's men resigned.²⁹⁴ On 26 October 1942 Karl Marthinsen, the chief of the Norwegian State Police, began the round-up of Jews. Sweden immediately offered asylum to Norway's Jews which the Nazis spurned. The Swedish consulate in Oslo invited some of the arrested Jews, whose connections with Sweden were somewhat tenuous, to apply for Swedish nationality. By 1944 some 770 Jews had been deported. Some 900 Norwegian Jews, just over half the community, escaped to Sweden and others were hidden.²⁹⁵

Sweden, which had admitted 35,000 Jews, offered to request that Germany release 20,000 Jewish children if they could be placed elsewhere after the war. Despite being approved by the British on 19 May 1943 the State Department under Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long, delayed, procrastinated and effectively vetoed it during the next five months on financial grounds.²⁹⁶

Denmark

Denmark was invaded on 9 April 1940 in breach of a non-aggression pact which it had signed less than a year earlier. Denmark capitulated after just four hours' fighting.²⁹⁷ Until November 1942 Denmark was a neutral country occupied by Germany, which tolerated its self-governing colonial status.²⁹⁸

Apart from Albania, Denmark was the only Nazi-occupied country where not one Jew was murdered in the extermination camps. The Danish Nazi Party, DNSAP, which had some 22,000 members, in the Nazi-run general election of 1943 only obtained 2.1%²⁹⁹ or 3% with the fascist Bondepartiet, a decline from 5% in the 1939 election.³⁰⁰ Denmark was stubborn in its refusal to accept anti-Semitism and when the Nazis tried to impose the Yellow Star, they were told that the first person to wear it would be the King of Denmark.

Denmark was given a greater degree of autonomy than was usual for a country under Nazi occupation. Danish ministers were responsible for the administration.³⁰¹ General Hermann von Hanneken, despite being placed in Denmark by Hitler personally because he was a 'rabid Nazi', was a troop commander not a military governor and he refused to provide troops during the round-ups or to order that all Jews report for work, where they could be arrested.³⁰²

Eichmann's representative Dr Werner Best was appointed Minister in Copenhagen in November 1942. He reported that Prime Minister Erik Scavenius and his cabinet had threatened to resign if the Nazis tried to introduce anti-Jewish measures although Gunnar S. Paulsson disputes this.³⁰³ Best, who was Deputy to Heydrich, was a convinced anti-Semite. However he was also a pragmatist and reliant on the government's co-operation.³⁰⁴

In August 1943 dockers, shipyard and other workers erupted with strikes, riots and sabotage. This was the Danish working-class's first mass action against the Nazi occupiers.³⁰⁵ On 29 August 1943 the Government resigned and the Nazis declared a State of Emergency.³⁰⁶ On 17 September the Jewish community offices were raided by the Gestapo.³⁰⁷ However, all they succeeded in obtaining was an old card file. Many in Denmark's assimilated Jewish community, especially

those who were only Jewish under the Nuremberg Laws, had no contact with the community. The raid was ‘an act of desperation.’ [308](#)

Hitler insisted on the deportations³⁰⁹ and on 23 September he rejected Ribbentrop’s suggestion that the action against Denmark’s Jews be postponed because it would cause unrest in Denmark and possibly disrupt the supply of foodstuffs and armaments.³¹⁰

Best used Georg Duckwitz, a captain in the SS, to spread the rumour of a roundup on 28 September. Duckwitz, informed a Danish acquaintance, who promptly informed the Jewish leadership, as well as the leaders of the Danish Social Democratic Party.³¹¹ Duckwitz, who was made Righteous Amongst the Gentiles by YV was, according to Jørgen Haestrup, ‘the sole decent person among the German leaders’.³¹² Tatiana Brustin-Berenstein disagreed, considering him a ‘self-promoting fraud’ who took credit for what he was ordered to do. According to Duckwitz, Best told him that he wished he could build ‘a bridge over the Øresund’ to let the Jews escape. [313](#)

Paulsson asked why all these men, including the Chief of SiPO SS *Standartenführer* Rudolf Mildner, a man who had acquired ‘an odious reputation’, defied Hitler’s will. It is suggested that Himmler interpreted Hitler’s instructions ‘creatively’. This is confirmed by a note of a conversation between Nils Ekblad, a Swedish embassy official and Duckwitz. The latter stated that Himmler ‘was entirely in agreement that one ought not to undertake any measures against the Danish Jews.’ [314](#)

Paulsson suggested that Best never intended to deport Denmark’s Jews but simply wished to make Denmark *Judenrein* by expelling them. ‘The attempted deportation of the Danish Jews was thus essentially a charade... never seriously meant to succeed.’ The Danish Jews escaped because they were allowed, even encouraged, to escape.³¹⁵

In contrast to other countries, the news of the impending roundup was communicated in the synagogues at the New Year services. Most Jews went into hiding. Duckwitz advised the German commandant of Copenhagen Harbour to put his ships into repair, leaving coastal security in the hands of the Danish Coastal Police. The German navy was under instructions not to interfere with the operation. No Danish boat appears to have been fired upon or even pursued. Eichmann sent one of his best men, Rolf Gunther, to Copenhagen, but he too had no success.

On 1 October 1943 the Swedish Government made an announcement that they would accept all Denmark’s Jews.³¹⁶ Just hours later the Nazis began the

roundup but they were told not to break down doors as they didn't wish to come into conflict with the Danish Police! This policy was decided upon by Mildner, Karl Heinz Hoffman, the head of the Gestapo and Gunther on 29 October.³¹⁷ Out of more than 7,800 Jews they found 202 in Copenhagen. A total of 481 Danish Jews were deported.³¹⁸ Those deported were taken to Theresienstadt, where they all survived except for a few of the elderly who died from natural causes.

Throughout October 1943 the Danish fishing fleet ferried Jews across the sea. 5,919 refugees escaped of whom 1,000 were German Jews, 1,310 were half-Jews and 686 were non-Jews married to Jews. Some Jews crossed the Øresund legally with exit visas as it had been left unguarded.³¹⁹

It seemed that the whole Danish people participated in the effort, including six German soldiers who sought asylum in Sweden.³²⁰ Pastor Krohn, for example, handed out blank baptismal certificates.³²¹ Nearly half of Danish Jewry chose to hide out in the country until the end of the war. However the Head of the Danish Red Cross, Helmer Rosting, wanted to send the Jews to Germany in reprisal for sabotage³²² and in exchange for interned Danish soldiers.³²³

There are hundreds of accounts by Danish Jews concerning the support and help they received from the non-Jewish population.³²⁴ The Zionist thesis of 'eternal anti-Semitism' was shown to be a counsel of despair. Integration and assimilation paid dividends. As Hannah Arendt observed, the Nazis had met resistance to their anti-Jewish policy and their 'toughness had melted like butter in the sun.'³²⁵

Switzerland

Switzerland was one of the few neutral countries during the war that wasn't invaded. Surrounded by Germany and its allies, the Swiss lived in fear of invasion. However, it served the interests of Nazi Germany financially that the country was not occupied. It was also where the ICRC was based. Switzerland was the major listening post for both the Zionist movement and the Allied countries.

The Swiss state became increasingly hostile to Jews who escaped from the Nazis and turned them back. Even the Nazis had shrunk from putting "J" on Jewish passports, for fear of international repercussions, until a Swiss demand that the Germans agree to stamp their passports with a 'J'.³²⁶ The Swiss policy of sending Jews back to Nazi Germany remained unchanged until late 1943 and continued selectively even beyond then.³²⁷

Italy

Italy was the birthplace of fascism. Mussolini seized power in October 1922. A series of Zionist leaders beat a path to his door.³²⁸ They believed that Mussolini wasn't, unlike Hitler, anti-Semitic.

Five Jews were founders of the Fighting Fasci and another three were 'Fascist martyrs'.³²⁹ It is estimated that in 1938 10,000 Jews, about one in three adults, were members of the Fascist Party³³⁰ and five Jews sat on the Fascist Grand Council. Jews were thoroughly integrated into Italian society. By 1938 there were 7,457 mixed marriages with a total of 9,274 children, well over 7,000 of whom were Catholics.³³¹ Trieste in 1927 had 255 mixed marriages per 100 Jewish marriages and 50% of married Jews had Christian spouses.³³²

In December 1922 a Zionist delegation consisting of Dante Lattes, Chief Rabbi Angelo Sacerdoti and Moshe Beilinson met Mussolini to discuss relations between Zionism and Fascism.³³³ Mussolini's main objection to the Zionist project was that it was a tool of British imperialism. Barely a month later, on 3 January 1923, Mussolini received Weizmann where 'many misunderstandings surrounding the Zionist position in Palestine were cleared up'.³³⁴

Weizmann had further meetings with Mussolini on 26 October 1927, 26 April 1933 and 17 February 1934.³³⁵ At his last meeting Weizmann lobbied for a Rome-London-Paris as opposed to a Rome-Berlin alignment. At this time relations between Hitler and Mussolini over issues such as Austria and the German minority in northern Italy were strained and Weizmann lobbied British ministers to court Mussolini in an effort to play him off against Hitler.³³⁶

On 26 October 1927 and again on 16 February 1933, Mussolini received Nahum Sokolow, Chairman of the ZE.³³⁷ Sokolow told Mussolini that 'true Jews had never fought you'.³³⁸ Sokolow was at pains to deny that Zionism hated Fascism. 'We are only enemies of the Antisemites.'³³⁹

The Zionist leaders' main objective was to secure Mussolini's support for a Jewish State, given that Italy held the Presidency of the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission. They naively believed that Mussolini might be able to moderate Hitler's anti-Semitism.

In 1933 the Italian foreign ministry argued that a strong Jewish state would be in Italy's best interests.³⁴⁰ From 1933 onwards Mussolini took an increasingly pro-Zionist stance. On 13 November 1934 Mussolini told Nahum Goldmann that

I am a Zionist myself and I told Dr. Weizmann so. You must have a real State not the ridiculous National Home that the British have offered you. I shall help you.³⁴¹

The Revisionists saw in Mussolini a kindred spirit and in October 1934 the first 28 students entered the Betar Naval Academy at the Civitavecchia naval base.³⁴² They produced some of the future commanders of the Israeli navy such as Admiral Avram Blass. Some 200 students trained there until 1938. In December 1935 and in April 1937 the Revisionists attempted to secure training for its youth with the Italian air force.³⁴³ Jabotinsky believed that it would be better if Fascist Italy replaced Britain as the mandatory power in Palestine.³⁴⁴

When Mussolini threw in his lot with Hitler, the Revisionists transferred their allegiance to the anti-Semitic government in Poland. They trained in the Carpathian mountains and proposed that Poland ask Britain to turn over the Palestine mandate to them and make it a Polish colony. The Polish Government supported the Revisionists in the hope that they might achieve the mass migration of Polish Jews to Palestine. Polish army officers provided training to the Irgun and supplied them with weapons.³⁴⁵

It wasn't Nazi pressure that laid the basis for Mussolini's anti-Semitism but the invasion of Abyssinia.³⁴⁶ In May-June 1938 and again in September, Mussolini rejected a military pact with Germany. Mussolini embraced anti-Semitism at the same time as he rejected German proposals for closer ties between Rome and Berlin.³⁴⁷

Mussolini's turn to racism was opposed by the Catholic Church. Galeazzo Ciano, the Foreign Minister, called in the Apostolic Nuncio to Italy, Francesco Borgongini Duca, to express his anger at the Pope's speech in July 1938, and to inform him that Mussolini considered the racial question as fundamental. It was the lack of racial preparedness which had led to the Amhara insurrection in Abyssinia.³⁴⁸

Mussolini passed Race Laws on 17 November 1938 outlawing mixed marriages. Jews were barred from the Civil Service and forbidden to marry 'Aryans'. They suffered economic, social and political discrimination.

Naturalisations after 1 January 1919 were nullified and all foreign or denaturalised Jews were supposed to leave Italy by 12 March 1939. The question of the Christian Jews caused a conflict with the Vatican, which lasted until the collapse of the regime.³⁴⁹ By June 1939 more than 4,000 Jews had been baptised since the racial laws were introduced.³⁵⁰ Nearly 6,000 Jews left the Jewish community in the years 1938-43. Another 6,000 emigrated. Mussolini's anti-Jewish campaign had reduced the number of Italian Jews by a quarter through either conversion or emigration.³⁵¹

By May 1942 a thousand Jews had been interned in the Tripolitanian camp of Giado, 318 of whom died. In January 1943 Ribbentrop informed Ciano that the Germans intended to treat Italian Jews in German-controlled territory as Jews, not Italians and the SS would deal with them accordingly.³⁵²

Until September 1943, when the Nazis formed the Salò Republic, areas under Italian occupation became sanctuaries for Jews. In Yugoslavia, General Mario Roatta declared it was 'incompatible with the honor of the Italian army' to hand over Jews to the Nazis.³⁵³ When the Italian army left Yugoslavia the Jews left with them and found refuge in Fiume.

Again and again the Italian generals and consuls, prefects and police inspectors, refused to cooperate in the deportations. The destruction process in Italy was carried out against their unremitting opposition.³⁵⁴

After the Fascist Grand Council had deposed Mussolini on 25 July 1943, Marshall Badoglio was appointed as Prime Minister. When Badoglio announced an armistice on 8 September with the Allies, the German army, mainly SS units, invaded Northern Italy freeing Mussolini and reinstating him as leader. The deportation of Jews to the death camps began soon after.

By the time the Nazis reached Campagna internment camp, the inmates had fled to the mountains with the help of local inhabitants. Rev. Aldo Brunacci of Assisi saved all the Jews who sought refuge. This became the basis for the film *Assisi Underground*.³⁵⁵

In November 1943 the Interior Ministry ordered that Jews be placed in concentration camps. Concentration camps were set up at Fossoli di Carpi and Bolzano.³⁵⁶ Fascist Black Brigades consisting of the police, carabinieri and militias were formed to hunt down Jews.³⁵⁷ During November and December the first two transports departed from northern Italy for Auschwitz.³⁵⁸ In November the Jews of Florence and Genoa were deported. Trieste's Jews were particularly badly affected.

About 7,500 Italian Jews were deported to Auschwitz, 800 of whom survived.³⁵⁹ Some 8,564 Jews in total were deported from Italy and Italian controlled areas, 1,009 returned, the most famous of whom was Primo Levi. Yet despite this some 85% of Italian Jews survived the Holocaust. Anti-Semitism had no roots in Italy.

Chief Rabbi Israel Zolla, who later converted to Catholicism, claimed he urged the head of Italian Jewry, Dante Almansì and Ugo Foa, President of Rome's Jewish community, to close the synagogue, remove the membership lists and disperse the Jews to monasteries and convents.³⁶⁰

Slovakia - The Judenrat and the Europa Plan

In the wake of the Munich Agreement of 29 September 1938 and the annexation of the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia was forced to cede further territory to Hungary and Poland. On 14 March 1939, the puppet state of Slovakia declared its 'independence' and on 15 March Germany invaded the remainder, incorporating the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia into Greater Germany.

On 26 October 1939 Jozef Tiso, a Catholic priest, became President of Slovakia with Vojtech Tuka, a radical anti-Semite, becoming Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sano Mach commanding the clerical fascist militia, the Hlinka Guard. Dieter Wisliceny of the SS arrived on 1 September 1940 as an "advisor" on the Jewish Question.

The ruling Slovak Peoples' Party's anti-Semitism was of the medieval kind. It was based on the supposed wealth rather than the different 'race' of the Jews.³⁶¹ The first racial laws, introduced on 18 April 1939, had a "basic defect"— they only covered Jews by religion. Half of Slovakia's Jews had no religion and those who had converted after 30 October 1918 were accepted as Christians. Only in September 1941 did the Jewry Code (Judenkodex) remedy this.³⁶²

The Judenzentrale or Ustredna Zidov [UZ] was formed on 26 September 1940 by Wisliceny.³⁶³ It was first headed by Heinrich Schwartz and then Arpad Sebastyen.

Under Sebastyen and Gestapo agent Karol Hochberg, the UZ excelled in its cooperation with the Nazis.³⁶⁴ It performed a 'dual role', helping in the implementation of the Final Solution whilst attempting to safeguard Jewish interests.³⁶⁵ One of its first tasks was the issuing of ID cards to Jews. The UZ supplied Wisliceny with 'an abundance of useful information to facilitate the deportations.'³⁶⁶

In November 1941, because some 80,000 Slovaks were working in Germany, the Slovak Government offered to substitute 10-20,000 Jews for them. In January 1942 Himmler accepted the offer but proposed that Slovakia be made *Judenrein*. The Slovak government agreed but imposed a condition that nothing be done to upset the Catholic Church.³⁶⁷

By mid-March 1942 with rumours that deportations were imminent Papal Nuncio Angelo Rotta in Budapest received an unsigned, undated note from Bratislava saying, 'We are condemned to destruction. With certainty we know that we are to be transported to Poland (Lublin):'³⁶⁸ On 21 March a pastoral letter was read in Slovak churches condemning the 'lamentable fate' of the Jews 'as a result of their descent or nationality.'³⁶⁹ On 26 March, as the deportations

began,³⁷⁰ the Vatican's Apostolic Delegate in Slovakia, Guiseppe Burzio, saw Tuka to protest against the deportations.³⁷¹ The Vatican sent six letters objecting to the deportations.³⁷²

Slovakia was the first place, bar Germany, to deport its Jews. From 26 March until 20 October 1942, 57 transports left containing 57,752 Jews. Women, the elderly and children were sent to Auschwitz and Sobibor and 9,000 younger men were sent to Lublin from where they were dispersed to different ghettos, labour camps and Maidenek.³⁷³ Links were established at an early stage between the deportees and those Jews left in Slovakia. This resulted in aid to the deportees and emissaries were sent out to contact them.³⁷⁴

Jewish resistance to the deportations grew as the first reports on the fate of the deportees and their horrific living conditions filtered into Slovakia in May-June 1942. People stopped reporting voluntarily for deportation.³⁷⁵ An increasing number of Jews sought refuge in the woods, in Hungary and with the churches.

In the woods of Homenau, Andreas Paziky, a Slovak Gendarmeria, was shot and killed searching for Jews. By the end of 1942 approximately 7,000 had escaped to Hungary. The number of Jews converted to Christianity after 1939 who had not been deported by November 1942 was estimated at 6,000. Most joined the Greek Orthodox or Protestant churches.³⁷⁶ Two Calvinist pastors, Stefano Puskas and László Sedivy, were arrested and charged with having performed multiple conversions.³⁷⁷ In the second wave of deportations in 1944, conversion to Christianity was of no avail. The Deportation Law of 15 May 1942 exempted all converts before 14 March 1939 from deportation.³⁷⁸

Amongst those excluded from deportation were those exempted by Tiso.³⁷⁹ German Ambassador Hanns Elard Ludin reported that 35,000 Jews had received exemption. Other estimates held that 24,000 Jews were left in Slovakia.³⁸⁰ The law extended immunity to family members of those exempted, professionals, labour certificate holders and the remaining entrepreneurs, as well as Jews in mixed marriages. The Vatican was unhappy that priests in Slovak's parliament had voted for or abstained on the measure. 'To Cardinal Secretary of State Luigi Maglione such clerical collaboration was unsavory.' The deportations almost ground to a halt at the end of June.³⁸¹

Burzio told the Vatican that the deportations would result in their certain death. He warned Tuka that the Jews weren't being sent to Poland for labour service but annihilation.³⁸² His intervention and that of the Apostolic Nuncio, Monsignor Martilotti, was crucial in getting Tiso to end the deportations. ³⁸³ A further report arrived in Geneva from Martilotti detailing the deportation of

Slovakia's Jews. For two weeks, until 30 August, Lichtheim delayed sending it to Palestine.³⁸⁴

Ludin reported that the deportations had become unpopular. Tuka declared that he wouldn't be taken in by Jewish propaganda but informed Ludin of how one bishop had reported that thousands of Jews in the Ukraine had been shot and he wanted a Slovak commission to inspect the camps. The consequence was that the deportations came to an end in October 1942.

In June Weissmandel agreed to pay Wisliceny a bribe of \$50,000 to stop the deportations.³⁸⁵ The first half was paid around July and the final half on 22 September. On 23 September and 20 October there were two further transports.³⁸⁶ After the bribe was paid, Weissmandel and Gisi Fleischmann, a Zionist member of UZ and JDC representative, were accorded privileges by Wisliceny including being able to collect money and send parcels to deportees in Poland and receive letters from those still alive.³⁸⁷

The bribe coincided with the efforts of the Catholic Church to halt the deportations. The UZ, including Weissmandel, 'were under the impression, although it turned out to be false, that it was their bribing of Wisliceny that had halted the deportations in 1942.'³⁸⁸

Because Weissmandel and Fleischmann did not know of the Church's role they formed the Working Group, an underground 'resistance' group which was part of UZ.³⁸⁹ They devised the Europa Plan, which was based on the idea that for \$2m the Nazis would put an end to the deportations in Europe bar Poland.³⁹⁰ Negotiations began in late 1942 and lasted until 3 September 1943 when Wisliceny told Fleischmann and André Steiner that he had instructions to cease negotiations. Nine days later he was handed a \$10,000 bribe by the Working Group in order to restart the talks.³⁹¹ The Nazi tactics involved the 'entrapment of the Zionist leaders'³⁹²

The Europa Plan was a 'naïve assessment'.³⁹³ Rudolf Vrba met with Weissmandel at his yeshiva in the centre of Bratislava at the end of June 1944, where it was operating openly under the protection of the Nazi authorities. He described it as 'a circus with Weissmandel as its main, albeit tragicomic clown' and the Europa Plan as 'truly hare-brained.'³⁹⁴ Their belief in the Europa Plan proved catastrophic for Hungarian Jewry.³⁹⁵

Bauer describes Vrba's comments about Weissmandel as being 'understandable in a bitter Auschwitz survivor.'³⁹⁶ Vrba was personally attacked by the Zionist holocaust historians for alleging that the Slovakian and Hungarian Jewish leaders betrayed their fellow Jews.³⁹⁷ Vrba, like Arendt, was accused of

being incapable of understanding the complexity of the situation.³⁹⁸ In attacking Vrba personally, the Zionist historians demonstrated the weakness of their own arguments.

According to Bauer, the UZ, including Hochberg, provided only 'technical and secretarial help' to the Nazis. This included handing over the deportation lists which they had worked on.³⁹⁹ Rothkirchen accepted that Hochberg's Department for 'Special Tasks' was active in registering Jews for deportation.⁴⁰⁰

In attempting to rebut the charge of Vrba and Conway that the Judenrat was an instrument of collaboration, Bauer argued that the Judenrat had no control over Hochberg. In any case the UZ had no clear information about the death camps albeit that they knew that being sent to Poland involved extreme danger.⁴⁰¹

On 12 June 1942, Hochberg described a recent transport as the 'best we have put together out of the 13,000 persons registered so far.'⁴⁰² Bauer exonerated the UZ because key Zionist activists such as Fleischmann and Oskar Neumann controlled its leadership. Absurdly he compared its relations with the Nazis to British prisoners-of-war negotiating with Nazi camp commanders.⁴⁰³

Erich Kulka complained that Vrba 'attacked and humiliated' the leaders of the Judenrat. Even worse 'Vrba attacks the Zionists and Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann.'⁴⁰⁴

The Slovakian Judenrat may have been 'good Zionists',⁴⁰⁵ but that did not prevent them collaborating in the deportations. Rothkirchen argued that although the Judenrat was 'established by the perpetrators of the Final Solution' it nonetheless 'safeguard(ed) Jewish interests.'⁴⁰⁶ Most of Slovakia's Jews perished, unlike their leaders.⁴⁰⁷

It was suspected that the primary concern of its officers was their own rescue. Hope and powerlessness led to hate against the Jewish officials...⁴⁰⁸

Fleischmann, despite being warned by Kurt Becher's second-in-command Max Gruson, tried to open negotiations with Alois Brunner, 'one of Eichmann's most ruthless henchmen' sent in the wake of the Slovakian Uprising, to deport the remaining Jews. Instead of calling on the Jews to escape to rebel territory they told the Jews of Bratislava to report to Sered for deportation.

When the UZ offices were broken into on the night of 26 September, a card index was stolen containing details of the remaining Jews in Bratislava. The Working Group complained to Brunner but they didn't warn the community.⁴⁰⁹

The activities of the Working Group in the month of September... cast a dark shadow over all of them and on Fleischmann as their leader. They knew; they had been forewarned; they could have no illusions. But still they acted just like some of the other Jewish Councils did: they could have warned but they didn't; they could have refused the demands of the Nazis...⁴¹⁰

The Working Group had ‘misinterpreted’ Wisliceny’s role in stopping the 1942 deportations. They could not understand that it would not work this time!’
[411](#)

Despite this Bauer and Zionism’s holocaust historians, resentful of the accusation that the UZ had kept Auschwitz and the Final Solution secret from the Jews, resorted to ad hominem attacks:

Regretfully, [the accusation of collaboration] was given legitimacy when Haifa University awarded an honorary doctorate to the head of these mockers, Peter [sic] Vrba.... Just because he was an Auschwitz prisoner endowed with personal heroism, he has crowned himself as knowledgeable to judge all those involved in the noble work of rescue... [412](#)

When the Slovak national uprising broke out in August 1944, the Slovakian army was disbanded. The Nazis took complete control. Obergruppenfuhrer Gottlob Berger, chief of staff of the Waffen SS, arrived. About 1,500 Jews joined the Slovak Resistance. The deportations resumed from September 1944 after the uprising had been crushed. Brunner deported 12-14,000 Jews.[413](#) Nearly 8,000 went to Auschwitz and 4,370 to Theresienstadt or Sachsenhausen. A few thousand managed to hide.[414](#) When the Russians liberated Bratislava on 4 April 1945 there were 20,000 Jews left.

Greece

The Jewish community in Greece dated back to 300 BC. When the Germans entered Salonika on 9 April 1941 they faced a Jewish community divided between Zionists, assimilationists and communists. In 1926 the Zionists obtained 46% of the vote and the Communists 31% to the governing body of the Jewish community. In the 1931 elections the Communist vote decreased and the Zionist vote increased.[415](#) In July 1931 the far-right Greek Nationalist Union [EEE] instigated a pogrom but the Zionists’ priority was in forming an anti-communist Jewish group. The Nazis occupied Greece until October 1944.

The Italians occupied most of Greece including the islands until September 1943. Bulgaria annexed Yugoslav Macedonia and Thrace and Germany the rest of Greece, including Salonika, Piraeus, and western Crete.[416](#) In the Italian sphere the Jews were safe from deportation.

The start of the Greek holocaust was Black Sabbath on 11 July 1942 when the Nazis summoned 10,000 Jews to Liberty Square in Salonika and tortured and humiliated them in the hot sun. 46,000 Salonikan Jews were deported to Auschwitz, of whom only 2000 survived.[417](#) Two-thirds of Greek Jews (55,000) lived in Salonika. The Jews there spoke Ladino, a Judeo-Spanish dialect which helped distinguish them from non-Jews.[418](#)

In Salonika the Jewish community led a largely separate life from their non-Jewish neighbours. This was the background to the latter's failure to offer protection to the Jews.⁴¹⁹ An anonymous Jewish witness testified that though Greek intellectuals were outraged by these persecutions the masses were either indifferent or hostile.⁴²⁰ Professional associations in Salonika, as in Athens, publicly criticised the deportations. In March 1943, the Metropolitan of Salonika, Gennadios Alexiadis, issued an appeal against the deportations.⁴²¹ The Nazis reported that the Greek people 'gave them gifts and bade them farewell in a disgustingly warm manner.'⁴²²

This was in contrast to the situation in Athens where the Jewish population doubled or tripled from 1,500 during the war as Jews were sheltered by non-Jews. The Zionist idea of Jews separating from their non-Jewish counterparts had once again proved fatal.

In December 1942 the Nazis installed Chief Rabbi Zvi Koretz as President of the Salonikan Judenrat against the wishes of the Jewish Community Council.⁴²³ He was considered by the Zionists as 'one of us'.⁴²⁴ As early as 1934, articles began appearing in the Jewish press, castigating him for his arrogance and ostentatious way of life.⁴²⁵

The only privileged Jews were those who were members of or who worked for the Judenrat, most of whom survived after being shipped to Bergen-Belsen. A key Nazi official was Gunther Altenberg, the Foreign Office's plenipotentiary in Athens. He was joined by Rolf Gunther of the SS, Alois Brunner and Dieter Wisliceny. On 6 February 1943 the Yellow Star was introduced.⁴²⁶

Wisliceny 'made maximum use of the Jewish community leadership'. Koretz, who believed in 'unquestioning compliance', was invested with powers over all the Jews and he was informed that they would have to be deported because of the 'communist threat'.⁴²⁷ Wisliceny ordered the formation of a Jewish ghetto in Salonika on 25 February 1943 but their stay was to be short-lived because the majority of Jews were deported between 15 March and April.⁴²⁸ By 18 August there were no more Jews left to deport. Hilberg held three men responsible for this – Wisliceny, Dr Max Merten, Chief of the Military Administration and Koretz.⁴²⁹

On 14 March Koretz informed the Jews that they would be sent to Krakow, where they would be received by the Jewish community with open arms.⁴³⁰ He barely avoided being attacked by congregants in his own synagogue for this.⁴³¹ The Allies failed to warn the Jews about their likely fate.⁴³² The destruction of Greek Jewry was uniquely avoidable.⁴³³ If the BBC's Greek broadcasts had

informed them of their likely fate, the Jews would not have accepted Koretz's assurances.⁴³⁴

Guelfo Zamboni, the Italian Consul General, saved 281 Italian Jews and wished to restore Italian nationality to 48 other Jews, which he did by smuggling them into the Italian sector on a troopship. The Spanish *chargé d'affaires* in Athens, Eduardo Gasser, claimed immunity for 600 Spanish Jews in Salonika but was hindered by the refusal of his government to admit more than 50. However they were deported to Bergen-Belsen where 365 survived. 'After much hesitation' Spain agreed to admit them in the Spring of 1944.⁴³⁵ Spain agreed to admit a further 155 Jews from Athens, who again were sent to Bergen-Belsen where they remained till April 1945.⁴³⁶

Four hundred and seventy two Jews joined the Underground and attempted to link up with the Greek partisans. Koretz and the kehillah attempted to bribe the Nazis not to effect the deportation from Salonika and Koretz used Alexiadis to obtain a meeting with Greek's collaborationist Prime Minister Ioannis D. Rhallis on 9 April 1943.⁴³⁷ Rhallis, however, refused to intercede with the Nazis. After this 'feeble attempt' to save the community, Koretz was sent to Bergen-Belsen.⁴³⁸

In Athens Rabbi Barzilai obtained permission from Archbishop Damaskinos Papandreou of the Greek Orthodox Church for Jews to hide in the churches. Damaskinos protested to the German Foreign Office against the deportation of Salonika's Jews and gave baptism papers to Jews and aid to Jews in hiding, appealing to his priests and the people of Athens to do likewise.⁴³⁹

Higher SS Police leader, Jurgen Stroop, threatened to shoot Damaskinos who replied that "Greek religious leaders are not shot, they are hanged. I request that you respect this custom."⁴⁴⁰

Barzilai reported to Wisliceny that he was unable to produce lists of the Jews and was given another 48 hours by which time he had destroyed all of them.⁴⁴¹ Helped by the Chief of Police in the Eighth District of Athens, Krisurdaov, who provided hundreds of Jews with forged identity cards and meal tickets, thousands of Athenian Jews survived by hiding out in Greek villages and joining the Underground.⁴⁴² Forty five per cent of Athens' 3,500 Jews survived.⁴⁴³

The assistance that Jews in Athens received from the Christian community was in contrast to that in Salonika. In Athens 'a politically unusual alliance of the Church, the police and the communist-dominated resistance group [EAM/ELAS or National Liberation Front], cooperated to thwart German plans.'⁴⁴⁴ Athens Police Chief Angelos Evert issued false identity cards.⁴⁴⁵

The actions of Barzilai, in contrast to that of Koretz, proved what Arendt had said about the Jewish leadership and cooperating with the Nazis. Non-cooperation was always more likely to produce more survivors. Zertal contrasts the behavior of Barzilai with that of Reform Rabbi Leo Baeck.⁴⁴⁶

Although the Italian zone was larger than the German zone, only 13,000 Jews lived under Italian control compared to the 55,000 Jews under Nazi control. With the introduction of forced labour in Salonika, more Jews escaped to the Italian zone. When Italy's military pact with Germany ended the 16,000 Jews in the Italian sector, the Dodecanese Islands, Albania and Montenegro were at risk. Several thousand Jews joined the communist ELAS whereas the anti-communist EDES gave 'full approval' to the round-ups.⁴⁴⁷ 60,000 Jews were deported from Greece, the Islands and 'New Albania' (Kosovo) and perhaps 12,000 survived.⁴⁴⁸

As the collaborationist Prime Minister of Greece Konstantinos Logothetopoulos confirmed, when reluctantly sending a letter of protest against the deportations on 18 March 1943, 'all layers' of Greek society were opposed to the anti-Jewish measures.⁴⁴⁹

On the island of Zakynthos in the Ionian Sea the mayor, Loukas Karrer, was ordered by the Nazis to hand over a list of the Jews on the island. Bishop Chrysostomos presented the Germans with a list containing two names – his own and that of the mayor. The bishop told the Germans. 'Here are your Jews. If you choose to deport the Jews of Zakynthos, you must also take me.' The Jews of the island were safely hidden in the mountains, and all 275 survived.⁴⁵⁰

Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia was founded as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 as a consequence of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. It included the former kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro (including Macedonia), Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Holocaust in Yugoslavia can be divided into the genocide of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies in Croatia and of Muslims in Bosnia. The numbers killed is estimated at just above 1 million.⁴⁵¹

Table 2

Numbers killed in Yugoslavia

	Numbers killed	% of total population
Serbs	487,000	6.9
Croats	207,000	5.4
Moslems	86,000	6.8
Jews	60,000	77.9
Gypsies	27,000	31.4

Croatia

Croatia was a puppet state created by the Nazis in April 1940. It was ruled by the Ustaše under Ante Pavelić. It was willing to sacrifice its Jewish citizens as part of the Final Solution. There was just one problem – the creation of ‘honorary Aryans, protective letters and other means for the exemption of influential, indispensable or baptised Jews.’ [452](#) Nonetheless on 26 June 1941 Pavelić ordered the roundup of Jews, first in Croatia and then in Bosnia. By the end of 1941 two-thirds of the Jews in Croatia were imprisoned in concentration camps. [453](#) Some 33,500 Jews, including 3,000 refugees from Western Europe, perished. [454](#)

On 30 April 1941 the first law was passed defining who was a Jew. [455](#) It followed the Nuremberg Laws but contained provisions for ‘honorary Aryans’, usually rich Jews and Christian converts. [456](#) ‘As so often, the tightly shut door concealed a wide-open back entrance.’ [457](#) Police attaché Hans Helm noted that a few of the Croatian leaders had strong family ties with Jews and some Cabinet members had Jewish wives. [458](#)

The Vatican sent Abbot Marcone as its apostolic visitor to Croatia, which was recognition in all but name. Marcone pleaded, at the request of the Chief Rabbi of Zagreb, Miroslav Šalom Freiburger, for an end to the deportations with Slavko Kvaternik, Croatia’s security chief, but without success. [459](#) He did, however, save one thousand Jews who were married to non-Jews in Zagreb. [460](#)

The clergy had a mixed record. Many supported the Ustaše’s reign of terror but there were a number of exceptions including Bishop Alojzije Mišić of Mostar, Mgr. Svetozar Rittig and Josip Lončar, Dean of Kaptol, who was sentenced to death. This was only commuted after the intervention of the Vatican. [461](#)

Archbishop Aloysius Stepinac, was a supporter of the Ustaše and welcomed Ante Pavelić’s return in April 1941. This didn’t stop him from receiving support from the AJC. [462](#) At no time did he publicly condemn the atrocities. [463](#) Croatian priests participated in the extermination squads and nearly half of Croatia’s 22 extermination camps were headed by a priest. [464](#)

Jasenovac, which was established in August 1941, and the other Croatian camps, were the only extermination camps not run by the Nazis. Estimates of those who were killed range from 100,000 [465](#) to 700,000, the majority of whom were Serbians. The USHMM places the number of dead at a maximum of 100,000 and Hilberg estimated that of these, 19,800 Jews died in Croatian camps, including 13,000 at Jasenovac. [466](#)

Krumey was sent to Croatia and by autumn 1943, 30,000 Jews had been deported to the extermination camps. There were approximately 40,000 Jews in

Croatia when it was established.⁴⁶⁷ Thousands fled to the Italian-occupied zone and to the Hungarian Bačka. Siegfried Kasche, the German Ambassador to Croatia, suggested rounding up Jews in the Italian sector without asking the Italians. Despite Mussolini having no objections, the Italian commander General Roatta and the Carabinieri commander General Giuseppe Pieche objected. Several thousand Jews on the Italian-occupied island of Rab escaped to the partisan-held sector in September 1943.⁴⁶⁸

In April 1944 Kasche reported that the Jewish question had been solved in Croatia except for the honorary Aryans, Jews in mixed marriages and Mischlinge. Many Jews found refuge with Tito's partisans. About 20% of Croatian Jewry survived.⁴⁶⁹

Serbia

On 25 March 1941, Regent Prince Paul signed the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany, along with Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary. Two days later Paul was overthrown. On 6 April Germany, Hungary and Italy invaded Yugoslavia and annexed part of Serbia. The remainder was occupied by Germany. Race laws were adopted on 30 April 1941. Compulsory Aryanisation was decreed after 22 July. In Serbia the final solution was implemented with less delay than almost anywhere else.

After August the Nazis set up a puppet government under former Minister of War General Milan Nedić. Of the 16,000 Jews in Serbia, 14,500 or 90% were murdered.⁴⁷⁰ The Jews who survived did so by joining the Resistance, fleeing to Italian-occupied territory or going into hiding.⁴⁷¹

The repression of the Serbian population after the invasion of Russia caused a national rebellion under Tito which the Nazis used as a pretext to implement the Final Solution.⁴⁷² When 21 German troops were killed in an ambush on 2 October 1941 General Franz Böhme ordered 2,100 male Jews to be shot by troops not the SS.⁴⁷³ It was the military who initiated the Final Solution in Serbia.⁴⁷⁴

The head of the civilian administration was SS Gruppenführer Harald Turner who, together with Felix Benzler, the Foreign Office representative, urged Berlin to rid them of the Jews. They wanted to deport them to the East but were told by Martin Luther in an angry but revealing message that:

it is his [the German army commander's] duty to get rid of them... in other parts [of Europe] the local army commanders eliminated a lot more Jews without making such a fuss.
⁴⁷⁵

A “transit camp” was set up at Semlin (Sajmište) at the end of October, a mile from Belgrade city centre, which was in Croatia. Mainly women and children were kept there in horrific conditions. In March 1942 a gas van from Berlin arrived at the camp. Between March and 10 May between 8,000 and 10,000 Jews were exterminated. Turner, who was executed after the war, wrote in August 1942 that ‘Serbia is the only country in Europe where the Jewish problem has been solved.’⁴⁷⁶

In addition to the Jews in Semlin, patients and staff of the Belgrade Jewish Hospital and Jewish prisoners of the Banjica concentration camp were also murdered in the gas van.⁴⁷⁷ Between 15,000 and 18,000 Jews are estimated to have survived in Yugoslavia out of 43,000.⁴⁷⁸ Other estimates of the pre-war Jewish population suggest about 82,500.⁴⁷⁹ Many played a prominent part in the Resistance. Almost the entire medical corps of the partisans was Jewish.⁴⁸⁰

Albania

Muslim Albania was the only country in Nazi-occupied Europe where the number of Jews increased during the war, from 200 to 2000.⁴⁸¹ According to Johanna Neumann, a Hamburg-born Jewess who was herself rescued, the Albanian Embassy in Berlin issued visas to Jews until 1942. Until the summer of 1943 many European Jews obtained asylum in Albania.

The fascist occupiers tried to deport Jews from Albania, too, but the population refused to surrender the Jews living in their country. Even members of the Albanian government pitched in, providing Jewish families with forged documents. Many Albanian farmers took in and hid Jews.⁴⁸²

In 1938, under pressure from Mussolini, King Zog enacted anti-Jewish legislation. However, it was never implemented.⁴⁸³ The interned Jews of Albania went through difficult times in September 1943 when Italy capitulated. The Albanians took them from the internment camps and hid them in isolated villages where the Germans could not reach them.

There is no known case of this trust being betrayed, no known case of a Jew being exposed, and no known case of an Albanian host requiring payment for the service.⁴⁸⁴

Detention camps which were established by the Italians were taken over by SiPO and used to imprison political opponents. On 29 August 1944 Nazi Plenipotentiary Josef Fitzthum directed a raid in Tirana when a heavily guarded transport of prisoners was brought to Pristina, Kosovo. Bettina Bern suggested that several Albanian Jews fell victim to a Nazi raid although ‘a large number of Albanian Jews managed to survive in hiding until the end of the war.’⁴⁸⁵

On December 12 1943 Albania was placed under the control of the Commander of the Military South-East, Hans Felber. In April 1944 SS Division Skanderbeg is reported to have rounded up 210 Jews in Pristina ('New Albania'), though the number is now thought to be approximately 20. Kosovo had the highest rate of survival of Jews (62%) in the former Yugoslavia.[486](#)

Bulgaria

Bulgaria was a signatory to the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany but it was never occupied. Bulgaria was the least committed of Germany's satellites.[487](#) It didn't even declare war on the Soviet Union and Bulgarian troops did not serve on the Eastern Front. The key difference between Bulgaria and the other Axis allies was the opposition to anti-Semitism and the strength of the Left.

On 20 November 1940 the Law for the Protection of the Nation was passed. However, it exempted all converted Jews. As a result 5,000 (10%) Bulgarian Jews converted overnight.[488](#) The emphasis in the legislation was on baptism and adherence to the Christian faith. The legislation introduced a *numerus clausus*. As Bulgaria's Jews were 1% of the population this could have pauperised them. However, it was adjusted to the percentage of the Jewish population in the locality, which defeated its purpose.[489](#) Under pressure from Ira Hirschmann of the WRB, the Bulgarian cabinet announced on 30 August 1944 that the anti-Jewish laws were being cancelled. This was the first such cancellation of anti-Jewish legislation by any Axis country.[490](#)

Despite the willingness of King Boris III and Prime Minister Bogdan Filov to enact anti-Semitic laws, there were mass protests in Bulgaria, which resulted in the Jews of the capital, Sofia, being dispersed to the countryside, the exact opposite of what the Nazis wanted. When the population of Sofia heard about the proposed expulsions, they demonstrated outside the King's palace. Ironically the Nazis, believing that Boris was pro-Jewish, almost certainly murdered him.[491](#) Boris described how Hitler went into a rage when he refused his demands. As a compromise, Boris declared war on Britain and America which resulted in massive Allied bombing raids on Sofia.[492](#)

When the Yellow Star was introduced in August 1942 only 20% of Jews wore it and those who did received 'so many manifestations of sympathy from the misled population that they are actually proud of their sign.' Metropolitan Stefan protested against it publicly.[493](#) On 30 September its wearing was no longer made compulsory and the deportations to the countryside were stopped.[494](#)

In January 1943 Eichmann sent Danneker to Bulgaria. Interior Minister Petar Gabrovski agreed on 2 March to the deportation of 11,000 Jews from Thrace and Macedonia, annexed from Greece and Yugoslavia and 6,000 'leading Jews' from 'Old Bulgaria'. Its implementation was entrusted to the Jewish Commissariat who reached an agreement with the RSHA to implement the deportations in February 1943.⁴⁹⁵

Deportations from Old Bulgaria never happened. Police Attaché Adolf Hoffmann reported that 11,343 had been deported.⁴⁹⁶ On 10 March police began arresting Jews and Metropolitan Kyrill of Plovdiv, who became Patriarch of Bulgaria, threatened to lie down on the railway tracks to stop the deportation trains.⁴⁹⁷ He prevented the deportation of about 1,500 Jews from his diocese.

It was the refusal of the Jews to co-operate in their anti-Greek policies which prompted the Bulgarian authorities to hand the Jews of Thrace and Macedonia over to the Germans.⁴⁹⁸ It is questionable whether or not the Bulgarian Government realised that 'resettlement in the East' meant death or if the Government even had control of the annexed territories.⁴⁹⁹ When Jewish Commissar Alexander Dimitar Belev ordered the internment of 'influential' Jews in the wake of this, Vice-President Dimitar Peshev, supported by 40 deputies, moved a motion of censure against the government. Although Peshev lost the motion and his office, the proposed deportations were doomed.⁵⁰⁰

They provoked mass protests. German Ambassador Adolf Beckerle informed the Foreign Office in June 1943 that the situation was hopeless and he advised that nothing more could be done.⁵⁰¹ The problem was that the Bulgarians 'had been living with peoples like the Armenians, Greeks and Gypsies for so long that they simply could not appreciate the Jewish problem.'⁵⁰²

When about a thousand Jews from Kyustendil were ordered on 7 March to leave their homes, local citizens formed a delegation of 44 people to travel to Sofia to get the authorities to rescind the order.⁵⁰³ One of the reasons for the Bulgarians' resistance was the strength of the Communist Party. Their leader, Georgi Dimitrov, was tried and acquitted for having participated in the Reichstag fire. Bulgaria's rulers would have acquiesced to the Nazi demands but the people refused and the result was that no Bulgarian Jew was deported to their death. The other factors working in favour of Bulgaria's Jews was that there was no Judenrat and the Zionists were very weak.⁵⁰⁴

Poland

Poland suffered more than any other country under Nazi occupation. Up to three million non-Jewish Poles were murdered.⁵⁰⁵ Much of Poland's territory was annexed to Germany. Hitler ordered members of the Polish intelligentsia, clergy and nobility to be killed as part of Operation Tannenberg.⁵⁰⁶ In the first two years of Nazi occupation, more Jews died because they were part of the Polish intelligentsia than because they were Jewish.⁵⁰⁷

With the invasion the Einsatzgruppen were sent into Poland. They were organised by Heydrich and Werner Best.⁵⁰⁸ Their major operations were the liquidation of the intelligentsia and priests as well as expelling the Jews further east rather than as part of an overall genocidal plan.⁵⁰⁹ Over three million Jews lived in pre-war Poland of whom half a million died from the cold, disease and starvation.

The Catholic Church suffered particularly. 214 priests were executed in October and November 1942 alone. A German military report spoke of the 'extermination' of the priests. By 1943 2,000 priests were in Dachau. There was also extensive collaboration by the church. Adam Stefan Sapieha, the Archbishop of Krakow, was the only noteworthy Polish Catholic opponent of the Nazi Occupation whereas Bishop Czeslaw Kaczmarek of Kielce commanded obedience to the occupation regime.⁵¹⁰

It is estimated that 2,300 men and women of the church were killed and another 5,400 were imprisoned during the war.⁵¹¹ By April 1945 only 816 priests in Poland were left alive. Despite this, in Warsaw alone, some 650 Jewish children were hidden in Catholic institutions.⁵¹²

Polish anti-Semitism

After the first world war Poland's Jews found that a new state had been created around them.⁵¹³ Poland signed the Polish Minority Treaty at Versailles on 28 June 1919, guaranteeing full equality to Poland's national minorities, of which the Jews were one. It was observed in the breach.

Anti-Semitism represented a strong political current within Polish society. It was represented by the National Democrats or Endecja (Endeks).⁵¹⁴ Although there was no specific anti-Semitic legislation, ghetto benches were introduced in universities and Jewish children were put at the back of school classes. A *numerus clausus* existed in the professions.

The Endeks drew most of their support from the Polish petite bourgeoisie and intelligentsia who competed with their Jewish counterparts. Unlike the Nazis, the Endeks could not conquer the villages. From 1935 to 1937 their campaign of

boycotting Jews led to violence and pogroms in which hundreds of Jews were killed or injured. Both the Polish Peasant Party and the Polish Socialist Party rejected anti-Semitism. [515](#)

The Jewish position in Poland was precarious, both politically and economically. In the transformation from feudalism to capitalism most Jews were pauperised. On a visit in 1934, Neville Laski, President of the BOD wrote that 'I have never seen such poverty, squalor and filth.... nothing that I have seen or heard in any degree pictures what I saw with my own eyes.' [516](#)

During World War II anti-Semitism, especially in the areas formerly occupied by the Soviet Union, rested on the myth that the Jews of these areas had welcomed the Soviet invasion and had collaborated in the deportation of Polish citizens. Jan Tomasz Gross suggested that this criticism of the Jews was a projection 'onto an entrenched narrative' by those who sought to excuse their own collaboration with the Nazi invasion in 1941. [517](#)

On 10 July 1941 up to 1,600 Jews were burnt alive in a barn by Poles in Jedwabne. A similar massacre occurred in Radzilów. [518](#) Although much of Jedwabne's pre-war population was Jewish, today there are no Jews left. [519](#) The massacre was the subject of two books by Polish historians. [520](#)

However, even in heavily nationalist areas there were Poles who acted selflessly in defending and hiding Jews. One such family was that of Antonina Wyrzykowska who lived five kilometres from Jedwabne. They were close enough to hear the screams of the victims and they were determined to hide, for two and a half years, seven Jews, despite the risk to their own and their children's lives. [521](#) Their reward included Antonina being savagely beaten by fascists after the war and a bauble from YV.

If Poles showed less sympathy with the Jews than the Danes or Dutch, then they behaved far more humanely than Romanians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians or Latvians. [522](#) It is estimated that at least one million Poles sheltered or helped Jews survive, despite the fact that if they were caught it meant an automatic death sentence. [523](#) Avihu Ronen describes how Hayka (Chajka) Klinger, after escaping from a Nazi detention camp on August 23-24, where she had been tortured by the Gestapo, was hidden by two Polish families, the Kobylecs and the Banasiks. [524](#) Jan Grabowski estimates that 200,000 Jews were betrayed to the Germans or killed by Poles out of a total of 250,000 who went into hiding. [525](#)

After the war between 650 and 700 Jews who returned from the camps were murdered by nationalist Poles. [526](#) The most famous episode was the pogrom in Kielce on 4 July 1946 when 42 Jews were murdered and 40 were injured. [527](#)

The Polish Government-in-Exile

The Polish Government-in-exile, which relocated to London with the invasion, was riddled with anti-Semitism. It was forced to accept Shmuel Zygielbojm of the Bund as a Jewish representative, because of its diplomatic position in Britain.

In Britain Jewish soldiers were told by their officers that when they went into battle they would be shot in the back and if they returned to Poland after the war they would be massacred. Hundreds deserted and 31 men were told they would be court-martialled. Tom Driberg put down a question in Parliament and immediately Schwarzbart phoned him begging him to withdraw the question. Both Driberg and Michael Foot MP denounced the trials at a mass demonstration on 14 May 1944.⁵²⁸ Years later, Driberg, a strong supporter of the Zionist movement, wrote that:

The odd thing was that we had pursued this matter in the House against the advice – almost the lachrymose pleading – of the official spokesmen (BOD) of the Jewish community in Britain. They felt that any publicity about this might lead to more anti-Semitism... ⁵²⁹

The Polish Ambassador in London Count Edward Raczyński was ‘enraged’ by the ‘witchhunt against Polish anti-Semitism’ and shared his outrage over lunch with Churchill, who wrote to Eden:

What is this amnesty that is to be made by the Poles? Is it about Jewish deserters? ... I do not like people who desert on the eve of the battle and I believe there has been some Communist intrigue behind all this to discredit the Polish division. ⁵³⁰

The General Jewish Workers Union – The Bund

In December 1938 the anti-Zionist Jewish Bund received the largest percentage of the Jewish vote in the municipal elections. These were Poland’s last free elections. In 89 towns, one-third elected Bund majorities.⁵³¹

In Warsaw the Bund won 62% of the vote, taking 17 of the 20 Jewish council seats. In Łódź they won 57% (11 of the 17).⁵³² Together with the Polish Socialist Party, the Left was victorious in Warsaw, Łódź, Lwów, Piotrków, Kraków, Białystok, Grodno and Vilnius:⁵³³ ‘One of the most striking features of the elections was the emergence of the Bund as the dominant political force in the Jewish community.’ ⁵³⁴

When on 26 September 1937 the Naras bombed the Bund’s offices they replied with the Group of 30, so-called because 10 each from the PPS, the Bund and Left 385

Poalei Zion attacked the fascists’ HQ. In March 1938 the Bund organised a two-day strike against ghetto benches in the universities and schools.⁵³⁵ In

October 1941, on the Bund's 44th anniversary, over 2,000 people took part in celebrations in Warsaw, despite the Nazi terror.[536](#)

With its daily papers and kitchens 'the only underground political organisation of significance soon after the German occupation was the Bund, with its centre in Warsaw'.[537](#) It formed a socialist Red Cross which provided hide-outs for those hunted by the Nazis. The Bund:

reactivated its pre-war militia. As the major militia among the Jewish parties... the Bund functioned also as a pan-Jewish defense group in Poland against anti-Semitic violence and hooligans.

Polish Zionism

The Zionist movement had a substantial political following in the 1920s. In the 1930s, as anti-Semitism increased it fell away. Isaac Deutscher wrote that:

The most fanatical enemies of Zionism were precisely the workers.... To them anti-Semitism seemed to triumph in Zionism, which recognised the legitimacy and the validity of the old cry 'Jews get out!' The Zionists were agreeing to get out. [538](#)

When the Nazis invaded Poland the Revisionist Zionist leaders fled. Betar's world headquarters complained that its leader Menachem Begin had abandoned the movement. The Revisionists 'had little concern for the movement that had been left behind. Their eyes were on Palestine.' [539](#)

The Revisionists sent hundreds of members of Betar to work as farming labourers on abandoned Polish farms in the summer of 1941. It was a betrayal of Poles deported as slave labour to Germany. 'The Nazis left them alone until June 1942, shortly before the first *Aktion* in Warsaw.' [540](#) The few thousand members of the Hechalutz groups had more pressing matters than resistance. Most retained their kibbutzim which operated in Warsaw, Zagłębia, Kielce, Lublin, Radom, Hrubieszów and Częstochowa.[541](#)

The Polish Holocaust

Nazi policy towards the Jews until 1941 was expulsion, not extermination.[542](#) The Poles feared that they would soon be joining the Jews. The Nazis toyed with the idea of getting rid of the Poles. They decided to make Lublin a city for Germans. Rumours spread that they were going to be "resettled" beyond the Bug and turned into soap.[543](#)

On 21 May 1942 the Bund sent a report to London describing the murder of 700,000 Jews by the Nazis.[544](#) The report reached London later that month. It warned that 'millions of Jewish citizens of Poland face the threat of immediate extermination.' [545](#) Included were thousands of negatives, many of which had been taken in the Warsaw Ghetto. Sven Norrman, a Swedish businessman, had

photographed examples of violence against Jews in October 1939 in Wloclawek, the first European town where the Yellow Star was made compulsory.

This was the first time that such detailed evidence of Nazi war crimes had been seen. As a result seven Swedish businessmen were arrested and four were sentenced to death. On the intervention of King Gustav of Sweden they were pardoned and released in September 1944.⁵⁴⁶ The Nazis could not afford to antagonize the Swedes, upon whom they relied for much of their iron and steel.

On 9 June Polish Prime Minister Wladyslaw Sikorski broadcast details of the Holocaust on the BBC.⁵⁴⁷ It was covered by the *Daily Telegraph*.⁵⁴⁸ It said that the Germans had 'embarked on the physical extermination of the Jewish population' of Poland.⁵⁴⁹ The Polish Government-in-Exile published a Black Report describing the actions of the Einsatzgruppen in Eastern Galicia and the exterminations by gas vans in Western Poland.⁵⁵⁰

The Polish Government nonetheless played down the extent of the catastrophe, refusing to believe that Poland's Jews were being deliberately exterminated. At a press conference on 9 July Deputy Prime Minister Stanislaw Mikolajczyk preferred a figure of 'more than 200,000' to the Bund's 700,000.⁵⁵¹

Schwarzbart warned, in an unpublished letter to the JC, that 'every exaggeration in rounding up figures is not only needless but irresponsible'.⁵⁵² The Bund's Report stated that:

From the day the Russo-German war broke out, the Germans embarked on the physical extermination of the Jewish population on Polish soil, making use of the Ukrainians and the Lithuanian fascists for this job.⁵⁵³

Warsaw

In Warsaw, 98% of Jews and 25% of Poles were murdered.⁵⁵⁴ The number of Jews who lived at one time on the 'Aryan' side of Warsaw was estimated at 28,000.⁵⁵⁵ Ringleblum estimated in Oneg Shabbat, the secret archives that he compiled, that at least 10,000-15,000 non-Jews in Warsaw were helping Jews to hide.⁵⁵⁶

Poland was the only Nazi-occupied country where the death penalty was automatically imposed for sheltering a Jew.⁵⁵⁷ About 700 Poles were executed as a result.⁵⁵⁸ The Catholic Church in December 1942 offered, at some considerable risk, to save several hundred Jewish children, by placing them in convents.⁵⁵⁹ Ringleblum noted in his diary of 31 December 1940 that priests in all of Warsaw's churches urged their parishioners to bury their anti-Semitism in the fight against the common enemy.⁵⁶⁰

In Warsaw, but for the Uprising and the Hotel Polski affair, the attrition rate of Warsaw Jewry in hiding would have been the same as in Western Europe, about 2.2% per month. Hotel Polski was a massive entrapment scheme which caught over 3,000 Jews who were enticed out of hiding on the promise of being exchanged for German captives.⁵⁶¹

Ringleblum wrote in October 1940 about how, when students from Konarski's high school started beating Jews on the street, it was other Christians who stood up to them. 'Sympathetic bonds arose from common oppression.' Ringleblum also reported that when the Jews were incarcerated in the ghetto, Jewish businessmen often received gift packages, bread and flowers, from their Christian associates. 'This is a mass phenomenon.'⁵⁶²

German Colonisation

Himmler set out his ideas on screening out the 'ethnic mush', some 23 million people in the Incorporated Territories and the Generalgouvernement [GG]], in May 1940 in 'Some Thoughts on the Treatment of Alien Populations in the East.' The aim was 'to fish out... the racially valuable' and to resettle the *Volksdeutsche* in the Warthegau. However, given the lack of German colonists, it was enough to proclaim one's wish to be German to be accepted as an Aryan.⁵⁶³

Following an order from Heydrich of 28 November 1939 that 80,000 Jews and Poles be expelled from the Warthegau, 87,833 Jews were expelled by 17 December.⁵⁶⁴ 350,000 Jews; 8 % of the population of the Warthegau were Jewish. Pressure for deportation came from Berlin not locally or from Łódź.⁵⁶⁵ Even before the deportation of the Jews of the Łódź Ghetto to Chelmnno, mass killings of Jews in the southern part of the Warthegau were occurring.⁵⁶⁶

On 16 July 1941 Rolf-Heinz Hoppner, the head of the SD in Poznań, suggested to Eichmann that Jews in the Warthegau be concentrated in a huge camp next to the coalfields. It suggested that the 'most humane solution' would be to eliminate those Jews incapable of working.⁵⁶⁷

Despite the assertion of Higher SS and Police chief Wilhelm Koppe that the killings were a result of a Fuhrer Order, all the evidence suggests that the order to begin killing Jews came from Arthur Greiser, the Gauleiter of the Warthegau. Likewise in Lithuania, the scene of the first mass murders, none of the killing orders or situation reports make any mention of a *Fuhrerbefehl*. The 'will' or 'wish' of Hitler was sufficient.⁵⁶⁸

At the Wannsee conference Secretary of State Josef Buhler asked that the Final Solution begin in the GG because only a small proportion of Jews were

'mobilised for labour.'⁵⁶⁹ The Holocaust in Poland, which began with OB in June 1941, continued relentlessly during 1942. In July 1942 Himmler ordered that the GG be cleared of Jews by the end of 1942,⁵⁷⁰ when about 600,000 Jews remained in Poland.⁵⁷¹ By the end of the war it is estimated that the number of Jews surviving in the countryside was no more than 15,000 though other estimates put it as high as 100,000.⁵⁷²

Turkey

Turkey was neutral in the Second World War. It did not encourage, at least until late into the war, the immigration of Jewish refugees. However many of its diplomats abroad did their best to rescue Jews of Turkish origin in the countries where they were based. One such was the Turkish Ambassador in France, Behiç Erkin who saved over 400 Turkish Jews. Eventually after German pressure, Erkin was recalled in June 1943.

Between 15 March 1943 and 23 May 1944 the Turkish Embassy in Vichy organised at least eight groups of 53 Jews to return to Turkey. Germany later announced that after 31 January 1944 Turkish Jews would be treated like German Jews.

Another Turkish diplomat who went out of his way to save Jews was Ismail Necdet Kent, consul-general in Marseilles between 1941 and 1944. Kent gave dozens of passports to Turkish Jews living in France. When in 1943 he learnt that 80 Turkish Jews had been loaded onto a deportation train he jumped on himself and refused to get off until everyone had been unloaded.⁵⁷³

Tunisia

Vichy policy towards Jews in its colonies, especially Northern Africa, was hostile. Attempts to Aryanise and dismiss the Jews of Tunisia from the civil service ran into a roadblock. The Italian army insisted on protecting the 5,000 Italian Jews in Tunisia. Until German troops landed in November 1942 there was no progress in anti-Jewish measures.⁵⁷⁴

In November 1942 the Nazis occupied Vichy France and the Protectorate of Tunisia for six months. The Jewish leadership was immediately arrested. However, the Italians in Tunisia were opposed to any deportations and the SS had to accept a forced labour system. On the island of Djerba, 4,500 Jews lived in two ghettos. Under threat of bombardment the Nazis extorted 47 kg of gold but when they departed, 80,000 Jews were left untouched.⁵⁷⁵

In their six months of rule the Nazis presided over a reign of terror but the Tunisians were opposed to attempts to organise pogroms and hostile to the Nazis' anti-Semitism. Walter Rauff, of Eichmann's Judenkommando, intended to build an extermination camp at Kairoun but ran out of time when Tunisia was liberated on 7 May 1943. [576](#)

Some 1% of Tunisia's Jews died compared to over 90% in Poland and the Baltic states. This was, at least in part, due to the hostility of the Arabs to the Final Solution.

- [1](#) Marion Woolfson, p. 198.
- [2](#) Beit Zvi, p. 203.
- [3](#) Hilberg, p. 448 citing *Goebbels Diaries* 6.3.43., p. 276.
- [4](#) *Ibid.* p. 1124.
- [5](#) Jewish Population of Europe Before the Holocaust. <https://tinyurl.com/d6sknz>
- [6](#) The figure of six million exterminated was from Eichmann, as cited by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, 30.9.46. The original estimate by the Institute of Jewish Affairs was 5.6 million, assuming that there had been 2.1m Jews in the Soviet area of whom 50% had been evacuated, and 30,000 survivors. Hilberg, p. 1321 estimated that 5.1 million were murdered.
- [7](#) Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p. 534, estimates that the bulk of the three million Jews of pre-war Russia escaped into the Russian interior as well as a 'very large proportion of the 1,800,000 Jews of the annexed territories,' p. 241. Porat, p. 27, cites Eliyahu Dobkin that a million Jews were saved, as well as hundreds of thousands who fled from Poland to Russia in 1939. More had been transferred by the USSR from areas bordering Germany on the eve of the invasion in June 1941. Hilberg, pp. 295, 353, 1307, 1310 estimates that 1.5 million Russian Jews fled before the German army arrived.
- [8](#) Wasserstein, p. 41.
- [9](#) Begin, *The Revolt*, p.13, 1953.
- [10](#) Hilberg, p. 353.
- [11](#) Yaacov Lozowick & Rollbahn Mord: *The Early Activities of Einsatzgruppe 'C'*, p. 234. Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, p. 299. Dnepropetrovsk, with a prewar Jewish population of 100,000, was reduced to 30,000, an estimate that later proved too high. In Chernigov, only 309 out of 10,000 Jews remained.
- [12](#) Alexander Prusin, *A Community of Violence*, p. 7.
- [13](#) Hilberg, p. 353 citing RSHA IV-A-1, Operational Report USSR, number 81, 21.9.41.
- [14](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1311.
- [15](#) Norman Davies, p. 265.
- [16](#) Hilberg, pp. 324-5.
- [17](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1,105.
- [18](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 415.
- [19](#) Bauer, Review: Three Books of Crucial Importance, p. 301.
- [20](#) Wasserstein, p. 140.
- [21](#) Konrad Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 12.
- [22](#) Deutscher, p. 78.
- [23](#) Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*, p. 171, citing William Perl, *The Four Front War*, p. 349.
- [24](#) Rein, p. 388.
- [25](#) Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader*, p. 93. Round-up Report, Einsatzgruppen A to October 15, 1941.
- [26](#) Professor John-Paul Himka, *The Incomprehensible Holocaust: An Exchange*, New York Review of Books, 28.9.89., citing Bauer, *History of the Holocaust* pp. 184-5. <https://tinyurl.com/y6a6ktqo>

- [27](#) Browning, *Ordinary Men—Reserve Police Battalion 101* pp. 57-8. Hilberg, pp. 1098-9.
- [28](#) Jurgen Matthaus, p. 230.
- [29](#) Leonid Rein, Local Collaboration in the Execution of the Final Solution, pp. 387, 389-90, 393.
- [30](#) Lozowick & Mord, The Early Activities of Einsatzgruppe 'C', p. 235.
- [31](#) Hilberg, p. 354.
- [32](#) Ibid., p. 323.
- [33](#) Ibid., pp. 320-21.
- [34](#) Friedlander, p. 243.
- [35](#) Hilberg, pp. 316-7.
- [36](#) Ibid., p. 331.
- [37](#) Leonid Rein, Local Collaboration in the Execution of the Final Solution, p. 395.
- [38](#) Michael McQueen, *The Context of Mass Destruction and Prerequisites of the Holocaust in Lithuania*, p. 41, fn. 2. McQueen estimates that 10,000 Jews escaped to Russia. There are wildly differing estimates (see below) of how many Jews died in Lithuania from 130,000 in *Ha'aretz* to 168,000 by Yad Vashem.
- [39](#) Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 4. The figure of 8,000 Jews surviving out of 220,00 should be treated with caution.
- [40](#) Saulius Sužiedėlis, Lithuanian Collaboration during the Second World War, p. 156.
- [41](#) Jurgen Matthaus, *Controlled Escalation*, p.230.
- [42](#) McQueen, *The Context of Mass Destruction and Prerequisites of the Holocaust in Lithuania*, p. 39.
- [43](#) Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 14.
- [44](#) McQueen, *The Context of Mass Destruction and Prerequisites of the Holocaust in Lithuania*, p. 35.
- [45](#) Adam Kirsch reviewing Timothy Snyder's *The Bloodlands*, *The Tablet*, 30.11.10. <https://tinyurl.com/yyn62ap>
- [46](#) Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 14.
- [47](#) The Kovno Garage Massacre. <https://tinyurl.com/u4327o8>
- [48](#) Sužiedėlis, Lithuanian Collaboration during the Second World War, pp 155-6.
- [49](#) Breitman, Himmler and the Terrible 'Secret', pp. 436-7.
- [50](#) Sužiedėlis, Lithuanian Collaboration during the Second World War, pp. 154-5.
- [51](#) Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 11.
- [52](#) Ibid., p. 13.
- [53](#) Sužiedėlis, Lithuanian Collaboration during the Second World War, pp. 156-7.
- [54](#) Ibid., p. 154.
- [55](#) Matthaus, p. 223.
- [56](#) Steinberg, German Civil Administration in the Occupied Soviet Union, 1941-4, p. 640.
- [57](#) Jon Seligman, War Crimes - The Investigation of the Holocaust in Kretinga, <https://tinyurl.com/2p8ku8nn>
- [58](#) Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 19.
- [59](#) Saulius Sužiedėlis, Lithuanian Collaboration during the Second World War, pp. 158-60. This is true also of Ukraine.

- [60](#) Grant Cochlin, 'Will Lithuania continue to honor Nazi collaborators?' *Jerusalem Post*, 20.8.15. <https://tinyurl.com/y2llo7cy>
- [61](#) Lithuanian court rejects lawsuit against state honors for Nazi collaborator, *ToI*, 27.3.19. <https://tinyurl.com/y2lere6t>
- [62](#) Andrew Higgins, 'Nazi Collaborator or National Hero? A Test for Lithuania, *NYT*, 10.9.18. <https://tinyurl.com/vmfjvuq>
- [63](#) 'Netanyahu scorned for wooing Holocaust-distorting allies', *ToI*, 31.1.19. <https://tinyurl.com/wl36p2l>
- [64](#) Sylvia Foti, 'My grandfather wasn't a Nazi-fighting war hero — he was a brutal collaborator', *Salon*, 14.7.18. <https://tinyurl.com/tq74t96>.
- [65](#) In Search of the Truth: Sylvia Foti Investigates Jonas Noreika, <https://silviafoti.com/>
- [66](#) Andrew Higgins, 'Nazi Collaborator or National Hero?' *NYT*, 10.9.18. <https://tinyurl.com/vmfjvuq>
- [67](#) *Ibid.*, <https://tinyurl.com/vmfjvuq>
- [68](#) YIVO Encyclopedia, Latvia <https://tinyurl.com/y4ce3fog>
- [69](#) German occupation of Latvia, 1941-1944. <https://tinyurl.com/y4kfa4dj>
- [70](#) Edward Anders, *Who Died in the Holocaust?* pp. 114-15.
- [71](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, pp. 368-9.
- [72](#) Sužiedėlis, p. 248. Review of *The Holocaust in Latvia, 1941-1944* by Andrew Ezergailis,
- [73](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution* p. 427.
- [74](#) Sužiedėlis pp. 248-9. Review of *The Holocaust in Latvia, 1941-1944* by Andrew Ezergailis.
- [75](#) Hilberg, p. 331.
- [76](#) The American Jewish Yearbook 1946 estimates there were 9,739,200 whereas Dawidowicz gives a figure of 8,861,000. The Pew Research Centre estimates there were 9.5 million Jews in 1939. <https://tinyurl.com/uja59fm>
- [77](#) Arendt described the total number of Jewish victims as 'a guess', anywhere between 4.5 and 6 million, *Eichmann in Jerusalem – A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Note to the Reader.
- [78](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 168.
- [79](#) Hilberg, p. 811.
- [80](#) Dorohoi pogrom, <https://tinyurl.com/y6bxf9y>
- [81](#) Jean Ancel, The "Christian" Regimes of Romania and the Jews, 1940-1942, pp. 14, 16.
- [82](#) Vladimir Solonar, The Romanian Policy of Ethnic Cleansing during World War II, pp. 268-9, 273.
- [83](#) Radu Ioanid, The Pogrom of Bucharest 21-23 January 1941, p. 376.
- [84](#) Ancel, The German-Romanian Relationship and the Final Solution, pp. 2523.
- [85](#) The Iasi Pogrom <https://tinyurl.com/y4mv4uxt>
- [86](#) The Holocaust: Facts and Figures, *Ha'aretz* 24.7.13. <https://tinyurl.com/rb4r9xx>
- [87](#) Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews 1933-45*, Appendix B, p. 480.
- [88](#) The 'Final Solution': Estimated Number of Jews Killed <https://tinyurl.com/yab9ebzz>
- [89](#) Raul Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, pp. 1,128, 1,321.
- [90](#) <https://tinyurl.com/yab9ebzz>

- ⁹¹ According to YV, of Luxembourg's pre-war population of 3,500, 1,950 were murdered, i.e. 55.7%, yet the percentage given is only 20%. A clear arithmetical mistake.
- ⁹² Reitlinger, pp. 430-1.
- ⁹³ Ancel, *The German-Romanian Relationship*, p. 256.
- ⁹⁴ Ioanid, *The Pogrom of Bucharest 21-23 January 1941*, p. 374.
- ⁹⁵ Ancel, p. 255, *Romania Virtual Jewish History Tour: Community During World War II*, pp. 14, 16. <https://tinyurl.com/yyc2wd7l>
- ⁹⁶ Vladimir Solonar, *The Romanian Policy of Ethnic Cleansing during World War II*, pp. 275-6, 279. Hilberg, p. 824. Dennis Deletant, *Ghetto Experience in Golta*, p. 2, gives a figure of 147,000 Jews of whom at least 90,000 died. Solonar also gives a figure of 147,300, *The Romanian Policy of Ethnic Cleansing during World War II*, pp. 275-6, 279.
- ⁹⁷ Ioanid, *The Pogrom of Bucharest 21-23 January 1941*, p. 374, states that at least 70,000 Jews were killed or died in the deportation to Transnistria.
- ⁹⁸ Ancel, 'The Christian' Regimes of Romania and the Jews, p. 24.
- ⁹⁹ Dov Levin & Theodor Lavi, *The Jews of Bessarabia – The Holocaust Period*, <https://tinyurl.com/y6hvgjnx> History of the Jews in Bessarabia, <https://tinyurl.com/yeygbbme>. Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania*, p. 172, estimates that 124,000 Jews – 81,000 from Bessarabia and 43,000 from Bukovina, left with Soviet forces, cited by Deletant, *Ghetto Experience in Golta*, p. 20.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ancel, 'The Christian 'Regimes' of Romania', pp. 19-22.
- ¹⁰¹ Obituary, Alexander Safran, *The Independent*, 30.7.06, <https://tinyurl.com/yx9qaz33>
- ¹⁰² Ancel, *The Christian 'Regimes' of Romania*, pp. 25-6. See also "The Survival of the Romanian Jews, <http://www.romanianjewish.org/en/cap8.html>
- ¹⁰³ Steinberg, p. 314.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, fn. 2, p. 320.
- ¹⁰⁵ Arendt, p. 191, citing Hilberg.
- ¹⁰⁶ Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, pp. 292-3. Ancel, p. 260. Steinberg put the number of dead at 80,000, p. 314.
- ¹⁰⁷ Romania, US Holocaust Museum, <https://tinyurl.com/6ot6toa> See also *The Holocaust in Romania* <https://tinyurl.com/9zbhw7n>
- ¹⁰⁸ Hilberg, pp. 830-1.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Encyclopedia Judaica*: Transnistria, <https://tinyurl.com/y36reabh>
- ¹¹⁰ Review, Robert Levy, 1941-1942: *Transnistria: The Romanian Mass Murder Campaigns*, Jean Ancel, Rachel Garfinkel and Karen Gold, pp. 424-9. Deletant, *Ghetto Experience in Golta*, fn 4, p. 20 estimates that of the 300,000 Ukrainian Jews, 150,000-200,000 left with the Soviet forces.
- ¹¹¹ Ancel, p. 261,
- ¹¹² Deletant, p. 19.
- ¹¹³ Hilberg, p. 839. The numbers weren't insignificant. There were 3,000 in France alone. [fn. 146]
- ¹¹⁴ Olivia Simion, p. 8.
- ¹¹⁵ Hilberg, p. 837.
- ¹¹⁶ Vargo, "The Centre of the Jews in Romania' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 296., citing Dr Lavi, Jerusalem, 7.6.76.

- [117](#) Vargo, 'The Centre of the Jews in Romania, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 295..
- [118](#) Weber, Regime Changes, Public Memory and the Pursuit of Justice: The Case of German-Speaking Jews in Bukovina (1920-1960), Ph D thesis, fn. 357, p. 173.
- [119](#) Ancel, The German-Romanian Relationship, p. 262.
- [120](#) Dov Levin & Theodor Lavi, Yizkor Book Project, <https://tinyurl.com/2venht2x>, *The Jews of Bessarabia - the Holocaust Period*
- [121](#) Hilberg, pp. 827-8.
- [122](#) Ibid., p. 809.
- [123](#) Ephraim Ofir, Was the Transnistria Plan Achievable?, p.5.
- [124](#) Hilberg, pp. 833-4.
- [125](#) Vargo, 'The Centre of the Jews in Romania,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 290.
- [126](#) Simion, The Romanian Jewish population under Antonescu governance, p. 8.
- [127](#) Hilberg, pp. 843, 845. See also Lecca, <https://tinyurl.com/y3ps6r3s>
- [128](#) Reitlinger, p.437.
- [129](#) Ancel, p. 263.
- [130](#) Simion, p. 9.
- [131](#) Lapidé, p. 165.
- [132](#) Hilberg, p. 847.
- [133](#) Marrus (ed.), *The Nazi Holocaust, Part 6: The Victims of the Holocaust*, p. 714. Vargo, *The Centre of Jews in Romania*, <https://tinyurl.com/y5StjvxN>
- [134](#) Fein, Accounting for Genocide, p. 171.
- [135](#) Vargo, Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945, p. 305.
- [136](#) Ofir, Was the Transnistria Plan Achievable? p. 10.
- [137](#) Jewish Currents, 15.2.2012, <https://tinyurl.com/yxwfhR5o>
- [138](#) Ofir, Was the Transnistria Plan Achievable?, p. 11.
- [139](#) Hecht, pp. 169-70.
- [140](#) Fein, Accounting for Genocide, p. 170.
- [141](#) Morse, pp. 79-86.
- [142](#) Hilberg, pp. 847-9, 851.
- [143](#) Vargo, 'The Centre of the Jews in Romania,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 307.
- [144](#) Adler, p. 1078.
- [145](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 312.
- [146](#) Fein, Accounting for Genocide, p. 111.
- [147](#) Adler, p. 1067.
- [148](#) Marrus & Paxton, The Nazis and the Jews in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1944, p.690.
- [149](#) Leni Yahil, 'The Jewish Leadership of France,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 322.
- [150](#) Griffioen and Zeller, p. 445.
- [151](#) Hilberg, pp. 666-7.
- [152](#) Josephs, pp. 45-6.
- [153](#) Steinberg, *Jewish Rescue Activities in Belgium and France*, <https://tinyurl.com/y54tuesn>.
- [154](#) Jacques Adler, p. 1073, The Jews and Vichy.

- [155](#) Marrus, *Jewish Leaders and the Holocaust*, p. 324. Yahil, 'The Jewish Leadership of France,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 329.
- [156](#) Hilberg, pp. 679, 681.
- [157](#) *Ibid.*, p. 685.
- [158](#) Josephs, p. 68.
- [159](#) Hilberg, p. 695.
- [160](#) Henry Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, p. 324.
- [161](#) Josephs, p.41.
- [162](#) Marrus, *Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust*, p. 95.
- [163](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 61, citing the testimony of George Wellers at the Eichmann trial, 5.9.61.
- [164](#) Hilberg, p. 679.
- [165](#) Felstiner, p. 31.
- [166](#) Josephs, p.12.
- [167](#) Hilberg, p. 677. Arendt, p. 163. Felstiner p. 31.
- [168](#) Griffioen and Zeller, p. 453.
- [169](#) Josephs, p. 72. <https://tinyurl.com/yyoxfxwg>
- [170](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 113. <https://tinyurl.com/ysav2wvy>
- [171](#) Griffioen and Zeller, p. 452.
- [172](#) Hilberg, p. 684. Stucki was also a delegate of the ICRC for France.
- [173](#) Renée Poznanski, *The Geopolitics of Jewish Resistance in France*, p. 246.
- [174](#) Josephs, *Swastika over Paris*, London: Bloomsbury, 1989, p. 167.
- [175](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 113.
- [176](#) Marrus, *Jewish Leaders and the Holocaust*, p. 316.
- [177](#) Poznanski, *The Geopolitics of Jewish Resistance in France*, pp. 256-8.
- [178](#) Adler, p. 1090.
- [179](#) Josephs, p. 12.
- [180](#) *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- [181](#) Poznanski, *The Geopolitics of Jewish Resistance in France*, pp. 251-2.
- [182](#) *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- [183](#) Hilberg, p. 651.
- [184](#) *Ibid.*, p. 689. Even the small state of Andorra in the Pyrenees was reported to be full of Jewish refugees. Steinberg estimated that up to 50,000 Jews found refuge in Spain. *Jewish Rescue Activities in Belgium and France*, YV, <https://tinyurl.com/y54tuesn>
- [185](#) Poznanski, *The Geopolitics of Jewish Resistance in France*, p. 254.
- [186](#) Hilberg pp. 690-2. Sergio Minerbi, *The Eichmann Trial Diary*, NY, p.76, 2011
- [187](#) Hilberg pp. 692-3.
- [188](#) Steinberg suggests their fascist loyalties had become weakened by this time. *Jewish Rescue Activities in Belgium and France*, Yad Vashem, <https://tinyurl.com/y54tuesn>
- [189](#) Felstiner, p. 29.
- [190](#) Griffioen and Zeller, p. 455.

- [191](#) Friedlander, p. 329. See also Michael Gross, *Jewish Rescue in Holland and France*, pp. 467, 470.
- [192](#) Felstiner, *Commandant of Drancy: Alois Brunner and the Jews of France*, pp. 22, 40, 41. Timeline of deportations of French Jews to death camps <https://tinyurl.com/yxrzfeas>
- [193](#) Felstiner, pp. 33, 34, 36.
- [194](#) Hilberg, p. 696.
- [195](#) Griffioen and Zeller, pp. 456-7.
- [196](#) Felstiner, p. 30.
- [197](#) Hilberg pp. 698-9, Marrus and Paxton, p. 714.
- [198](#) Sompolinsky, p. 132.
- [199](#) Arendt, pp. 164-5.
- [200](#) Hilberg, pp. 635-6. The numbers of those who are believed to survive differ wildly ranging from 25,000 (40%) to 65,000 (73%). See [Table 1](#).
- [201](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 157.
- [202](#) Steinberg, *Jewish Rescue Activities in Belgium and France*, <https://tinyurl.com/y54tuesn>
- [203](#) Kless, pp. 281-2.
- [204](#) Steinberg, 'The Trap of Legality,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p.354.
- [205](#) Hilberg, p. 641.
- [206](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 155.
- [207](#) Steinberg, 'The Trap of Legality – the Association of Jews in Belgium,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 358.
- [208](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution* p. 558.
- [209](#) Kless, pp. 277, 279, 280.
- [210](#) Steinberg, p. 133.
- [211](#) Kless, p. 277.
- [212](#) Hilberg p. 643, citing Klarsfeld and Steinberg, *Memorial*.
- [213](#) Arendt, p. 166.
- [214](#) Hilberg, pp. 639, 641.
- [215](#) Steinberg, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 360.
- [216](#) Hilberg, p. 642.
- [217](#) Steinberg, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 364.
- [218](#) *Ibid.*, p. 372.
- [219](#) *Ibid.*, p. 366.
- [220](#) Steinberg, *Jewish Rescue Activities in Belgium and France*, <https://tinyurl.com/y54tuesn>
- [221](#) Hilberg, p. 643.
- [222](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 157.
- [223](#) Friedlander, pp. 330-1.
- [224](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 322.
- [225](#) Steinberg, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 376.
- [226](#) Hilberg, pp. 644-5.
- [227](#) Kless, *The Rescue of Jewish Children in Belgium*, pp. 276, 284.
- [228](#) *The Destruction of the Jews of Luxembourg*, <https://tinyurl.com/ya66t49w>

- [229](#) Ruth Zariz, *The Jews of Luxembourg during the Second World War*, p. 55.
- [230](#) *Ibid.*, p. 51. Paul Dostert gives a figure of 3,900 Jews living in Luxembourg prior to the Nazi invasion. <https://tinyurl.com/y8nbf2qb>
- [231](#) Hilberg, p. 632.
- [232](#) Zariz, p. 58.
- [233](#) *Ibid.*, p. 59. Nathaniel Lodhi, *The deportation of Luxembourg's Jewish community during WWII*, suggests that 323 Jews were deported to Lodz (Litzmannstadt) <https://tinyurl.com/ydaklvcl>
- [234](#) *Holocaust Encyclopedia* – Luxembourg, USHMM, <https://tinyurl.com/yacamxkw>
- [235](#) Hilberg, pp. 634-5. The USHMM puts the number of survivors at 36 whereas Nathalie Lodhi, *The deportation of Luxembourg's Jewish community during WWII*, details seven deportation trains in which a total of 658 Jews were deported, of whom 44 survived, <https://tinyurl.com/ydaklvcl>.
- [236](#) *The Destruction of the Jews of Luxembourg* <https://tinyurl.com/ya66t49w>
- [237](#) Zariz, pp. 57-8, 60, 61.
- [238](#) *Ibid.*, p. 62, citing Edmond Mark, the head of the Consistoire after the war.
- [239](#) *Holocaust Encyclopedia* – Luxembourg, USHMM, <https://tinyurl.com/yacamxkw>
- [240](#) *The Destruction of the Jews of Luxembourg*, <https://tinyurl.com/ya66t49w>
- [241](#) Paul Dostert, "Luxembourg unter deutscher Besatzung 1940-45: Die Bevölkerung eines kleinen Landes zwischen Kollaboration und Widerstand", <https://tinyurl.com/y4xatsrm>
- [242](#) *The Destruction of the Jews of Luxembourg* <https://tinyurl.com/ya66t49w>
- [243](#) Mason, *Jews in the Occupied Netherlands*, p. 318.
- [244](#) Hilberg pp. 618-9, fn. 85, 619, fn. 139, 629.
- [245](#) Griffioen and Zeller, p. 446.
- [246](#) Griffioen and Zeller, *Anti-Jewish Policy*, p. 460, disputed this suggesting that differences between civilian and military administration 'were ultimately not of decisive importance.'
- [247](#) Marnix Croes, p. 476.
- [248](#) Hilberg, pp. 623-5.
- [249](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 1089-90. <https://tinyurl.com/y6em4kly>.
- [250](#) After another strike, Leiden University was closed by the Nazis for the duration of the Occupation. Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, p. 321.
- [251](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p.270.
- [252](#) Hilberg, p. 613. See Zowi Milanovi, 'Netherlands: 80 years since the February Strike', In *Defence*, 25 February 2021 <https://tinyurl.com/y8pezs5z>
- [253](#) According to Wally de Lang, 108 of the Jewish deportees were murdered at Hartheim Castle, one of six 'euthanasia' centres. 'Dutch Jews died in 'secret Nazi gas chamber' in 1941', <https://tinyurl.com/4adudkyb>
- [254](#) USHMM, *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, <https://tinyurl.com/yyhdkgk4h> The Amsterdam General Strike of February 1941. <https://tinyurl.com/yam8x2yd>
- [255](#) Hilberg, pp. 612-15, 645. Braham, fn. 8, p. 1054; Lapidé p. 199.
- [256](#) National Socialist Movement in the Netherlands, <https://tinyurl.com/y3d5kzc9>
- [257](#) Steinberg, *Not As a Lamb*, p. 159.
- [258](#) Hilberg, p. 631. Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, p. 327.

- [259](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 104.
- [260](#) *Ibid.*, p. 100.
- [261](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations: Jews in Occupied Netherlands*, p. 320.
- [262](#) *Ibid.*, p. 321.
- [263](#) *Ibid.*, p. 342.
- [264](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 104.
- [265](#) Formerly the National Bureau for War Documentation, <http://www.niod.nl/en/history>
- [266](#) Arendt, p. 169.
- [267](#) Marnix Croes, p. 478.
- [268](#) Arendt, p. 125.
- [269](#) *Ibid.*, p. 170. Lapidé (p. 263) suggested that 40,000 went into hiding, of whom 15,000 survived. Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations: Jews in the Occupied Netherlands*, p. 330 gives a figure of 18,500, of whom 4,500 were children.
- [270](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 286.
- [271](#) Croes, *The Holocaust in the Netherlands and the Rate of Jewish Survival*, p. 474.
- [272](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 484, 491.
- [273](#) Michael Gross, *Jewish Rescue in Holland and France*, pp. 467-70.
- [274](#) <https://tinyurl.com/y59ww3pe>, <https://tinyurl.com/y4w99rta>
- [275](#) Joseph Michman, 'The Jewish Council of Amsterdam', *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 252.
- [276](#) *Ibid.*, p. 248.
- [277](#) Hilberg, pp. 611-12.
- [278](#) Joseph Michman 'The Jewish Council of Amsterdam', *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 236.
- [279](#) Jacob Presser, *Ashes in the Wind*, Souvenir Press, 1968, p. 213.
- [280](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations: Jews in Occupied Netherlands*, p. 329.
- [281](#) Arendt, p. 125.
- [282](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations: Jews in Occupied Netherlands*, p. 332.
- [283](#) Mason, *Imponderables of the Holocaust*, p. 109.
- [284](#) Michman, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 256.
- [285](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations: Jews in Occupied Netherlands*, p. 340.
- [286](#) Presser, p. 264.
- [287](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 271.
- [288](#) *Ibid.*, p. 271.
- [289](#) Presser, p. 272.
- [290](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, pp. 334-335.
- [291](#) The Finnish government had broken the American code and was therefore well aware of the Final Solution in 1942. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 37.
- [292](#) Hilberg, p. 584 fn3.
- [293](#) William B Cohen and Jorgen Svensson, *Finland and the Holocaust*, pp. 72, 73, 76.
- [294](#) Arendt, p. 170.
- [295](#) Hilberg, p. 588.
- [296](#) Morse, pp. 66-7.
- [297](#) German invasion of Denmark (1940), <https://tinyurl.com/qm8wob3>

- [298](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 144.
- [299](#) Hans Kirchhoff, *Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust?* p. 466.
- [300](#) Gunnar S. Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, fn. 54, p. 464.
- [301](#) Kirchhoff, *Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust?* p. 468.
- [302](#) Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, p. 438.
- [303](#) *Ibid.*, p. 459.
- [304](#) Kirchhoff, *Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust?* p. 473, Paulsson, p. 438.
- [305](#) The Danish Trade Union Movement, *Equality and Diversity for More than 100 Years*, <https://tinyurl.com/y9dpxpovq>
- [306](#) The German occupation (1940-1945), National Museum of Denmark, <https://tinyurl.com/shwzq9s>
- [307](#) Although it is arguable that they already had comprehensive records and were merely updating them. Kirchhoff, p. 471.
- [308](#) Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, p. 447.
- [309](#) Hilberg, pp. 589-94, 597.
- [310](#) Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, pp. 438, 441, 449.
- [311](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 147.
- [312](#) Kirchhoff, pp. 471, 473. Marrus and Paxton, *The Nazis and the Jews*, p. 710, argue that Best wanted to deport the Jews but that he failed to gain the co-operation of the Wehrmacht, whose commander General Hannecken opposed the deportations.
- [313](#) Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, pp. 436-7, fn. 21, p. 462.
- [314](#) *Ibid.*, p. 452.
- [315](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 435-6.
- [316](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 451-2.
- [317](#) *Ibid.*, p. 454.
- [318](#) Kirchhoff, *Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust?* p. 468.
- [319](#) Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, fn. 54, p. 434-5, 454.
- [320](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, fn. 78, p. 339.
- [321](#) Hilberg, p. 598.
- [322](#) Kirchhoff, *Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust?* p. 475.
- [323](#) Paulsson, *The Bridge over the Øresund*, p. 460.
- [324](#) Kirchhoff, *Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust?* pp. 469, 476.
- [325](#) Arendt, pp. 173-5.
- [326](#) Friedlander, p. 106; Hilberg, p. 173.
- [327](#) Friedlander, p. 339.
- [328](#) Michaelis, *Mussolini and the Jews*, p. 13. On 4 June 1919, as part of his anti-Bolshevik campaign, Mussolini described Bolshevism as a worldwide Jewish conspiracy against the Aryan race. A year later he was declaring that 'contrary to general opinion, Bolshevism is not a Jewish phenomenon.' Steinberg, p. 58.
- [329](#) Michaelis, p. 11.
- [330](#) Peter Egill Brownfeld, *The Italian Holocaust: The Story of an Assimilated Jewish Community*, American Council for Judaism, <https://tinyurl.com/mymnu6k>
- [331](#) Michaelis, pp. 2334.

- [332](#) Hilberg, p. 704, fn. 6.
- [333](#) Michaelis, p. 24.
- [334](#) 'Weizmann Has Hour's Talk with Mussolini', *JTA*, 5.1.23. <https://tinyurl.com/yy9qkp9m>
- [335](#) Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, pp. 368-72. Weizmann claims to have met Mussolini on three occasions.
- [336](#) 'Bygone Days: Chaim Weizmann's tea with Mussolini,' *Jerusalem Post*, 23.1.08. <https://tinyurl.com/y5nexplvz>
- [337](#) Michaelis, p.32.
- [338](#) Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*, p. 40, citing Michael Ledeen, 'Italian Jews and Fascism' *Judaism* (Summer 1969), p. 286.
- [339](#) Dan Tamir, *Hebrew fascism in Palestine 1922-1942*, University of Zurich, 2012. <https://tinyurl.com/y5n949xu>
- [340](#) Eric Kaplan, 2005. *The Jewish Radical Right: Revisionist Zionism and Its Ideological Legacy*. University of Wisconsin Press cited in Betar Naval Academy <https://tinyurl.com/yy2623oz>
- [341](#) Michaelis, p. 69. See also Weinstock, p. 151.
- [342](#) Brenner, p. 117. See Betar Naval Academy. <https://tinyurl.com/y5n949xu>
- [343](#) Felice, p. 262, *Israeli Navy Creation & The Civitavecchia Maritime School*. <https://tinyurl.com/y4vnpwl8>.
- [344](#) Steinberg, 'Not As a Lamb', p. 58. See Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, p. 376. Brenner, p. 197. <https://tinyurl.com/y2st4o2v> Yonathan Shapiro, *The Road to Power: Herut Party in Israel*, p. 36.
- [345](#) Arens, *ZZW in the Warsaw Ghetto*, p. 214.
- [346](#) Michaelis, pp. 101-2. Mussolini stated that the enactment of the anti-Semitic racial laws of 1938 were no more than a logical extension of the racial laws enacted in Ethiopia.
- [347](#) Michaelis, pp. 158-9, suggests that Mussolini's anti-Semitism policy waxed and waned according to his relations with the Nazis. He intervened in favour of persecuted Jewish spouses of Italians, pp. 282-3.
- [348](#) Hilberg pp. 705-6.
- [349](#) Michaelis, p. 235.
- [350](#) *Ibid.*, p. 239.
- [351](#) See Joshua D. Zimmerman (ed.), *Introduction to Jews in Italy*, <https://tinyurl.com/4jfydc>.
- [352](#) Hilberg, p. 710.
- [353](#) Edward Alexander, *The Holocaust: History and the War of Ideas*, London: Transaction Books, p. 116, 1994.
- [354](#) Hilberg, pp. 1084-5.
- [355](#) <https://tinyurl.com/Sp4j4u>
- [356](#) Hilberg, p.722.
- [357](#) *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, Italy, <https://tinyurl.com/35ruhut> Zimmerman in *Jews in Italy under Fascist and Nazi rule* and Susan Zuccotti *The Italians and the Holocaust: Persecution, Rescue, Survival*, argue that there was far greater participation of Italians in the persecution, rounding up and deportation of the Jews.
- [358](#) Hilberg, pp. 717-8.
- [359](#) *Ibid.*, p. 723.

- [360](#) Ibid., p. 713.
- [361](#) Arendt, p. 203.
- [362](#) Hilberg, fn 12, p. 769. Between 14.3.39 and the end of 1941 more than 7,000 Jews emigrated and several thousand converted to Christianity. They weren't counted in the census of 1940.
- [363](#) Judenrate and Other Representative Bodies, <https://tinyurl.com/td542c>. See Linn, p. 24.
- [364](#) Hilberg, p. 779. 'The Central Jewish Council was drawn into the operation with all of its resources.'
- [365](#) Livia Rothkirchen, The Dual Role of the 'Jewish Centre' in Slovakia, cited by Marrus, The History of the Holocaust, p. 152.
- [366](#) Beit Zvi, p. 290.
- [367](#) Hilberg, p. 776.
- [368](#) Lapide, p.148.
- [369](#) Ibid., p.141.
- [370](#) Hilberg, pp. 778-9. The Vatican Secretary of State to the Slovak legation on 14.3.42 expressed anxiety about the imminent expulsion of Jews to Galicia and Lublin without regard to religious adherence.
- [371](#) Lapide, p. 142.
- [372](#) Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows*, p. 101, argues that the Vatican's record in Slovakia was 'dismal' and that the resistance of the Slovakian government to the deportations was on account of 'well placed bribes,' betraying an ignorance of the crucial role of the Vatican and Burzio.
- [373](#) Hilberg, pp. 784-5.
- [374](#) Buchler, pp. 160-2.
- [375](#) Fatran, *The Working Group*, p. 182.
- [376](#) Hilberg, p. 781. Memo 22.12.43.
- [377](#) Sedivy performed 792 baptisms in 1942. He was imprisoned and tortured, dying in 1944. <https://tinyurl.com/2p9bc6j9>
- [378](#) Hilberg, *Destruction of European Jews*, pp. 778-82.
- [379](#) Rothkirchen, 'The "Jewish Centre" in Slovakia,' *Patterns*, p. 221.
- [380](#) The Holocaust in Slovakia, <https://tinyurl.com/yy9hlepy>, Hilberg pp. 783, 785. In the 1940 census the number of Jews was estimated at 88,000 with another 10,000 Christian Jews.
- [381](#) Hilberg, pp. 782-3.
- [382](#) Hilberg, *Destruction*, pp. 786-7, citing Affidavit by Hans Gmelin, a member of the German legation in Bratislava, NG-5291 (Government documents Nuremberg. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 141.
- [383](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 56.
- [384](#) Beit Zvi, p. 69.
- [385](#) Shonfeld, *Holocaust Victims Accuse*, pp. 75-81, based on Weissmandel's *Min HaMitzar* (I Accuse – From the Depths). It is cavalier with the truth, e.g. there is no mention of Weissmandel's letter to Rabbi Freudiger saying that they could trust Wisliceny. It fails to mention that Weissmandel and Fleischmann were members of the Slovakian Judenrat.
- [386](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale?*, pp. 78-9.

- [387](#) S Beit Zvi, p. 292.
- [388](#) Braham describe as ‘totally false’ the idea that bribes led to the ending of the deportations. Weissmandel only established contact with Wisliceny around June-July 1942. *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p. 41.
- [389](#) Rothkirchen, “The “Jewish Centre” in Slovakia, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 221. “The truth is that the “Group” was an offshoot of the official establishment...’ and that ‘it is not always possible to draw a clear line of demarcation between the activities of the two groups.’
- [390](#) Lob, p. 229. For a contrary view see S Beit Zvi, who claims that Himmler was supportive of the Europa Plan, pp. 290-99; Braham, p. 702.
- [391](#) Gila Fatran, *The Working Group*, pp. 175-6.
- [392](#) Braham, *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p. 43.
- [393](#) Linn, p. 25.
- [394](#) Vrba, *I Cannot Forgive*, pp. 370-1.
- [395](#) Braham, *Rescue Operations in Hungary*, p. 44. Even Kasztner was to admit in a debriefing that, apart from Wisliceny, the SS leaders were ‘completely incorruptible’. FBI Intelligence Report fn. 39.
- [396](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 230.
- [397](#) *Ibid.*, pp.230, 235, 239.
- [398](#) Linn, p. 76.
- [399](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, p. 73.
- [400](#) Rothkirchen, ‘The Jewish Centre in Slovakia,’ *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 222.
- [401](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, pp. 70-1.
- [402](#) Hilberg, *Destruction*, p. 780.
- [403](#) Bauer, *Jews for Sale*, p. 73. British POWs weren’t being singled out for extermination and they were covered by the Geneva Convention.
- [404](#) Kulka, *Attempts by Jewish Escapees to Stop Extermination*, p. 304.
- [405](#) Linn, p. 67 describing Kulka’s view.
- [406](#) Rothkirchen, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933-1945*, p. 219.
- [407](#) Kasztner wrote of the Slovakian deportations that ‘we would have liked to save from deportation at least the leaders of the Vaada, who for years... had performed outstanding work.’ *Kasztner Report*, p. 212.
- [408](#) Linn, p. 80, citing Juraj Spitzer, *I Did not Want to be a Jew*, pp. 119, 1997.
- [409](#) Gila Fatran, *The ‘Working Group’*, p. 192.
- [410](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, pp. 183-4.
- [411](#) Fatran, *The Working Group*, p. 190.
- [412](#) Linn, p. 91 citing *Leadership under Duress: The Working Group in Slovakia, 1942-1944*, pp. 11–12 (Hebrew).
- [413](#) Gisi Fleischmann was deported to Auschwitz where she was murdered immediately on arrival. Weissmandel was put on an Auschwitz-bound train but he escaped.
- [414](#) Hilberg, pp. 789-92.
- [415](#) Aristotle Kallis, *The Jewish Community of Salonika under Siege*, pp. 39-40, 43.
- [416](#) *The Holocaust in Greece*, USHMM, <https://tinyurl.com/38a2ha47>.

- [417](#) Paul Isaac Hagouel, *The Holocaust of Jewish Greeks and Jews of Thessaloniki*, fn. 21, <https://tinyurl.com/S4hecydv>. This figure is far lower than most estimates, see [Table 1](#).
- [418](#) Alan Rosenbaum, 'Greek Jewry and the Holocaust,' *Jerusalem Post*, 30.4.19. <https://tinyurl.com/wc6uw7n>
- [419](#) Kallis, *The Jewish Community of Salonika under Siege*, p. 51.
- [420](#) Minna Rozen, *Jews and Greeks Remember Their Past: The Political Career of Tzevi Koretz (1933–43)*, p. 128.
- [421](#) Apostolou, p. 175.
- [422](#) Gail Holst-Warhaft, p. 105.
- [423](#) Holst-Warhaft, *The Tragedy of the Greek Jews*, p. 100. <https://tinyurl.com/y2szjnh5>
- [424](#) Rozen, *Jews and Greeks Remember Their Past: The Political Career of Tzevi Koretz*, p. 134,
- [425](#) *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- [426](#) Andrew Apostolou, *The Exception of Salonika: Bystanders and Collaborators in Northern Greece*, p. 179.
- [427](#) Hilberg, p. 741.
- [428](#) Holst-Warhaft, p. 99.
- [429](#) Hilberg pp. 740, 745-6. Several thousand Jews escaped to the Italian sector or went into hiding.
- [430](#) Holst-Warhaft, p. 108 fn 2. Cecil Roth's *The Last Days of Jewish Salonika* blames Koretz for the community's destruction.
- [431](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 132.
- [432](#) Hilberg pp. 742-3;;Holst-Warhaft, pp. 101-2.
- [433](#) Michael Matsas, *The Illusion of Safety The Story of the Greek Jews During the Second World War*.
- [434](#) Holst-Warhaft, p. 105.
- [435](#) Braham p. 1091. Hilberg pp. 746-8.
- [436](#) Wasserstein pp. 237-8.
- [437](#) Joseph Ben, 'Jewish Leadership in Greece During the Holocaust,' *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 347.
- [438](#) Hilberg pp. 744-5. Koretz survived to see liberation only to die shortly after from typhus.
- [439](#) Helen Fein, pp.117-118.
- [440](#) Gregory Pappas, *Three Greek Orthodox Christian Hierarchs Who Tried to Stop the Holocaust in Their Country*, <https://tinyurl.com/5886eyyt>
- [441](#) Holst-Warhaft, p. 106.
- [442](#) Joseph Ben, 'Jewish Leadership in Greece During the Holocaust,' *Patterns*, p. 352.
- [443](#) Holst-Warhaft, p. 105. USHMM puts the figure as high as 66%. <https://tinyurl.com/38a2ha47>
- [444](#) Apostolou, pp. 165-6.
- [445](#) *The Holocaust in Greece*, USHMM. <https://tinyurl.com/38a2ha47>
- [446](#) Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, pp. 137-8, 143.
- [447](#) Hilberg, pp. 749-51.
- [448](#) *Ibid.*, p. 755.
- [449](#) Apostolou, p. 181.

- [450](#) Alan Rosenbaum, 'Greek Jewry and the Holocaust,' *Jerusalem Post*, 30.4.19. <https://tinyurl.com/wc6uw7n>
- [451](#) Damir Mirković, Victims and Perpetrators in the Yugoslav Genocide 1941-1945, pp. 319-20.
- [452](#) Hilberg, p. 724.
- [453](#) Michael Sells, *Holocaust Abuse*, p. 747.
- [454](#) Mirković, Victims and Perpetrators in the Yugoslav Genocide 1941-1945, pp. 321, 326.
- [455](#) *Ibid.*, p. 326.
- [456](#) Independent State of Croatia, <https://tinyurl.com/yzyz3mg>, Hilberg p. 757.
- [457](#) Hilberg, Destruction of the European Jews, p. 757.
- [458](#) Arendt, p. 184; Hilberg p. 765.
- [459](#) Hilberg, p. 757. See also Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 105.
- [460](#) Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy*; Collins: London (1986), p. 147.
- [461](#) Mirković, fn. 39, p. 331.
- [462](#) When he was put on trial for collaboration Stepinac received support from the West. <https://tinyurl.com/y8jtz59b> See also 'Vatican OKs miracle for Croatian called traitor by Jews,' *ToI*, 14.2.14., <https://tinyurl.com/1537umk>
- [463](#) Mirković, p. 327.
- [464](#) Fein, pp. 103-4.
- [465](#) Jasenovac concentration camp. <https://tinyurl.com/yupvn7>
- [466](#) Hilberg, p. 761.
- [467](#) The Holocaust in the Independent State of Croatia, <https://tinyurl.com/yxjvo8nf>
- [468](#) Hilberg pp. 761-4. For a contrary view see Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows*, p. 113.
- [469](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 765-6. In 1946 there were 12,500 including returned prisoners-of-war and another 2,000 Yugoslav Jews in Italy.
- [470](#) Mirković, Victims and Perpetrators in the Yugoslav Genocide 1941-1945, p. 325.
- [471](#) Arendt, p. 185.
- [472](#) Menachem Shelach, Sajmište – An Extermination Camp in Serbia, p. 244.
- [473](#) Hilberg, pp. 728-9, 731.
- [474](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 733-5.
- [475](#) Shelach, Sajmište – An Extermination Camp in Serbia, p. 245.
- [476](#) *Ibid.*, p. 254.
- [477](#) *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- [478](#) Dawidowicz, War Against the Jews 1933-1945, p. 480.
- [479](#) Hilberg, p. 725. *History of the Jews in Serbia*, <https://tinyurl.com/y55czhcy>.
- [480](#) Marrus, *History of the Holocaust*, p. 158.
- [481](#) Genti Kruja, *Interfaith Dialogue in Albania*, p. 79. states that 3000 Jews found sanctuary in Albania.
- [482](#) 'Albanians saved Jews from deportation in WWII,' *Deutsche Welle*. 27.12.12. <https://tinyurl.com/u5qzf2e>
- [483](#) Jack Frank Sigman, *Albania During the Holocaust*, p. 9. 21.12. 20. <https://tinyurl.com/yd2gxvw6>

- [484](#) Bernd Fischer, *The Jews of Albania During the Zogist Period and the Second World War*, <https://tinyurl.com/y76tq44o> *Texts and Documents of Albanian History*, Robert Elsie.
- [485](#) Bettina Birn, *Austrian Higher SS and Police Leaders*, p. 364.
- [486](#) Stephen Schwartz revised this upwards in 2009 to 95%. *Frontpagemag*, 21.3.05. *The Jews, the Serbs, and the Truth*. <https://tinyurl.com/yy9ml4pu>
- [487](#) Hilberg, pp. 793-4.
- [488](#) Arendt, p. 186.
- [489](#) Hilberg, p. 797; Arendt, p. 186.
- [490](#) Morse, p. 320.
- [491](#) Arendt, p. 187.
- [492](#) Nick Kalchev, *The Rescue of the Bulgarian Jews*, 1995, <https://tinyurl.com/y2tzffqf> 24.1.15.
- [493](#) Arendt, pp. 187-8, citing Hilberg, *Destruction*, p. 803. Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 160.
- [494](#) Arendt, pp. 186-7. Walter Schellenberg, Chief of Counter Intelligence, 9.11.42. attributed the backing down over the Yellow Star to pressure from foreign powers, including most of the Axis. Hilberg, p. 803.
- [495](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, pp. 160-61.
- [496](#) Hilberg, pp. 804-5.
- [497](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 162.
- [498](#) Holst-Warhaft, p. 105.
- [499](#) Arendt, p. 185. Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 161, states that the deportations were carried out 'with the full cooperation of Bulgarian officials' and that the local Jews were completely unaware of what was happening until their homes were surrounded between 4 and 10 March 1943.
- [500](#) Hilberg, p. 805, see *Contesting the Deportations in Parliament*, Yad Vashem, <https://tinyurl.com/yeyr8cny>
- [501](#) Arendt, pp. 187-8.
- [502](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 163.
- [503](#) <https://tinyurl.com/ySbwgv7z>
- [504](#) Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, pp. 185-7.
- [505](#) Estimated casualties during WWII (including Jews) <https://tinyurl.com/y2o9gjb8>
- [506](#) See Hitler's Berghof speech to his generals on August 22 1939. Charles W. Sydnor, Review Article, *The Selling of Adolf Hitler: David Irving's Hitler's War*, p. 176.
- [507](#) Norman Davies pp. 263-4.
- [508](#) Hilberg, pp. 190-1. Alexander Rossino, *Nazi Anti-Jewish Policy During the Polish Campaign*, p. 35.
- [509](#) Rossino, p.44.
- [510](#) Klaus-Peter Friedrich, *Patterns of Collaboration in Poland, during WW2*, pp. 735-6.
- [511](#) Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows*, p. 96. John Conway cites figures of 261 and 340 German Catholic priests held in Dachau. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches*, fn. 11, p. 429.
- [512](#) Lapidé, pp. 83-6.
- [513](#) Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, p. 261.

- [514](#) 'Poland Does Nothing to Check Anti-Semitic Drive of the Endeks,' 7.8.34. *JTA*, <https://tinyurl.com/y4jqcfa2>
- [515](#) William Hagen, *Towards a Comparative Analysis of Political Anti-Semitism in Interwar Germany and Poland*, pp. 368-71, 373.
- [516](#) *Ibid.*, p. 354
- [517](#) Jan T. Gross, *Neighbours*, p. 155.
- [518](#) See Anna Bikont's *The Crime and the Silence*, for details of her investigation into these pogroms and how they were justified, not least by the Catholic Church in Poland.
- [519](#) 'Burning Alive' by Andrzej Kaczynski, published 5.5.2000. in *Rzeczpospolita*, <https://tinyurl.com/y3rgyv73> Introduction by Morlan Ty Rogers, 27.6.2000.
- [520](#) Gross, *Neighbours*; Bikont, *The Crime and the Silence*. See review, *NYT*, 4.11.15. <https://tinyurl.com/nj572wy>
- [521](#) Bikont, pp. 365-80.
- [522](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 107.
- [523](#) Hans G Furth, 'One Million Polish Rescuers of Hunted Jews?,' *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 1:2, 1999, p. 229. Furth cites N. Tec *When Light Pierced Darkness: Christians' Rescue of Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland* (New York: OUP) but Furth's own estimate is 1.2 million and possibly more.
- [524](#) Introduction to the Diaries of Chajka Klingler, p.9.
- [525](#) *Ha'aretz* 10.2.17., Ofer Aderet, 'Orgy of Murder': <https://tinyurl.com/y6l59o53>; Daniel Blatman, *The Holocaust's Evasive History in Both Poland and Israel*, *Ha'aretz* 3.5.19, <https://tinyurl.com/y34spovu> and *Ha'aretz* 22.2.19. Polish Honor and Israeli Hypocrisy <https://tinyurl.com/yym1sggp>.
- [526](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution* p. 773.
- [527](#) Kielce: The Post-Holocaust Pogrom That Poland Is Still Fighting Over, <https://tinyurl.com/y6j79bpc>
- [528](#) Brenner, p. 218.
- [529](#) Tom Driberg, *Ruling Passions*, pp. 202-3 cited in Bernard Wasserstein, p. 128.
- [530](#) Wasserstein, p. 129.
- [531](#) Harry Rabinowicz, *The Legacy of Polish Jewry: a history of Polish Jews in the inter-war years, 1919-1939*, pp. 118–25, NY, 1965, <https://tinyurl.com/6282b8l>
- [532](#) Antony Polonsky, 'The Bund in Polish Political Life, 1935-1939', in Ezra Mendelsohn, *Essential Papers on Jews and the Left*, NY: New York University Press, 1997, pp. 194–5.
- [533](#) Bernard K. Johnpoll, *The Politics of Futility: The General Jewish Workers Bund of Poland, 1917-1943*, Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1967.
- [534](#) Polonsky, *Politics in Independent Poland 1921-1939*, p. 68. Many Polish-speaking Jews in cities such as Warsaw and Lodz joined the PSP. Davies, *Gods Playground – A History of Poland*, p. 255.
- [535](#) Brenner, pp. 191-2 <https://tinyurl.com/y4wzu56p>
- [536](#) Edelman pp. 44-5. It is unlikely to have been armed due to a lack of weapons.
- [537](#) Dawidowicz p. 323.
- [538](#) Isaac Deutscher, *The Non Jewish Jew & Other Essays*, pp. 66/7.
- [539](#) Arens, *The Jewish Military Organisation (ZZW) in the Warsaw Ghetto*, p. 207.
- [540](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 210-11.

- [541](#) Dawidowicz, p. 322.
- [542](#) Steinberg, German Civil Administration in the Occupied Soviet Union, 1941-4, p. 632.
- [543](#) Hilberg, pp. 545-7.
- [544](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, p. 491. Much of the information came via the Oneg Shabbat network. Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 243.
- [545](#) Stola, p. 6.
- [546](#) Himmler's physician Felix Kersten also played a part, see Hugh Trevor-Roper, p. 5.
- [547](#) Paul Bartrop, *Resisting the Holocaust – Upstanders, Partisans and Survivors*, p. 192.
- [548](#) Germans murder 700,000 Jews in Poland, 25.6.42., <https://tinyurl.com/mrtbtgtg> See Gelber, *Zionist Policy and the Fate of European Jewry, 1939-42*, p. 190. Gelber misdates the *Telegraph* article to 26 June.
- [549](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 137. Braham, p. 694.
- [550](#) Gelber, *Zionist Policy*, p. 190. The report was carried in *Davar* and *Ha'aretz* 28.6.42.
- [551](#) Stola, p. 7. Zygielbojm had escaped to London from the Warsaw Ghetto in 1940.
- [552](#) Laqueur, *A Terrible Secret*, p. 75 fn, Stola, p. 8.
- [553](#) Marrus (ed.), *The Nazi Holocaust Part 8: Bystanders to the Holocaust, Volume 1*, London: Meckler Ltd, 1989, p. 58: 'Report of the Bund regarding the persecution of the Jews.'
- [554](#) Paulsson, Introduction p. 1.
- [555](#) *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- [556](#) Marrus, *History of the Holocaust*, p. 143.
- [557](#) Hilberg, pp. 509-10, 1122. On 23.6.43. a court in Piotrkow Trybunalski imposed the death penalty on a farmer and his wife, Wladyslaw and Genowefa Rutkowski for harboring two Jews. Paulsson, p. 67.
- [558](#) Paulsson, *Secret City*, p. 129.
- [559](#) *Ibid.*, p. 87. 'The record of the Catholic Church in providing forged documents and hiding places, the latter chiefly for children, was generally an admirable one...' Paulsson, p. 106. It is estimated that 7,000 Jewish children were placed with Catholic families in hiding.
- [560](#) Lapide, p. 186,
- [561](#) Paulsson, *Secret City*, pp. 138-41, 230.
- [562](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 220.
- [563](#) Friedrich, *Patterns of Collaboration in Poland, during WW2*, pp. 726-7.
- [564](#) Browning, *Nazi Resettlement Policy*, pp. 505, 509. Kershaw, *Improvvised Genocide?* states that Heydrich ordered 80,000 Jews to be expelled between 1st and 16th December 1939.
- [565](#) Kershaw, *Improvvised Genocide?* pp. 53, 63.
- [566](#) *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- [567](#) *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- [568](#) Kwiet, *Rehearsing for Murder*, p. 10. Kershaw, *Improvvised Genocide?* p. 67.
- [569](#) Herbert, *Labour and extermination*, p. 170.
- [570](#) Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 426 citing Christopher Browning.
- [571](#) Hilberg p. 558.
- [572](#) Friedrich, *Patterns of Collaboration in Poland, during WW2*, p. 745.
- [573](#) Yitzchak Kerem, 'Rescue of Sephardic Jews by Muslims in the Holocaust', Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece, <https://tinyurl.com/tc8hhush>

[§74](#) Hilberg, pp. 663.

[§75](#) Hilberg, p. 689.

[§76](#) 'The Jews in Nazi-occupied Tunisia' <https://tinyurl.com/yyp1989f> were the only Jews in North Africa to experience a direct Nazi occupation (9.11.42-13.5.43.).

Chapter 12

Refugeism & the Zionist Obstruction of Rescue

'If there was a line in Ben-Gurion's mind between the beneficial disaster and an all-destroying catastrophe, it must have been a very fine one.' (Shabtai Teveth, official biographer of David Ben-Gurion) [1](#)

Prioritising a Jewish State over rescuing Jews

Today it is difficult to comprehend, given its prominence in the Zionist narrative, that when the Holocaust was actually happening it was seen as a distraction from the task of building a Jewish state.

A meeting of the JAE in August 1943 was told by their Istanbul representative that a lack of funds had 'severely restricted rescue opportunities'. However the problem wasn't so much a lack of funds as the fact that the rescue of Jews was not seen as a priority. Ben-Gurion took the opportunity to restate their priorities:

The Agency is bound to do... everything in the way of rescuing Jews by immigration to Palestine... That is its role. However... the tasks of assistance, of saving one more Jew, of doing all to prevent deportations, are very important... and must be assumed by another organization, to be set up and funded from other sources. [2](#)

In other words rescue for the sake of rescue, unless it was to Palestine, was not the concern of the Zionist movement. Ben-Gurion emphasised that he favoured a clear distinction between rescuing Jews and the work of the Zionist movement.[3](#) Not only did the JA deny that the extermination of the Jews was taking place until the very last moment, but it suppressed information about the Holocaust and actively sought to block and disrupt all attempts at rescuing Jewish refugees which did not involve Palestine. This is not a matter of speculation.

In May 1942 Abba Hillel Silver, President of the ZOA, laid out two goals for American Zionism: Firstly to increase the level of 'national education' and secondly to rectify the 'tragic lack of a [Jewish] homeland'. There was no third priority – rescue.[4](#)

If the Zionist movement had made the rescue of Jews their first priority they would have demanded that the Allied countries open their doors to Jewish refugees who could escape. They would have drawn up plans to rescue those who it might have been possible to save and demanded the setting up of an international refugee organisation to coordinate the rescue of those who could be helped. They did none of these things. Instead they actually *opposed* the formation of the WRB.

On 15 October 1942 at the ZE, Ben-Gurion dwelt at length on 'A Zionist Plan of Action and American Jewry.' The Holocaust was referred to in passing.⁵ 'About rescue – not a word.'⁶ Ben-Gurion and Shertok 'had been too busy laying the basis for the future State of Israel to think of saving Jews in Europe.'⁷ Even Walter Laqueur admitted that the Zionists were absorbed in 'post-war planning' and were oblivious to those demanding immediate action to save the remnant of Europe's Jews.⁸

Ben-Gurion and Katznelson took no part in the three sessions of the JAE [18 January, 18 February and May 1943] which discussed the Holocaust.⁹

Not for nothing was Shabtai Teveth's chapter on the Holocaust in his biography of Ben-Gurion headed 'Disaster means strength'. For the leaders of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish catastrophe in Europe meant the strengthening of the movement for a Jewish State. Ben-Gurion admitted that 'in these terrible days ... I am still more worried about the elections of the (Mapai) branch in Tel Aviv'.¹⁰

Throughout 1939 and 1940 the situation of Europe's Jews was not discussed once by Mapai's Central Committee.¹¹ It was not until 22 November 1942 that the JAE devoted a whole meeting to the situation of European Jewry. 'Few debates dealt with the plight of European Jewry'.¹²

Achcar suggests that Ben-Gurion's 'relative indifference' to the Holocaust was only one Zionist viewpoint.¹³ The evidence suggests otherwise. Every single member of the JAE opposed 'refugeism', the rescue of Jews for its own sake. Yitzhak Gruenbaum, at a meeting on 18 February 1943 accused his critics and friends of letting him take the blame:

Meanwhile a mood swept over Eretz Yisrael that I think is very dangerous to Zionism, to our efforts for redemption, our war of independence... I cannot understand how such a thing could occur in Eretz Yisrael, something that never happened abroad. How is it possible that in a meeting in Yerushalayim people will call: 'If you don't have enough money you should take it from the Keren Hayesod, ... I thought it obligatory to stand before this wave...'

¹⁴

It was Zionist historians such as Tom Segev, Francis Nicosia and Shabtai Teveth, who shone a light on Zionism's record during the Holocaust. David Cesarani and Saul Friedlander concluded that the Zionist movement had prioritised building a Jewish state over saving actual living Jews. According to Zionist 'logic', preserving the transient life of individual Jews was less important than securing the eternal life of the Jewish people via a Jewish state. Dina Porat attempted to reply to some of these critics but she raised more questions than answers.¹⁵

Refugeeism

The Zionist movement believed that saving Jews in places other than Palestine would simply transfer anti-Semitism to another country. It would perpetuate the tragedy of 'exile'. Only by dwelling on 'national' land would the Jews' situation be 'normalised'. This was blood and soil ('blut and boden') Zionism.¹⁶ This 'rhetoric of race' was particularly entrenched in German Zionism.¹⁷ Abba Hillel Silver, the President of the ZOA (1945-7), worried that:

It is possible for the Diaspora to undermine the Jewish state, because the urgency of the rescue issue could lead the world to accept a temporary solution. We should place increased emphasis on fundamental Zionist ideology.¹⁸

Saul Friedlander described the attitude of the Zionist leadership in Palestine as 'perplexing': 'no concrete assistance or rescue plans emerged from the Yishuv throughout most of 1941'. The JA¹⁹ 'hardly paid attention to the situation in Europe...' ²⁰ According to Ben-Gurion 'the Zionist slogan should henceforth be: 'Everything for the land [of Israel] – nothing for anything else.'²¹

When it became clear that European Jewry faced extermination and that there might be no Jews left alive, the fear amongst the Zionist leadership was the effect this would have on the Zionist project: 'not only was European Jewry being destroyed: it would also be the end of the Zionist enterprise.'²² This provoked a 'desperate search' for large groups of Jews in Africa and the Middle East.²³ At the JAE of 13 November 1938 Moshe Shertok explained how Weizmann:

does not think that the JA can participate in activity for emigration to other countries.

But we must take part in this meeting (an assembly for German Jewry) in order to step up the pressure on the government to increase immigration to Palestine.

Opposition to 'refugeeism', seeking any refuge for Europe's Jews, not just Palestine, was shared by all wings of Zionism. Hillel Silver made it clear that Jewish displaced persons should be channeled only to Palestine:²⁴

Are we again, in moments of desperation going to confuse Zionism with refugeeism which is likely to defeat Zionism?... Zionism is not a refugee movement. It is not a product of the Second World War, nor of the first. Were there no displaced Jews in Europe... Zionism would still be an imperative necessity.²⁵

In the wake of Kristallnacht there was a wave of sympathy for Germany's Jews. An Appeal by former British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin received over a million contributions. 9,354 children were brought to England in the Kindertransport despite Zionist hostility.²⁶ The Zionist leaders demanded instead that the children be brought to Palestine, which the Colonial Office rejected.²⁷ Fortunately the Board of Deputies had not yet been captured by the Zionists. If it had been then the children of the Kindertransport might have become one more grisly statistic. Malcolm MacDonald, the Colonial Secretary, recalled:

I remember at the time that Weizmann's attitude shocked me. He insisted on the children going to Palestine. As far as he was concerned it was Palestine or nowhere. [28](#)

When MacDonald refused to guarantee that the children would go on to Palestine Weizmann told him that: 'We shall fight you - and when I say fight I mean fight.'[29](#) The Zionist leadership's greatest fear was that

the future and destiny of Palestine and the plight of European Jewry would be considered as two separate problems. As a result, efforts would be made to solve the problem of European Jewry without using Palestine as a refuge.[30](#)

At a meeting of Vaad Leumi on 2 December 1938 Ben-Gurion was afraid that 'ideological and territorialist plans would be formulated both among the Jews and among the Gentiles'.[31](#) In a speech to Mapai's Central Committee on 9 December 1938, he explained his reasoning:

If I knew that it would be possible to save all the children in Germany by bringing them over to England, and only half of them by transporting them to Eretz Yisrael, then I would opt for the second alternative. For we must weigh not only the life of these children, but also the history of the People of Israel.[32](#)

Ben-Gurion worried that 'the human conscience' might persuade countries to open their doors to Jewish refugees. He warned that 'Zionism is in danger!' [33](#) If other countries could save Europe's Jews then what was the need for a Jewish Palestine? This was the 'logic' of Zionism. Ben-Gurion wrote, in a memo to the ZE of 17 December 1938:

If the Jews are faced with a choice between the refugee problem and rescuing Jews from concentration camps on the one hand, and aid for the national museum in Palestine on the other, the Jewish sense of pity will prevail and our people's entire strength will be directed at aid for the refugees in the various countries. Zionism will vanish from the agenda and indeed not only world public opinion in England and America but also from Jewish public opinion. We are risking Zionism's very existence if we allow the refugee problem to be separated from the Palestine problem.[34](#)

In 1938 when Senator Robert Wagner and Congresswoman Edith Rogers proposed a bill allowing 20,000 children under the age of 14 to be admitted, the leaders of America's Jewish organisations, at Wise's instigation, failed to back it.[35](#) Roosevelt's response was 'File No Action' despite pleas from his wife Eleanor.[36](#) 'Instead of serving as Jewish representatives to the President, Jewish leaders had become the President's representatives to the Jews.'[37](#)

Whereas most Jews feared for the safety of German Jewry, the Zionist leaders feared what might happen if they were rescued: 'the Jewish plight might be translated into other, anti-Zionist solutions.' [38](#) Saul Friedlander, himself a holocaust survivor, concluded that 'rescue of the Jews in Europe was not at the top of the Yishuv leaders' list of priorities. For them, the most important thing was the effort to establish the state'.[39](#)

Table 3 The Destination of Jewish Refugees from Germany

The Destination of Jewish Refugees from Distribution of Jewish Germany April 1933 to May 1939, including Refugees: Estimate as of Areas occupied by Germany in May 1939⁴⁰ 31 December 1939⁴¹

United States	63,000	90,000
Palestine	55,000	60,000
Great Britain	40,000	48,000
France	30,000	38,000
Argentina	25,000	25,000
Brazil	13,000	15,000
South Africa	5,500	
Italy	5,000	
Other European Countries	25,000	68,000
Other American Countries* including America	20,000	43,000
Far Eastern Countries	15,000	15,000
Other	8,000	44,000
Total	304,500	446,000[‡]

‡ There is an arithmetical mistake in the original table

The above totals include Jews from Austria. There are considerable disagreements as to how many each country took but general agreement that approximately 300,000 Jews emigrated from Germany and 130,000 from Austria. According to the *Holocaust Encyclopedia* approximately 282,000 Jews left Germany and 117,000 from Austria.⁴²

The number of Jews emigrating from Europe to Palestine between March 1933 and 1940 was about 208,600.⁴³ By October 1941, of the original half a million Jews in Germany, 163,000 remained, 73,000 in Berlin.

Hilberg estimated that 475,000 left Germany, Austria and Bohemia-Moravia and that 155,000 went to the United States, 70,000 to Palestine and 150,000 to countries out of German reach but that 100,000 emigrated to countries where they were overtaken by the Nazis.⁴⁴

Porat wrote that 6,000 people were saved by Aliyah Bet, illegal immigration into Palestine, and that through this 'we gave meaning to life, we raised the prestige of the Zionist movement.'⁴⁵ The arrogance of this statement is breathtaking. In other words saving Jews to anywhere but Palestine was meaningless. Aliyah Bet was about saving Zionist activists not 'those who turned to Palestine only in calamity', that is the majority of European Jewry.⁴⁶

According to the JA Rescue Committee, 'It is true that not only Zionists should be saved, but we cannot allow... such a high proportion of anti-Zionists.'⁴⁷ The Zionist movement turned its back on European Jewry. South African Jews ceased all contributions to the JA because of this.⁴⁸

After November 1942 there was, for the first time, a debate about rescue in the JAE. But the critics of the previous policy of inaction argued only in respect of one category, their Zionist comrades, 'our haverim, members of our family.'⁴⁹ In the view of some Zionist leaders such as Apolinary Hartglas, 'indiscriminate rescue might even prove harmful.' These were people who had:

no feelings for Palestine or Zionism. They were harmful to Zionist values, shirked work and tried to lead an easy life at public expense. ... they might return to the Diaspora after the war and slander the Zionist enterprise even though it had saved their lives.⁵⁰

This policy of turning one's back on Jews in danger was articulated as early as 1919. Chaim Weizmann explained why the gates of Palestine couldn't be opened to thousands of survivors of the Ukrainian pogroms who were begging for asylum. Weizmann 'didn't think these refugees had the enormous constructive powers needed to build a national home for the Jewish people.' Professor Gur Alroey, a historian at the University of Haifa, described how 'Weizmann preferred productive immigrants over needy refugees and thought the Land of Israel needed strong, healthy immigrants, not refugees weak in body and spirit.'⁵¹ Jewish refugees were seen in terms of their usefulness to Zionism.

The Zionists Lobby the Nazis to Only Allow Emigration to Palestine

It is difficult to believe it now but the ZVfD went one step further. They actually lobbied the Gestapo to get them to prevent Germany's Jewish refugees going anywhere but Palestine. The Gestapo 'did everything in those days to promote emigration, particularly to Palestine.'⁵² Prior to the Holocaust the Zionists' main enemy was not Nazi Germany, which was more than willing to allow the emigration of Jews, but Britain, which barred entry to Palestine.⁵³

On 7 April 1933 the Nazis halted the uncontrolled emigration of German Jews because of the danger that their random dispersion would contribute to 'intensified anti-German feelings in most other destination countries' whereas Palestine was 'a remote, self-run concentration camp.'⁵⁴

George Landauer of the ZVfD, in a letter to Dr Hans Hartenstein of the Reich Foreign Currency Control Office, wrote that they were 'looking for solutions to prevent people using this concession [Ha'avara] in a roundabout way to establish a sure means of livelihood in other countries.' The ZVfD instituted a certification process to ensure that a German Jew 'could not save himself with any of his assets unless he did so through Palestine.'⁵⁵ In 1936 the CV criticised the ZVfD for trying 'to direct Jewish emigration exclusively to Palestine at the

expense of other suitable destinations.’ [56](#) This gives the lie to the idea that Ha’avara was about saving Germany’s Jews.

Feivel Polkes, a Haganah intelligence agent, came to Berlin for talks with the SD and Gestapo between 26 February and 2 March 1937.[57](#) According to a situation report of October 1937, Polkes offered to become an informant for the Gestapo, sharing Haganah intelligence information, in return for which the Gestapo would pressure the RVt to require emigrating Jews to settle exclusively in Palestine.[58](#) Polkes worked with Dr Franz Reichert, an agent of the SD, who was nominally a correspondent for DNB, the German overseas news service in Jerusalem. Among other things, he would support German foreign policy interests in the Middle East and use his influence to secure sources of oil for the Reich if German foreign currency regulations for Jews emigrating to Palestine were to be relaxed.[59](#)

Polkes claimed that he was on the General Staff of the Haganah.[60](#) SS files show that in return for information from Polkes on attempts to kill Hitler, ‘pressure will be exerted on the Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland to oblige Jews who emigrate from Germany to go exclusively to Palestine, and not to other countries.’[61](#) Dr Franz Six, Eichmann’s boss, wrote confirming this.[62](#) In a 1957 interview, the former Chairman of the ZVfD, Dr Hans Friedenthal, revealed that ‘the Gestapo did all it could to promote Jewish emigration to Palestine, thereby rendering considerable assistance to the Zionist cause.’[63](#)

Polkes arranged, in his contacts with Eichmann, for arms supplies, Mauser pistols, to be smuggled to Palestine in barrels of cement.[64](#) In return Polkes supplied the Nazis with information on an illegal communist broadcasting station which drove between the German and Luxembourg border.[65](#) He also supplied the Nazis with information about two pro-Soviet Arab leaders, Emirs Sheikib Arslan and Adil Arslan, who were at a conference in Berlin.

Polkes later met with Eichmann in Café Groppi in Cairo on 10 and 11 October 1937, after Eichmann had been deported by the British from Palestine.[66](#) Here he assured him that the Zionists ‘were favourably disposed to the extreme German policy.’[67](#)

In 1983 Lenni Brenner met Yoav Gelber of YV, who told him that he was unable to access Polkes file in the Haganah archives in Tel Aviv. In October 1983 Brenner asked archivist Chaim Zamir to see the file. ‘There is no file,’ Zamir responded. When told about his conversation with Gelber, Zamir replied: ‘There is no file because it would be too embarrassing’[68](#) The question is what is it that is so embarrassing that they have to hide it?

Evian

The Evian Conference (6-15 July 1938) was called by Roosevelt to discuss the Jewish refugee crisis. Countries attended on the basis that they would not have to change their existing refugee policies. Roosevelt was only prepared to admit refugees outside of America's quotas at the end of 1941, when 2,000 statesmen, artists and scientists, who had been trapped in Vichy France, were allowed entry.

Only in the years 1938-40 did the USA admit more than half the miserly quotas allotted to Germany and Austria.⁶⁹

A meeting of the JAE on June 26, 1938 decided to:

belittle the [Evian] Conference as far as possible and to cause it to decide nothing.... We are particularly worried that it would move Jewish organizations to collect large sums of money for aid to Jewish refugees, and these collections could interfere with our collection efforts.⁷⁰

Ben-Gurion at a meeting of the JAE of 26.6.38. pulled no punches: 'No rationalizations can turn the conference from a harmful to a useful one. What can and should be done is to limit the damage as far as possible.'⁷¹ Menachem Ussishkin at the same meeting cited the fears of the future Chairman of the JA Rescue Committee, Yitzhak Gruenbaum:

He hoped to hear in Evian that Eretz Israel remains the main venue for Jewish emigration. All other emigration countries do not interest him... **The greatest danger is that attempts will be made to find other territories for Jewish emigration.**⁷² (my emphasis)

The JA was worried that Evian might succeed. 'Its wish was for the conference to fail abysmally.'⁷³ In a letter to Stephen Wise of 13 June 1938, George Landauer, later Director of the JA's Central Bureau for the Settlement of German Jews, wrote of his concern:

Even if the Conference will not place countries other than Palestine in the front for Jewish immigration, there will certainly be public appeals which will tend to overshadow the importance of Palestine.... it may bind Jewish organizations to collect large sums of money for assisting Jewish refugees, and these collections are likely to interfere with our own campaigns.⁷⁴

Christopher Sykes wrote:

From the start they regarded the whole enterprise with hostile indifference... If the 31 nations had done their duty and shown hospitality to those in dire need then the pressure on the National Home and the heightened enthusiasm of Jews with Palestine would both have been relaxed. **This was the last thing that the Zionist leaders wished for....** Even in the more terrible days ahead they made no secret of the fact, even when talking to Gentiles, that they did not want Jewish settlements outside Palestine to be successful... The Zionists wanted to do something more for Jews than merely help them to escape danger.... that such was the basic Zionist idea is not a matter of opinion but a fact abundantly provable by evidence...⁷⁵ [my emphasis]

Noah Lucas described how ‘the Zionists were not displeased by the failure of the Evian conference.’ [76](#) Robert Silverberg reached the same conclusion:

... truly dedicated Zionists hoped for the failure of the Evian talks. How disastrous it would be for Zionism if Australia say were to agree to admit a million Jews at once!... They did not want a Jewish colony in Australia; they wanted Europe’s suffering Jews to go only to Palestine, and if getting them there meant a prolongation of their suffering until the political climate was right, so be it.[77](#)

Virtually no state, apart from the Dominican Republic, was willing to accept Jewish refugees. Richard Crossman, a future Labour cabinet minister wrote: ‘The Zionists’ ... main preoccupation is not to save Jews alive out of Europe, but to get Jews into Palestine.’ [78](#) Yitzhak Gruenbaum feared that

immense dangers loom from the Evian conference. It could mark the end of Palestine as a land of immigration... they will find some new territory to which they will want to direct Jewish emigration. We must defend our principle – that Jewish settlement can succeed only in Eretz-Israel, and therefore no other [place of] settlement can be considered.[79](#) (JAE, 26.6.38)

Menahem Ussishkin described Evian as ‘a terrible danger for us’ warning that ‘they will try to find a territory for Jewish immigration.’ When Roosevelt expressed the opinion that Palestine could not solve the Jewish question, Ben-Gurion’s response was that ‘We must see to it that this dangerous tendency does not find expression at the conference.’[80](#) Yoav Gelber observed:

The fight on the Jewish front for the Zionist solution removed the Zionists and the Yishuv, even before the war, from rescue attempts and strategies not connected to Eretz Yisrael. This is shown by Weizmann’s refusal to attend the Evian Conference of 1938.[81](#)

Britain made considerable efforts to find a place for Jewish refugees in the colonies but it met with resistance from the White settlers. The Governor of Kenya declared ‘a Jewish enclave... would be an undesirable feature.’ About 3,000 refugees found safety in the colonies before the war.[82](#)

When the United States and Britain held a smaller conference in Bermuda in January 1943, the same attitude prevailed: ‘The Bermuda Conference undertook humanitarian duties without reference to Zionist political aims, so it was of no interest to Zionists, and its weak result was not regretted by them.’ [83](#)

The Zionists, however, exploited the failure of Evian as ‘convincing proof of the indifference and hypocrisy of the world towards the fate of the Jews.’[84](#) *Der Angriff*, Goebbels’ paper, was also delighted with the failure of Evian. It was proof that no one wanted the Jews.[85](#)

On 7 November 1935 Zionist and non-Zionist Jewish leaders convened at Lord Rothschild’s New Court residence to discuss emigration plans. The Zionist leaders were not happy. Weizmann attempted to forestall international acceptance of any non-Zionist emigration plan. ‘The Jewish Agency decided to

withhold support because the plan would not adequately ensure the interests of Palestine', as well as hurting the United Palestine Appeal in the United States.

The New Court negotiations led to the creation, in March 1936 of the Council for German Jewry. Tens of thousands of German Jews owed their lives to the efforts of the Council.⁸⁶

Santo Domingo

The only positive outcome from Evian was the offer from Gen. Rafael Trujillo of Santo Domingo to accept 100,000 Jewish refugees. Brazil's representative, Helio Lobo, indicated that Brazil could accept 40,000 emigrants a year, though nothing like this number were admitted.⁸⁷ It is estimated that more German Jewish refugees found refuge in Latin America than Palestine during the 1930s.⁸⁸

The JA was unremitting in its hostility to Trujillo's offer. Trujillo was a maverick dictator as well as a racist, massacring up to 30,000 Haitians in 1937. He supported the Republicans in Spain, giving shelter to thousands following Franco's victory. This and the offer to accept 100,000 Jews stemmed from his desire to "whiten" Dominican society.⁸⁹

The Zionist *Yiddisher Kempfer* attacked the project in a fit of hypocritical anti-racist rhetoric. The settlement originated 'in the curse and disgrace of his racist hatred for the Negroes of Haiti.' Only the support of Roosevelt caused America's Zionist leaders to restrain their opposition.⁹⁰

What ended the Santo Domingo project was a report of August 1942, instigated by the Zionists, from the Brookings Institution, which argued that the Dominican Republic couldn't absorb more than 5,000 refugees.⁹¹ The main area of settlement was Dorsa, where the first fifty settlers arrived in March and April 1940. By January 1941 300 settlers had arrived.

In *Congress Weekly* of December 1941, Ida Silverman, a friend of Wise and Goldman, complained that 10% of Jewish marriages were to non-Jews. Any Jews saved might be lost to the Jewish people anyway.⁹² This was Zionism's racist logic. Beit Zvi speculated that not only did the Zionist movement sabotage the project from the United States, they did so from Spain and Portugal.⁹³

Rafael Medoff argued that the Roosevelt Administration also undermined the Santo Domingo project for fear that they might sneak into the United States. He argued that Roosevelt repeatedly misled US diplomat James McDonald into thinking the US would find a safe haven for Germany's Jews.⁹⁴

Selectivity

Selectivity was the Siamese twin of refugeeism and formed the basis of Zionist immigration policy. The *Zionist Pioneer* described ‘unprepared immigration’ to Palestine as a ‘crime against Zionism.’⁹⁵ There was a consensus among the Zionist leadership that Palestine must not be overwhelmed by an undifferentiated mass of Jewish refugees.⁹⁶

Out of more than 53,000 European Jews who entered Palestine via workers and capitalist schedules in 1935, fewer than 9,000 were German.⁹⁷ Barely a quarter of the Jews who entered Palestine between 1933 and 1939 were German. 4,180 Jews from the USA and 20,000 from countries where Hitler posed no threat to Jews, received certificates between 1933-9 (see [Table 5](#)). Two-thirds of German Jewish applicants were rejected. As time passed fewer and fewer German Jewish applications were successful.⁹⁸ At the JAE there were ‘frequent protests against the preference given to German Jews.’⁹⁹

What was the justification for allocating immigration certificates to Jews who were in no danger? ¹⁰⁰ Why the preference for ‘selective immigration not mass evacuation?’ ¹⁰¹ Quite simply the JA’s main consideration was ‘the needs of the new society’ in Palestine not the needs of German Jewry.¹⁰²

This view was widespread in the Yishuv. The German Immigrants Association complained that ‘the human material coming from Germany (is) getting worse and worse.’ Henrietta Szold, the head of the JA’s social work division even demanded that certain ‘cases’ be returned back to Nazi Germany in order that they wouldn’t become a burden on Jewish society.¹⁰³

Table 4 ¹⁰⁴

Jewish Legal Immigration into Palestine 1933-1939		Number from		% of total Jewish immigration
		Germany	Austria	
1933	30,327	7,600		
1934	42,359	9,800		
1935	61,854	8,600		
1936	29,727	8,700		
1937	10,536	3,700		
1938	12,868	4,800	200	
1939	16,405	8,500	1,700	
TOTAL	204,076	52,600	2,100	25.5

Table 5 ¹⁰⁵

Immigration into Palestine by country of origin

Jewish Immigration to Palestine 1933-1945												
	Poland	Russia	Germany	Romania	Britain	Rest of Europe	USA	Rest of America	Asia	Africa	Other	TOTAL
1933	12,879	408	5,750	1,374	85	3,858	1,063	130	1,424	36	3320	30
1934	16,829	578	6,992	1,751	153	5,749	1,078	172	2,428	71	6608	42
1935	29,407	446	5,464	3,616	275	8,862	1,602	277	3,635	106	8164	61
1936	12,929	585	5,757	1,363	130	3,076	245	64	1,655	34	3889	29
1937	3,578	268	2,665	256	73	872	103	21	1,037	11	1652	10
1938	3,346	52	3,367	454	15	2,532	61	8	919	12	2102	12
1939	1,892	18	5,832	357	45	3,727	28	6	632	6	3862	16
TOTAL	80,860	2,355	35,827	9,171	776	28,676	4,180	678	11,730	276	29,597	204

Selective immigration versus 'uniform Hechalutz' formed one of the main arguments between the 'left' in Mapai around Faction B and Hashomer Hatzair and the 'right' around Ben-Gurion. It was the 'left' which supported selective immigration.¹⁰⁶ Yitzhak Tabenkin

opposed Ben-Gurion's demand to give immigration certificates to 'ordinary Jews' ... this deviation from the pioneering principle in allocating certificates meant turning *Eretz Israel* into 'another diaspora'.

Terms such as 'left' and 'right' are meaningless when describing differences in the Zionist movement. It was the Zionist 'left' which negotiated with the SS to secure facilities to train their pioneers and then bring them to Palestine.

These Jews from Palestine spoke a language not totally different from that of Eichmann. They had been sent to Europe by the communal settlements in Palestine and they were not interested in rescue operations. That was not their job ... their chief enemy prior to the extermination program ... was definitely Britain not Germany.¹⁰⁷

David Werner Senator, a member of the JAE (1930-35) warned that if the German Zionists 'did not improve the quality of the "human material" they were sending, the number of certificates would be cut.'¹⁰⁸ Candidates above the age of 35 would receive immigration certificates 'only if there is no reason to believe that they might become a burden.'¹⁰⁹ German Jews who were given immigration permits 'merely as refugees' were considered 'undesirable human material' by Dobkin.¹¹⁰

At the Zionist Congress in 1933, Ben-Gurion argued that the young Zionist pioneers, Halutzim, must be given priority in the allocation of immigration certificates. However there were only 3,000 Halutzim in Germany. The needs of German Jewry took second place to the needs of Palestine.¹¹¹ Ruppin told Congress that immigration to Palestine should 'not flood the existing settlement in Palestine like lava.' Shertok argued that it was necessary to treat the Diaspora 'with a certain degree of cruelty.'¹¹²

The Zionist leaders preferred the 'easier to integrate' immigrants from Poland to German Jews, except for those rich enough to take advantage of Ha'avara.¹¹³

The Zionist movement itself set up rigid standards for prospective immigrants, which ... excluded anti-Zionists as applicants for certificates. ... persons with capital were the preferred candidates for Aliyah ... the needs and interests of Palestine took precedence over a strategy of rescue.¹¹⁴

Henry Montor, executive vice-president of the United Jewish Appeal wrote a letter to a rabbi in Maryland, thousands of copies of which he distributed, stating that:

There could be no more deadly ammunition provided to the enemies of Zionism ... if Palestine were to be flooded with very old people or with undesirables.... No reasonable person has ever said that Palestine could hold all the millions of Jews who need its shelter... Until the resources of Palestine are adequately developed, immigration of 30,000 to 60,000 a year may be possible.¹¹⁵

In 1940 Montor refused to intervene for a shipload of Jewish refugees stranded on the Danube.¹¹⁶

Obstruction, Indifference and Hostility to Rescue

In July 1933 Australia announced a willingness to accept thousands of German Jewish families in the northern region around Darwin.¹¹⁷ A proposal was also made by Japan for a Jewish homeland in Manchuria, but all of these were rejected by the ZO. It was 'Palestine or nowhere.'¹¹⁸

In 1939 the Swedish parliament passed a law allowing the entry of thousands of German Jews. Chief Rabbi Dr Ehrenpreis, an old associate of Herzl, lobbied the government urging that this decision not be implemented because it would cause a rise in anti-Semitism. As Rabbi Shonfeld observed, when Danish Jewry were smuggled into Sweden, Ehrenpreis was unable to thwart what happened, 'since it came to him as a surprise too.'¹¹⁹

Jewish aid agencies like the JDC and HIAS helped Germany's Jews survive when they were pauperised. The Zionist leaders 'saw these relief efforts as threats' because they excluded Palestine.¹²⁰ Berl Locker argued that it was 'necessary to prevent the new Help Fund.'¹²¹ The Zionist movement wanted 'to end the monopoly of the JDC ('the Joint') and turn relief operations into a general Jewish undertaking, to bring more immigrants to Palestine...'. With the creation of the WRB, it was feared that the JDC would be strengthened.¹²²

Once the achievement of statehood became the overriding goal of the movement, the Zionist realpolitik developed a rigorous logic and a momentum of its own in which humanitarian considerations were subordinate.¹²³

In 1939, with war looming, there were feverish attempts to leave the Reich-Protectorate area. Thousands of families booked passages to Cuba, there to wait for quota entry to the United States. Some 14,000 Jews in Greater Germany went by sea to Shanghai as did more than a thousand Polish Jews.¹²⁴ In December 1941, Japan attacked Shanghai. The Japanese rounded up the city's Jews and confined them in Tilanqiao. Shanghai's Jewish ghetto had been born.¹²⁵

On the outbreak of war, up to 10,000 Jews were able to escape from Lithuania because the Japanese vice-consul in Kaunas, Chiune Sugihara, had issued thousands of Japanese transit visas to Jews who had fled Poland. In 1945 Sugihara was dismissed because of this.¹²⁶ It is estimated half of those holders who received passports survived.¹²⁷

Before the war the US received more than twice as many Jews as Palestine.¹²⁸

Within the Zionist movement itself there were actually some ultra militants who argued that it was a good strategy to make no attempt to liberalize the United States immigration laws. They were virtually fanatics, to whom the building of a Jewish homeland in Palestine took priority over all other claims, even the claim of saving lives.¹²⁹

An exception to this was Avraham (Adolf) Silberschein of the WJC in Geneva, who organised the forwarding of food packages to Polish Jewry through the Portuguese Red Cross.¹³⁰ He was a member of the Zionist Actions Committee [ZAC] and PZ. He used the facilities of the WJC offices but soon found he was being hindered and obstructed by Gerhard Riegner.

Silberschein therefore turned to the Association of Galician Jews in America [AGJA]. In November 1939 he attempted to ransom Jews being held in the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen. He was granted a budget of \$1,250 a month by the AGJA. 250 Jews were released by February 1940.

Silberschein tried to get the released Jews sent to Shanghai and he was trying to raise money to send them to Bolivia. Nahum Goldmann intervened to stop the AGJA's support for Silberschein. Sol Lau, President of the AGJA, resigned as President. As a result, 'things fell apart irreversibly.'¹³¹

On 15 January 1940 Wise wrote to Weizmann urging him to join the President's Council for Refugees in order that he could:

represent the case of Palestine... in view of the ceaseless persistence of J.D.C. people... in urging such *fata morgana* as Santo Domingo, British Guiana and Mindanao (in the Philippines).¹³²

The latter three were places where there was a real possibility of Jews obtaining refuge. When Neville Chamberlain suggested the former German colony of Tanganyika, Wise exploded: 'I would rather have my fellow Jews die in Germany than live somehow, anyhow, in the lands which bear the imprint of yesterday's occupation by Germany.'¹³³ Other areas of settlement included Kimberley in Australia, which Freiland, a territorialist group, had sponsored. This too met with Zionist opposition.¹³⁴ Freiland asked:

Who can tell how many thousands of Jewish lives might have been saved from Hitler's claws if these anti-Jewish pressures exerted by Jews had not been effected? ¹³⁵

When students at Wise's seminar, the Jewish Institute of Religion, were urged by Bergson's ECSJE to sign a petition to Roosevelt urging the rescue of European

Jewry, the Secretary of their student body, Sidney Jacobs, wrote back declining the request because the Committee was 'not... a legitimate representative group within Jewish life.'¹³⁶

Wise was 'almost fanatical in his efforts to stymie dissidents' and protect Roosevelt.¹³⁷ The problem was: 'How could the Yishuv help in a way that would still be in keeping with Zionist principles?' ¹³⁸

Wise rejected a proposal from a student delegation from the Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary to publicly call for an increase in Jewish immigration 'fearing such calls would provoke anti-Semitism.'¹³⁹ Wise resented 'the refusal of the dissidents to accept the authority of the Jewish establishment.' The dissidents were guilty of 'usurpatory aspiration.'¹⁴⁰ Bergson's crime was his willingness to drop the demand to open the gates of Palestine. Bergson asked Wise:

If you were inside a burning house, would you want the people outside to scream 'save them' or to scream 'save them by taking them to the Waldorf Astoria?' ¹⁴¹

When US Interior Secretary Harold Ickes raised the idea of admitting 10,000 Jewish refugees a year to Alaska, this was taken up by a group in PZ, including Haim Greenberg in May 1940. The reaction was predictable. Berl Locker in London wrote 'a blistering article,' asking:

How can you, Poalei Zion members, be propagandizing for Jewish settlement in Alaska? As Zionists, you must surely know that this is simply not done!

The argument that they didn't intend to send to Alaska people who could settle in Palestine made no impression.¹⁴² Wise rejected Alaska, which was not subject to America's strict immigration quotas, as a refuge. The territory was 'too cold' for Europeans. His real reasons were spelt out in a letter to Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter (19.10.39). **It would 'make(s) a wrong and hurtful impression to have it appear that Jews are taking over some part of the country for settlement.'**¹⁴³ **This was chutzpah coming from someone who advocated the colonisation of Palestine.**

In July 1941 Zionist activists picketed the offices of Agudat Israel in the USA. They opposed food parcels being sent to the starving Jews of the Polish ghettos. Joseph Tenenbaum, a former Vice-President of the AJC, wrote that Jews must not interfere with Britain's war needs, 'even if this comes at the expense of victims in Poland or elsewhere.' Weizmann repeated this warning.¹⁴⁴ However, food parcels were sent to Zionist activists.¹⁴⁵

Agudat Israel obtained government permission to send 10,000 packages a month for a year. It enabled contact to be maintained with the ghettos. The exiled

Greek government had been allowed to send food to hungry Greeks but the Zionists were content for the Jews of Warsaw to starve.

An example of what was possible was when the JAE in London decided, on 30 November 1942, to send Wilfrid Israel and Shalom Adler-Rudel to Portugal and Sweden, to carry out rescue work. The JAE was not enthusiastic but 'out of shame' they agreed to the project whilst limiting its budget to £200. Israel was killed when his plane crashed in June 1943. In October 1943 Fritz Lichtenstein arrived in Lisbon. His task was to get the refugees in Spain and Portugal to Palestine. All other tasks – checking possibilities of rescue, increasing the flow of refugees or organising them on the southern side of the Pyrenees were not his responsibility.¹⁴⁶

Adler-Rudel was sent to Stockholm in February 1943.¹⁴⁷ Together with the US Minister in Stockholm, Herschel Johnson, he persuaded the Swedish government to admit 20,000 Jewish children. This was dependent on the British and American governments agreeing to maintain and feed the children and remove them after the war. However, the Americans prevaricated and the Nazis in the end vetoed the scheme.¹⁴⁸ There were already 150,000 non-Jewish refugees in Sweden. And then the scheme was abandoned.¹⁴⁹ Adler-Rudel was forced to leave Sweden. His funds had run out. Porat questioned:

whether the JA acted wisely in letting Adler-Rudel leave Stockholm, given his extensive contacts and achievements in the short time he was there, and in not replacing him given Sweden's neutral status and its proximity to the Baltic states and Poland. ¹⁵⁰

The problem with Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal was that despite their proximity to the killing fields they were far from Palestine. This was why Istanbul was the centre of Zionist operations in the neutral countries.¹⁵¹

It was only in April 1944 that the JA opened an office in the Iberian peninsula. There was already an on-going rescue effort headed by the Armee Juif, which transferred thousands of people through the Pyrenees. The WRB also helped organise escape routes over the Pyrenees but to Dobkin this was a 'great shock'.¹⁵² It was left to the freelance efforts of people like Varian Mackey Fry, an American journalist, who ran a rescue network in Vichy France that helped approximately 2,000 to 4,000 anti-Nazi and Jewish refugees escape.¹⁵³ Another such individual was Hiram 'Harry' Bingham, an American diplomat who served as a Vice Consul in Marseilles. Along with Fry he helped over 2,500 Jews to flee from France.¹⁵⁴

In August 1942 Gruenbaum doubted 'whether the Jews of Poland could still be saved and whether any substantial help could be extended to them.' Yet despite this he was appointed as Chair of the JA's Rescue Committee.¹⁵⁵

When Gruenbaum proposed, on 25 October 1942, that 100 Palestinian pounds be spent on cabling news of the massacres to those who might put pressure on their governments, Eliezer Kaplan stated that 50 pounds would suffice. Moshe Shapira believed that the reports were exaggerated.¹⁵⁶ The Holocaust was one on a long list of agenda items.¹⁵⁷ When it was proposed that the JNF contribute half of the cost of Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Refugees, Ben-Gurion vetoed it.¹⁵⁸

When Dobkin told the ZE on 18 January 1943 that a possibility existed to send food packages to the ghettos he was corrected by Neustadt: 'no crack has been opened, it was always there; we did not know because we did not want to know... it was there all along.'¹⁵⁹ At the ZAC Gruenbaum argued that money from the Foundation Fund should not be used for rescue:

No, and I say it again – no! This tendency to consider Zionist activities secondary must be resisted.... The struggle for redemption of the land did not readily fit with activities for the benefit of the Diaspora... But if a choice had to be made between the two, then 'Zionism comes first.'¹⁶⁰

In discussions on the 1943 budget, after the ZAC had allocated £250,000 for agricultural development and tens of thousands for other developments, a loan of £15,000 was allocated for rescue activities. When Yehoshua Suprasky suggested a figure of £100,000 he couldn't even find a seconder.¹⁶¹ Ben-Gurion and Shertock's interest in fundraising for rescue operations depended on 'the prestige those operations would bring to the Zionist enterprise.'¹⁶² The JAE 'refused to use Zionist budgets for rescue.'¹⁶³

Ben-Gurion was clear: 'It is the job of Zionism not to save the remnant of Israel in Europe but rather to save the Land of Israel for the Jewish people.'¹⁶⁴ Ben-Gurion identified rescue almost exclusively with immigration to Palestine, even though very few were saved that way.¹⁶⁵

Choosing Between Rescue and Building the State

Even at the height of the deportations Ben-Gurion was worried that rescue might eclipse Zionism.¹⁶⁶ The desire to rescue Europe's Jews 'was conveniently structured by the Zionist programme in a way that involved only helping Jews to reach Palestine.'¹⁶⁷ Porat went even further: 'Most of the discussion in the Yishuv focused on immigration to Palestine as a solution,... Little attention was given to the actual plight of the Jews of Europe.'¹⁶⁸

Nathan Schwalb explained the 'logic' behind Zionist policy in a letter to Weissmandel in late 1942:

After the [Allied] victory, they will once again divide up the world between the nations... all the nations of the Allies are spilling much blood and if we do not bring sacrifices, with what will we achieve the right to sit at the table when they make the distribution of nations' territories after the war? And so it would be foolish and impertinent on our side to ask the nations whose blood is being spilled for permission to send money into the land of their enemies in order to protect our own blood. Because "rak b'dam tihyu lanu haaretz" (only through blood will the land be ours).¹⁶⁹

This view was not uncommon. Israeli historian Jacob Talmon referred to 'extremely nationalistic and certain religious persons... who state that the Holocaust was a necessary stage in the Jewish historical drama, as a type of suffering prior to redemption.' They conceived the destruction of European Jewry as a 'final apocalyptic vindication of Zionism.'¹⁷⁰ This messianism resembled the Evangelical belief that Jews must die in order to achieve salvation through Rapture. Zionism at its heart had always been a form of political Messianism, hence its description of its colonisatory project as one of 'Jewish Redemption'.¹⁷¹

The catastrophe that befell the Jews of Europe was seen by many Zionist leaders as the Jewish contribution to the war effort. They believed that it was imperative that the war effort should not be disturbed by campaigns to save Europe's Jews because they might antagonise the very leaders whose support was needed for the creation of a Jewish state. Abraham Margalioth described a speech by Weizmann to the ZE in 1935 in which he explained that:

the Zionist movement would have to choose between the immediate rescue of Jews and the establishment of a national project which would ensure lasting redemption for the Jewish people. Under such circumstances, the movement, according to Weizmann, must choose the latter course.¹⁷²

Weizmann destroyed any illusion that Zionism could offer a solution to German anti-Semitism. When Weizmann addressed the 20th Zionist Congress in August 1937, at which Eichmann was an observer,¹⁷³ he recalled being asked whether Palestine could accommodate Europe's Jews.

The old ones will pass, they will bear their fate or they will not. They are dust, economic and moral dust, in a cruel world. Two millions, and perhaps less She'erit Hapletah. We have to accept it. ¹⁷⁴

When the Nazis took power Ruppin devised a plan in the summer of 1933 that 250,000 German Jews should emigrate to Palestine over the course of a decade.¹⁷⁵ Zionism was not only irrelevant to the plight of Europe's Jews but it made their position worse. The Zionist Movement's opposition to rescue, other than to Palestine, was a sentence of death for those Jews who could have escaped. On 21 December 1935 Weizmann told a meeting of German immigrants to Palestine that:

we have to face reality and admit frankly to ourselves that Palestine can offer only a partial solution of the problem.¹⁷⁶

Yet despite this the JA opposed rescue to any other destinations. When news of atrocities was received a favourite delaying tactic was to recheck the information.

Why did the information received from Ringleblum in Warsaw or from Zygielbojm in London have to be cross-checked with Rabbi Ehrenpreis in Stockholm? Why were the Poles and the Russians not believed – while the Germans of all people were believed?¹⁷⁷

As late as June 1944 Ben-Gurion told the JAE that ‘we don’t know what the real situation in Poland is.’¹⁷⁸ Yet on 17 April 1942 Shertock told Sir Claude Auchinleck, the Commander of the Eighth Army in North Africa that

there can be little doubt that if Palestine were overrun by the Nazis nothing less than complete annihilation would be the lot of the Jews of this country. The destruction of the Jewish race is a fundamental tenet of the Nazi doctrine. ¹⁷⁹

This was seven months before the JA admitted that the Holocaust was occurring. The Zionist leadership were happy to cast doubt on the Holocaust in Europe but they had no doubt as to what was in store if the Nazis occupied Palestine.¹⁸⁰ Weizmann shocked James MacDonald, the Chair of the League of Nations High Commission for Refugees when he

expressed his contempt for German Jews as a whole, his indifference to their fate and for that matter his indifference to the fate of millions of Jews elsewhere, just so long as a saving remnant could be preserved in Palestine. ¹⁸¹

Anti-Semitism in the British Government & Jewish refugees

The British Government resisted the establishment of a body similar to the WRB and ‘deeply resented’ its activities. The Government dressed up its hostility to rescue as opposition to giving preference to Jews as a separate category. The problem was that the Nazis were already giving the Jews preference:

‘Since Bermuda both the Foreign and Home Office were agreed that refugee Jews must be kept out of Britain.’ ¹⁸²

Anti-Semitism was endemic in the war-time British Government and Civil Service. At the Foreign Office [FO] Sir Alex Cadogan was of the opinion in January 1940 that ‘Jew control of our propaganda would be [a] major disaster.’¹⁸³ When the Polish Government in early 1940 urged the British and French governments to join a declaration condemning Nazi atrocities in Poland, the FO objected ‘to Jews being introduced as the culminating point in the list of German wrongs.’ ¹⁸⁴ Wasserstein’s conclusion that this was not due to anti-Semitism is inexplicable.¹⁸⁵

On 8 January 1943 Anthony Eden rejected the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Temple, to provide guarantees to neutral countries regarding the

admission of refugees.¹⁸⁶ Eden also opposed issuing a warning by the three Allied leaders to the Nazis in early 1944 regarding the extermination of the Jews. Eden warned that such a declaration would be to the Jews' disadvantage, prompting a furious response from John Pehle that the FO reasoning suggested that the Allies had no objection to the destruction of the Jews. Eden relented though he succeeded in watering the declaration down, in particular excluding Germany's Jews as they should be considered Germany's internal affair. Eden told the War Cabinet's Refugee Committee that the real reason for his opposition was that such a declaration 'is likely to be redoubled pressure upon us for measures of rescue.'¹⁸⁷

One FO official was of the opinion that 'a disproportionate amount of the time of the office is being wasted in dealing with these wailing Jews.'¹⁸⁸ When 200 Jews, including 70 children, drowned as the *Salvador* sank in the Sea of Marmara on 12 December 1940, the head of the FO refugee section described it as 'an opportune disaster from the point of view of stopping this traffic.'¹⁸⁹

Eden was concerned that if Britain offered to take in Jewish refugees then: 'Hitler might well take us up on any such offer.'¹⁹⁰ The Cabinet Committee on Jewish Refugees, which included Clement Attlee, sent a memorandum to the US State Department on 20 January 1943 warning that:

there is a possibility that the Germans or their satellites may change over from the policy of extermination to one of extrusion, and aim as they did before the war at embarrassing other countries by flooding them with alien immigrants.¹⁹¹

Fortunately for the Committee Hitler never wavered in his determination to pursue a policy of extermination. We can see where the obsession with 'alien immigrants' led – to the gas chambers or today, the bottom of the Mediterranean or English Channel.

When the internment of aliens began in 1940 the majority of those interned were Jewish.¹⁹² Everything possible was done once the war was started to prevent Jewish refugees from Europe entering Britain. The admission in November 1940 of 450 Jewish refugees from Luxembourg to Tanganyika was refused by Labour Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison.

Morrison set his face against the admission of more than a token number of Jewish refugees. He feared that he would be inundated with appeals. He therefore advised the Cabinet to reject such requests. Morrison's excuse was that it would cause an increase in anti-Semitism. When Attlee proposed, in January 1943, a draft parliamentary statement which said that 'any such refugees as may arrive in the United Kingdom will be admitted,' Morrison advised him to remove this

promise because 'it gave the impression that if Jewish refugees are placed on some worthless boat and sent to a British port that is a way of disposing of them.' [193](#)

In October 1942 Morrison received a delegation of eminent churchmen and public figures such as Eleanor Rathbone and Lord Astor, asking him for visas for 2,000 Jewish children and the elderly in Vichy France. Morrison refused. Apparently anti-Semitism 'was just under the pavement.' A month later the Nazis overran Vichy France and these Jews were deported to Auschwitz. Morrison was said to doubt that there was a holocaust.[194](#)

On 31 December 1942 Morrison made it clear that 'he could not agree that the door should be opened to the entry of uncategorised Jews.' [195](#) Morrison believed that if the Jews were allowed to remain in Britain after the war 'they might be an explosive element in the country, especially if the economic situation deteriorated.'[196](#) Morrison's real fear was of communist Jews. He combined both deep anti-Semitism and ardent Zionism. The Board of Deputies had no objections to Morrison's anti-Semitism unlike their concern about 'anti-Semitism' when criticism of Israel is made.

US Ambassador to Britain, John Winant, sent a message to the State Department describing how the FO 'are concerned with the difficulties of disposing of any considerable number of Jews should they be rescued from enemy-occupied territory...' [197](#)

In the wake of the UN Declaration of 17 December 1942 there was a wave of sympathy for the plight of European Jews. A Gallup Poll in February and a British Institute of Public Opinion survey in March 1943 found that 78% people supported the admission of Jewish refugees.[198](#)

Yet Morrison told a Christian-Jewish deputation that despite public opinion being supportive of the refugees 'there was also a body of opinion which was potentially anti-Semitic' and that it was important not to ignore this feeling. Morrison was giving anti-Semites a veto on the admission of Jewish refugees even if that led to their death. Fear of 'anti-Semitism' was the excuse for the government's own anti-Semitism.

Despite UN High Commissioner Sir Herbert Emerson declaring that it would be a mockery if the Allied Declaration on the Holocaust was not followed by action, Morrison refused to agree to admit more than 1,000 to 2,000 refugees.[199](#)

The Board of Deputies Refused to Protest the Extermination of European Jewry

When news was received of the Slovakian deportations in 1942, the Federation of Czechoslovakian Jews published a protest and asked for the BOD's co-operation. They refused. Their demands 'went against the grain' of the Board's passive attitude to news of the atrocities. The Federation held a public demonstration and a rally in early 1942. The Bishop of London, two Christian MPs and the Czech Interior and Rehabilitation Ministers spoke, but not the Board. Both the Secretary, Abraham Brotman, and the President, Selig Brodetsky, refused to attend.²⁰⁰

Pamela Shatzkes contrasted the pre-war and post-war record of the BOD. Before 1939 they enabled 60,000 Jewish refugees to enter Britain. After 1939 their record was one of dismal failure.²⁰¹ The reason lay in the capture of the BOD by the Zionist movement in 1940.

Throughout the war both Brotman and Brodetsky opposed any campaign to save Jewish refugees. When an attempt was made in October 1942 to persuade MPs to set up a committee to relax Swiss restrictions on the entry of refugees, Brotman was 'furious'.²⁰²

When FO officials urged Brodetsky not to issue public statements or hold demonstrations against the extermination of Hungarian Jewry, the BOD obliged. At a Board meeting on 18 June 1944, held to protest what was happening in Hungary, Brodetsky warned 'against overemphasizing the sufferings of the Jews.'²⁰³ The BOD even rejected an appeal by Vaad Leumi (National Council) in Palestine to hold a demonstration on the streets of London.²⁰⁴

This issue resurfaced 50 years later in a letter from Marcus Retter, a close associate of Rabbi Schonfeld and an assistant to Lord Wedgewood. Retter alleged that Brodetsky and Brotman deliberately sabotaged Schonfeld's attempts at rescue and how, with Wedgewood's support, Schonfeld mobilised considerable parliamentary and ecclesiastical support.

The tireless efforts of Professor Selig Brodetsky, president of the Board of Deputies and Lavy Bakstansky, general secretary of the Zionist Federation, resulted in the collapse of this move. Two incidents are engraved in my memory. Brodetsky instructed Adolph Brotman... to ask MPs to refrain from supporting the proposed motion.²⁰⁵

Retter met Brodetsky in January 1943.

At that meeting he admonished me for helping Dr Schonfeld in his effort, stating that only the Board of Deputies and the Jewish Agency were privileged to act in rescue matters. Retter, was told that as a member of the Board:

I had to obey the rules and abide by the decisions of the Board's foreign affairs committee.

A few days later he was shown by Bakstansky a letter from Stephen Wise which asked Lord Wedgewood 'to withdraw his support for Dr Schonfeld's

committee for rescuing victims of Nazi massacres.' Bakstansky told Retter that he and his colleagues 'would do everything possible to sabotage Dr Schonfeld's move.' This was because Schonfeld's efforts would:

interfere with the Jewish Agency's plans and politics. The Board did nothing – and prevented Rabbi Schonfeld from doing anything.

Retter concluded that whether Schonfeld's efforts would have succeeded is a matter of speculation.

One thing is for certain: the sabotage by Jews of efforts to help Jews met with success.

[206](#)

Geoffrey Alderman confirmed that

Marcus Retter's account of the steps taken by Professor Brodetsky and his allies in sabotaging Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld's motion and of their reasons for doing so, is perfectly correct. [207](#)

Schonfeld described how, with the support of a few leading Churchmen and Parliamentarians, he had, within ten days, obtained backing for his motion from 'two Archbishops, eight Peers, four Bishops and 48 members of all parties.' Their efforts were met by a

persistent attempt on the part of Brodetsky and some of his colleagues to sabotage the entire move... he and his collaborators asked members of the House to desist from supporting the new effort... To do nothing themselves and to prevent others from doing so is strange statesmanship.

The results were predictable: 'More than one MP has expressed a feeling of becoming wearied of trying to help the victims in the face of such sectarian Jewish opposition.' [208](#)

Brodetsky justified his actions on the grounds that 'the intervention of an unauthorized individual however well intentioned, in a situation of this sort naturally brings confusion and may have some damaging effects.' While thousands of Jews were burning each day, Brodetsky and the BOD were more concerned with challenges to their power and prestige than saving Jews from the gas chambers. Arthur Dolland wrote in a letter to the JC at the time:[209](#)

the fact that respected and formidable non-Jewish opinion has now been committed in support of Dr Schonfeld's resolution lays the onus of non-interference upon the communal leaders.

The Zionists were not prepared to allow, even from the Chief Rabbi,

any internal challenge from within British Jewry to the claim of the Board and its committees to have the exclusive right of audience with the British government.

Geoffrey Alderman speculated that Brodetsky's reaction might have been different if the motion had mentioned Palestine.[210](#)

The Hostility of America's Zionist Leaders to Rescue

American Zionist leaders were also concerned about challenges to their power. What concerned them were those Jews who wanted to concentrate on saving Europe's Jews from extermination in preference to building support for a Jewish state. Wise described Bergson's success in attracting support from prominent intellectuals and celebrities as 'a disaster to the Zionist cause and the Jewish people.' [211](#) At a meeting in 1943 of Jewish leaders, Wise challenged Bergson's right to act as a Jewish spokesman: 'Mi samcha? Who appointed you?' [212](#) It was a question that was more appropriate to ask of Wise and America's Zionist leaders. Given the choice, the vast majority of American Jews would have chosen saving Jews from the Holocaust in preference to Zionist diplomacy.

When Goldmann met with State Department officials, his concern was the support that Bergson had been receiving from the WRB and Pehle's belief that it was the ECSJE which had led to the formation of the WRB. Goldmann suggested that Bergson be deported or drafted and threatened that unless the WRB disavowed Bergson the WJC would publicly denounce the WRB. [213](#) Just four days earlier the deportation of Hungary's Jews had begun.

In one of their meetings... Rabbi Wise had gone so far as to inform Mr Pehle that he regarded Bergson as equally as great an enemy of the Jews as Hitler.

The threats of US Zionist leaders came at the same time that the Roosevelt Administration was at last taking steps to try and save Europe's remaining Jews. Their threats were a bluff. American Jewry would not have tolerated such attacks. [214](#)

In September 1981 a private Commission of American Jews was set up to examine the record of Jewish and Zionist leaders and groups during the Holocaust and their failure to put pressure on the Roosevelt Administration. It 'disbanded in a blaze of acrimony.' Funded by a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance, Jack Eisner, and chaired by Arthur J Goldberg, a draft report produced by Shmuel Merlin argued that 'the concentration of the American Jewish organisations on Palestine distracted attention from the fate of the Jews in Europe'. It singled out Stephen Wise for criticism.

According to the draft, Wise opposed a resolution to set up a commission to coordinate the rescue of Jewish refugees 'because it failed to include any provision that the British change their policy and open up Palestine to Jews.' [215](#) The Zionists instead attacked Merlin for having been a supporter of Menachem Begin. [216](#)

War Refugee Board

On 9 November 1943 a resolution calling for the establishment of an agency to rescue Jews from the Holocaust was introduced in the Senate by Guy Gillette, (D) Iowa and Robert Taft (R) Ohio and in the House of Representatives by Will Rogers (D) California and Joseph Baldwin (R) New York. They were all supporters of Bergson's ECSJE.

In the Senate Elbert Thomas (Utah) of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, pushed the resolution through unanimously. In the House of Representatives, Sol Bloom, a supporter of Wise, held public hearings on the resolution rather than moving to a vote. The purpose was to kick the proposal into the long grass.

Wise testified against the bill on 27 November because it did not mention Palestine.²¹⁷ Members remarked that his amendment jeopardised the resolution's chances of success, throwing him off guard. But if Wise avoided opposing the Resolution outright, *Congress Weekly*, journal of the American Jewish Congress, was less circumspect. On 10 December it attacked Bergson's ECSJE 'as a body that had no inkling of public responsibility'. Ariel Hurwitz spoke of 'tasteless attacks by the Jewish establishment on the resolution appearing before the American Congress.'²¹⁸

Dawidowicz attributed the establishment of the WRB to Morgenthau. It was just 'a coincidence of timing' that the Bergson group had succeeded in getting a congressional resolution establishing the Board tabled. However in his own diaries Morgenthau paid tribute to the Bergson Group.²¹⁹

On 29 December the American Jewish Conference attacked Bergson's group for blocking the inclusion of Palestine.²²⁰ At the urging of Hillel Silver, their Executive demanded that the resolution call for the opening of the gates of Palestine.²²¹ Despite the Zionists' best efforts the WRB was set up on 22 January 1944.²²²

The Roosevelt Administration initially opposed establishing the WRB, sending Breckinridge Long, who considered the Jews to be radicals and foreign agents, to testify.²²³ Long's testimony proved his undoing when he claimed that 580,000 Jewish refugees had been admitted to the USA since 1933.²²⁴ Less than a quarter of a million refugees, many not Jewish, had entered. Morgenthau compiled a dossier on the lies and obstructionism of the State Department under Long, who ensured that 90% of refugee quota places from Germany and Italy were never filled.²²⁵

Despite the Joint Allied Declaration of 17 December 1942, Long had instructed the US Minister to Switzerland, Leland Harrison, not to accept or

transmit any more reports or information on the situation of the Jews after Riegner had passed on a message on 10 February 1943.²²⁶ Long was forced to resign in November 1944.

An 18-page report to the Secretary on the 'Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews,' compiled by three Treasury officials, concluded that 'it takes months and months to grant the visa and then it usually applies to a corpse.' Not since 1862 had fewer aliens entered the USA. Each immigrant required two American sponsors, one to provide financial guarantees and the other to testify to their moral integrity. This caused Albert Einstein to write to Eleanor Roosevelt that the State Department's policy 'makes it all but impossible to give refuge to the victims of fascist cruelty in Europe.'²²⁷ On 16 January this report, now titled Morgenthau's Personal Report, was handed to Roosevelt. Six days later the WRB was set up.²²⁸

But for the refusal of the State Department to convey a message to Berlin regarding their interest in safeguarding the Vittel detainees and the holding up of a cable to Switzerland for three weeks urging the Nazis to honour Latin American passports, Yiddish poet Itzhak Katzenelson and the 238 Jews of the Vittel detention camp in NE France might have survived.²²⁹ In April 1942 the State Department warned that refugees from Germany were secret agents or sympathizers of totalitarian countries.

The Nazis placed particular emphasis on repatriating Germans living abroad and were eager to exchange Jews for Germans in the US. They set up Bergen-Belsen as a collection point. Bergen-Belsen was an exception within the Nazi camp system with tolerable treatment for those held. Most of those collected held documents promising to admit the holders to the Latin American countries, whose consuls had issued them. Himmler suggested setting aside 10,000 Jews as 'valuable hostages'. On 2 March 1943 the German Foreign Office suggested that 30,000 Jews be set aside.

There were two windows of opportunity for an exchange. In the summer of 1943, 2,500 Polish Jews arrived in Bergen-Belsen and remained until late October when they were deported to Auschwitz. In early 1944, 3,700 Dutch Jews were held for more than six months. On both occasions Latin American governments under pressure from the State Department refused to recognise their papers. 'Washington's energetic appeals to Latin American governments to restrict the entry of refugees proved effective.'²³⁰ Only 136 Jews were saved by an exchange carried out in February 1945.

The State Department objected to the use of fraudulent documents as late as March 1944 despite there being no other way to escape. The demand for genuine documents was more important than the survival of their holders. This holds lessons for today with the obsession of the British government on refugees holding forged documents.

The WRB had been established despite an increase in anti-Semitism in the United States. Fear of Jewish power had increased from 51% to 56% between 1943 and 1944. In Britain the opposite was true. Between 1941 and 1943 those expressing strong disfavour with Jews halved to 13%. Yet whereas the US government took decisive action, albeit at a late stage, to try and rescue the remnant of European Jews, the British Government, especially its Labour members, used anti-Semitism as a pretext for opposing the entry of Jewish refugees.²³¹

Pressure from the WRB led to the ICRC becoming active in Hungary.²³² Funds were provided to Prince Johannes Schwarzenberg in Geneva, who persuaded the German Foreign Office to allow food parcels to be supplied to named prisoners in the concentration camps. This resulted in a database of 56,000 Jews being built up to whom food parcels could be sent.

The WRB co-ordinated pressure on Horthy from the Swedish and Swiss governments and the Vatican to end the deportations. The WRB's impact was limited by the policy of not doing anything that might interfere with the war effort.²³³ The WRB's final report listed thousands of Jews who were rescued or assisted thanks to its help.

The one major failure of the WRB was the extermination of Hungary's Jews. Reitlinger attributed this to the fact that news of the annihilation of Hungarian Jewry didn't emerge until the beginning of July. He suggested that if the news had been more widely known and publicised half those murdered would not have voluntarily left for Auschwitz.²³⁴ This was the price paid for Zionist suppression of the AP.

Despite Yehuda Bauer's claim that the WRB had only 'marginal success'²³⁵ it is credited with having saved at least 200,000 Jews, primarily in Budapest, and 20,000 non-Jews.²³⁶ Pressure from the WRB led to the return of 48,000 survivors whom the Romanian government had deported to Transnistria. They pressurised the Turkish and British governments to streamline visa delays and between April and August 1944, 4,000 Jews left the Balkans for Palestine.²³⁷

Forcing Europe's Jews to go to Palestine - The Displaced Persons

As the war came to an end, the Zionist leaders became concerned that the holocaust survivors might not want to go to Palestine.²³⁸ Ben-Gurion stated that 'if they do not wish an influx of European Jews as immigrants to the United States they would be well advised to support the Zionist claim to Palestine.' The Zionist leaders were afraid that with the improvement of conditions in Europe the pressure on Palestine would subside. ²³⁹

When Morris Ernst, a non-Zionist Jewish lawyer, was asked by Roosevelt to draw up a post-war resettlement plan for Jewish refugees:

Jewish leaders decried, sneered and then attacked me as if I were a traitor. At one dinner party I was openly accused of furthering this plan of freer immigration in order to undermine Political Zionism.²⁴⁰

Roosevelt told Ernst that 'We can't put it over because the dominant vocal Jewish leadership of America won't stand for it.' ²⁴¹ On 1 April 1947, Republican Congressman William Stratton of Ohio sponsored a bill to immediately grant entry to the United States to 400,000 displaced persons. After being publicly denounced by the Zionist leadership the bill was not passed. ²⁴²

It was in the teeth of Zionist opposition that the US opened its doors to Jewish refugees. When the 1948 Displaced Persons Act was passed, about 40,000 Jews were admitted during the next two years out of a total of 200,000 DPs.²⁴³ About 72,000 Jews in total arrived under the Act.

Ben-Gurion definitively and often crudely opposed ameliorating the position of Jewish groups by means other than their transfer to Palestine.²⁴⁴

The Zionist movement saw the Jews in the Displaced Persons Camps as immigration fodder and did their best to prevent their emigration to any country but Palestine.

The Zionist movement operated in the Displaced Person's camps in Europe creating an atmosphere of terror against those who wished to settle anywhere but Palestine. Even Yehuda Bauer accepts that 'there is some truth in the allegations of force' by the Zionists who were 'none too gentle in their dealings with the Bundists.' ²⁴⁵

Ben-Gurion spoke of the 'danger' that Jewish survivors would not want to go to Palestine. Thousands of Jewish children were forcibly removed from their adoptive families who had taken them in when their parents had perished. 'Zionist leaders were (even) sabotaging Jewish adoptive homes for young Jewish survivors, for the single reason that those homes were not in Palestine.' Rabbi

Herzog, Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Palestine, waged a campaign to separate Jewish children from the families who had rescued them, regardless of the wishes of the children themselves.

A particularly iniquitous case occurred in August 1945 when Jewish activists persuaded the British government to allow 1,000 Jewish orphans to enter Britain. After the first 300 had come the Zionist leaders forcibly prevented the remaining 700 children staying in their orphanages, despite the fact that some of these children, who were in their teens, wrote letters to the Zionist leaders stating that they wished to establish a new life in England. Their views were disregarded because the priority was ‘gathering ethnically correct human fodder.’²⁴⁶ A similar rescue programme in France was sabotaged.’

Ben-Gurion warned that the camp children’s relocation, albeit on a temporary basis, might seriously impair the struggle to open the gates of Eretz Israel. ²⁴⁷ A Yiddish paper described how:

by insisting that Jewish D.P.'s do not wish to go to any country outside of Israel ... they [the Zionists] ... sacrificed the interests of living people—their brothers and sisters who went through a world of pain—to the politics of their own movement. ²⁴⁸

The publisher of the NYT complained that Europe’s surviving Jews were helpless hostages for whom statehood had been made the only ransom: ‘Why in God’s name should the fate of all these unhappy people be subordinated to the single cry of statehood?’ ²⁴⁹

The Klausner Report to the American Jewish Congress of 2 May 1948 was clear:

the people must be forced to go to Palestine... those who are not interested (in going to Palestine) are no longer to be wards of the Jewish community to be maintained in the camps... it becomes necessary for the Jewish community to make them as uncomfortable as possible... a further procedure would be to call for an organisation such as the Haganah to harass them.²⁵⁰

- ¹ Shabtai Teveth, *Ben-Gurion – The Burning Ground*, p. 851.
- ² Ibid. p. 858. See also Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 83.
- ³ Porat, p. 259.
- ⁴ Beit Zvi, p. 112, citing *Davar*, 28.5.42.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 89, citing *Ha'aretz*, 9.10.42 and *In the Campaign*, Vol IV, pp. 43-56.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 112, *Davar*, 28.5.42.
- ⁷ Lob, p. 223.
- ⁸ Walter Laqueur, *Terrible Secret*, p. 65, p. 194.
- ⁹ Beit-Zvi, p. 102.
- ¹⁰ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 105.
- ¹¹ Porter, *Kasztner's Train*, p. 66.
- ¹² Porat, p. 252.
- ¹³ Gilbert Achcar, p. 20, *The Arabs and the Holocaust*, citing Ben Gurion's statement to the JAE that 'the harsher the affliction the greater the strength of Zionism', *The Burning Ground 1886-1948*, p. 850.
- ¹⁴ Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators* p. 234, citing Yitzhak Gruenbaum, *Bi-Mei Hurban ve Shoah*, (In the Days of Holocaust and Destruction) pp. 62-70.
- ¹⁵ Porat, *The Blue & Yellow Stars of David: The Zionist Leadership and the Holocaust, 1939-1945*.
- ¹⁶ Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators*, pp. 18-26.
- ¹⁷ Morris-Reich, Arthur Ruppin's Concept of Race, p. 4.
- ¹⁸ Novick, p. 43.
- ¹⁹ The JA was responsible for the internal self-government of Palestinian Jewry. Albert Hyamson, *Palestine Under the Mandate*, p. 96.
- ²⁰ Friedlander, p. 275.
- ²¹ Gabriel Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism*, London: Verso, 2008, p. 98.
- ²² Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy*, p. 356.
- ²³ Ibid., p. 357.
- ²⁴ Abba Hillel Silver, *Jewish Virtual Library*, <https://tinyurl.com/y3cvjacy>.
- ²⁵ Robert Silverberg, p. 335, attributes this to a 'war-time ZOA President'. Tara Douglas, *Memories, Myths and Misconceptions*, p. 52, cites the first sentence of the quote and states that it's from a speech of Rabbi Hillel Silver to the ZOA membership, presumably at its 49th Annual Convention <https://tinyurl.com/y2tdh9f4> Douglas cites the NYT of 27.10.46. Rabbi Elmer Berger, *The Jewish Dilemma: The Case Against Zionist Nationalism*, New York: Devin-Adair, 1945 cited the first line up to the ellipsis in a speech to the August 1945 WZC in London. <https://tinyurl.com/y6grxf7z>. Tom Suarez, *State of Terror*, p. 374 fn. 316, states that the NYT is not a source of this quote but that he could not find a source. Nor could I.
- ²⁶ Gottlieb, 'Men of Vision – Anglo-Jewry's Aid to Victims of the Nazi Regime 1933-1945', pp. 119, 125.
- ²⁷ Gottlieb, p. 105, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kindertransport>
- ²⁸ Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle*, London: Andre Deutsch, 1979, p. 52.

- ²⁹ Sompolinsky, p. 36.
- ³⁰ Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy*, p. 352.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 352-3.
- ³² Gelber, 'Zionist policy and the Fate of European Jewry,' *Yad Vashem Studies (1939-42)* p. 199; see also Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 28; Teveth p. 855; Piterberg p. 99.
- ³³ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 28 citing Gelber, p. 131 'A New Homeland' (Jerusalem: Leo Baeck Institute, 1990).
- ³⁴ Machover-Offenburg, *Khamsin 6*, p. 58, Arie Bober, *The Other Israel*, p. 171 <https://tinyurl.com/y692ngan>, John Quigley, *The Case for Palestine*, pp. 26-7.
- ³⁵ Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, pp. 174, 180. The USHMM Encyclopedia puts the number of children at 10,000. Wagner-Rogers Bill. <https://tinyurl.com/rlekmqc>
- ³⁶ Morse, pp. 253, 268.
- ³⁷ Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 180.
- ³⁸ Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy*, p. 353 citing Berl Katznelson.
- ³⁹ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 467.
- ⁴⁰ Figures are from *Encyclopedia Judaica* (1971), vol. 7, vol. 491. <https://tinyurl.com/yxk2hclw> <https://tinyurl.com/y3r7ma2y>
- ⁴¹ American Jewish Year Book, Vol. 42, p. 600. <https://tinyurl.com/y6pc9ped>
- ⁴² German Jewish Refugees, <https://tinyurl.com/m4tsp6a> 1933-1939.
- ⁴³ 'Jewish Legal Immigration to Palestine, 1933-1940,' Nicosia, TRPQ, Appendix 7, p. 212.
- ⁴⁴ Hilberg, p. 1197.
- ⁴⁵ Porat, p. 233.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 247.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 101, 103.
- ⁴⁹ Beit Zvi, pp. 107-8. *JA Executive* January 18 1943.
- ⁵⁰ Porat, p. 246. Segev, *The Seventh Million* p. 100.
- ⁵¹ Ofer Aderet, *Ha'aretz* 29.11.21. 'The Zionist Selection Revealed: The Movement Blocked Weak and Sick Jewish Migrants.' <https://tinyurl.com/2p9f4cbs>
- ⁵² Nicosia, TRPQ, p. 57.
- ⁵³ Jon and David Kimche, *The Secret Roads: The 'Illegal' Migration of a People, 1938-1948*, London: Hyperion 1976, cited by Arendt, p. 61.
- ⁵⁴ Nicosia, *Anti-Semitism*, p.126. citing William Stuckart of the Interior Ministry. Black, pp. 97-8.
- ⁵⁵ Black p. 258-60.
- ⁵⁶ Nicosia, *Anti-Semitism*, p. 168.
- ⁵⁷ Nicosia, Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy, D1266.
- ⁵⁸ Nicosia, ZANG, p. 125; TRPQ, pp. 62-3, Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy, D1266.
- ⁵⁹ Nicosia, TRPQ, p. 62. See Stanley Heller, Isn't it Time for the Truth about Feivel Polkes and His Haganah Chiefs? <https://tinyurl.com/2ddfcsfh>
- ⁶⁰ Polkeh, *The Secret Contacts*, pp. 71-3.
- ⁶¹ Nicosia, TRPQ pp. 62-3.

- [62](#) Polkehn, *The Secret Contacts*, p. 72.
- [63](#) Nicosia, Zionism in National Socialist Jewish Policy, D1265.
- [64](#) Nicosia, TRPQ, pp. 63-4. Brenner, pp. 93-4 citing David Yisraeli, *The Palestine Problem in German Politics 1889-1945* (Hebrew), Appendix (German) 'Geheime Kommandosache Bericht' pp.301-2.
- [65](#) Polkehn, *The Secret Contacts*, p. 75.
- [66](#) Ibid., p. 74.
- [67](#) Eshkoli-Wagman, Yishuv Zionism: Its Attitude to Nazism and the Third Reich Reconsidered, p. 24.
- [68](#) Brenner, *51 Documents*, p. 111. Nicosia was also denied access to Polkes file, TRPQ fn 65, p. 245. Clearly there is something that the Zionists don't want to reveal.
- [69](#) Beit Zvi, p.178.
- [70](#) Boas Evron, *Jewish State or Israeli Nation*, fn 3, p. 260 quoting letter by Georg Landauer to Stephen Wise, 13.2.38. This shocking letter was written at the behest of Chaim Weizmann.
- [71](#) Ibid.
- [72](#) Ibid.
- [73](#) Beit Zvi, p. 166.
- [74](#) Ibid., p. 153. citing CZA, File S53/1552a.
- [75](#) Christopher Sykes, *Crossroads to Israel*, Indiana University Press, 1973, pp. 188-9.
- [76](#) Lucas, *The Modern History of Israel*, fn. 2, p. 458.
- [77](#) Silverberg, p. 175. See also Sykes, pp. 188/189 on the Evian Conference.
- [78](#) R.H. Crossman, *Washington Diary*, 1946. <https://tinyurl.com/22vpfdpy>
- [79](#) Beit Zvi, pp. 155-6.
- [80](#) Ibid., p. 156. Boas Evron, *Jewish State or Israeli Nation*, fn 3, p. 260.
- [81](#) Gelber, Zionist policy and the Fate of European Jewry – 1939-1942, p. 199.
- [82](#) Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945*, 1979, London, p. 28.
- [83](#) Sykes, p. 242.
- [84](#) Beit Zvi, p. 138.
- [85](#) Ibid., p. 179.
- [86](#) Silberklang, *Jewish Politics and Rescue*, p. 362.
- [87](#) Beit Zvi, p.170. 3,000 Jews were admitted to Brazil in 1940 after an appeal by Anglican Bishops, Herbert Strauss, p. 374.
- [88](#) Herbert A Strauss, *Jewish Emigration from Germany*, p. 363.
- [89](#) Morris Mottale, *Leveraging American Security Policy in the Caribbean: Rafael Trujillo, the Axis Threat, and Jewish Refugees from Europe in the 1930's*, <https://tinyurl.com/y3bbnbnm> Beit Zvi, p. 214.
- [90](#) Beit Zvi, p. 219.
- [91](#) Ibid., pp. 225, 232, 224, Report p. 7.
- [92](#) Ibid., p. 221.
- [93](#) Ibid., p. 236.
- [94](#) Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p 133.
- [95](#) Friedlander, p. 24. Margalot, *The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry*, p. 555, November 1933.

- [96](#) Margalioth, pp. 561-2, suggested that the Zionist leaders 'adopted different and at times even contradictory positions on this fateful question.' I disagree. The Zionist leaders used the plight of German Jewry, as in Weizmann's speech to the Peel Commission in 1936, in order to obtain an increase in the number of immigration certificates, knowing full well that the majority of the places would not go to German Jews.
- [97](#) Black, pp. 373, 375.
- [98](#) Margalioth, *The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry*, p. 559-60.
- [99](#) Segev, *Seventh Million*, p. 45.
- [100](#) Brenner, Review of *The Transfer Agreement*, p. 123, Edwin Black, *JPS Vol 13:4*, Summer 1984.
- [101](#) Segev, *Seventh Million*, p. 42.
- [102](#) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- [103](#) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- [104](#) 'Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem: 1917-1947 (Part I),' UN, *The Question of Palestine*, citing Royal Institute of International Affairs, Great Britain and Palestine, London, Chatham House, 1946, p. 61. <https://tinyurl.com/yd6a3huh> The UN figures for 1939 are different from Fawzi Abu-Diab because they omit the totals for uncategorized immigrants for 1939. See also Nicosia, *TRPQ*, Appendix 7, p. 212.
- [105](#) *Immigration to Israel*, Fawzi Abu-Diab, Arab Information Centre, New York, May 1960, p. 6. The figures for German Jewish immigration are consistently lower than the figure of between 50,000 and 60,000 normally given. The explanation is clearly that most of the 'other' column were German or Austrian Jews. Nicosia suggests that 51,700 German Jews emigrated to Palestine from 1933-1939 out of a total Jewish immigration of 204,100, Appendix 7, *TRPQ*, p. 212.
- [106](#) Weitz, *The Positions of David Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Tabenkin*, pp. 199-200.
- [107](#) Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem – A Report on the Banality of Evil, p. 61.
- [108](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 44, citing Werner Senator to the Palestine office in Berlin, 30.1.35, CZA S/7 142.
- [109](#) *Ibid.*, citing summary of meeting, 6.1.35. CZA, S/25 2576.
- [110](#) *Ibid.*, Dobkin to Martin Rosenblut. 15.1.36. CZA, S/6 3637. Note the constant reference to 'human material'.
- [111](#) Black, pp. 311-12.
- [112](#) Margalioth, *The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry During the Years 1933-1939*.
- [113](#) Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1933-1945*, p. 57.
- [114](#) Dawidowicz, pp. 238-9. The 18th Zionist Congress of 1933 established a Central Bureau for the Settlement of German Jews. Report to the 19th Zionist Congress in Lucerne and 4th Council of the JA, London July 1935.
- [115](#) Letter to Rabbi Baruch Rabinowitz 1.2.40, Moshe Shonfeld, *The Holocaust Victims Accuse*, pp. 89-94.
- [116](#) Henry Montor, Ruth Beloff, *Encyclopedia Judaica*, <https://tinyurl.com/yysyz6Sl>
- [117](#) 'Australian Government Considers German-Jewish Settlement to Check Japanese Influx,' *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, New York, 13.7.33; 'A Refugee Colony in North Australia,' *JC*, 21.7.33, 18. Cited in Black, p. 260.
- [118](#) Black, p. 260.

- [119](#) Shonfeld, 'Holocaust Victims Accuse' p. 111.
- [120](#) Black, p. 90.
- [121](#) Ibid., p. 97. Letter to Chaim Arlosoroff 8.4.33.
- [122](#) Porat, pp. 98-9.
- [123](#) Lucas, p. 190.
- [124](#) Hilberg, pp. 1197-8. Friedlander, p. 130, puts the number of Jews who reached China at 18,000.
- [125](#) *How China saved more than 20,000 Jews in WW2*, Ronan O'Connell, 5.4.21. BBC, <https://tinyurl.com/S6ajckdx>
- [126](#) Sompolinsky, p. 47. <https://tinyurl.com/gnfxkut> Chiune 'Sempo' Sugihara, <https://tinyurl.com/2mja59>
- [127](#) Friedlander, p. 228.
- [128](#) Hilberg, p. 1237. Hilberg's statistics vary considerably from the figures in [Table 3](#).
- [129](#) Silverberg, *If I Forget Thee O Jerusalem*, p. 138, NY: Pyramid Books, 1972.
- [130](#) Beit Zvi, p. 253, citing Yitzhak Weissman, *In the Face of the Titans of Evil* (Hebrew), p. 129.
- [131](#) Ibid., pp. 255-6.
- [132](#) Ibid., p. 247.
- [133](#) Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, p. 124, citing Wise, *As I See It*. Feingold notes in fn. 118, p. 327, that 'the same sentiments are expressed in a letter to Myron Taylor.' Wise MSS, 23.11.38.
- [134](#) Beit Zvi, p. 218.
- [135](#) Lilienthal, *The Other Side of the Coin*, New York 1965, p. 26,
- [136](#) Medoff, *Conflicts between American Jewish leaders and dissidents*, p. 441.
- [137](#) Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p 134.
- [138](#) Porat, p. 91.
- [139](#) Medoff, *Conflicts between American Jewish leaders and dissidents*, p. 445,
- [140](#) Ibid., pp. 447-9,.
- [141](#) Brenner, p. 242.
- [142](#) Beit Zvi, pp. 234-5.
- [143](#) Medoff, *Conflicts between American Jewish leaders and dissidents*, p. 445,
- [144](#) Beit Zvi, p. 249-50 citing *Der Tag* 22.7.41; Braham p. 1105. *Holocaust Victims Accuse*, pp. 45-6.
- [145](#) Porat, pp. 126-8.
- [146](#) Porat, p. 113.
- [147](#) Breitman, *American Rescue Activities in Sweden*, p. 203 suggests it was mid-March 1943.
- [148](#) Ibid., pp. 204-6.
- [149](#) Beit Zvi, p. 287.
- [150](#) Porat, pp. 117-18.
- [151](#) Ibid., p. 135.
- [152](#) Ibid., p. 115; Morse, p.331.
- [153](#) Varian Fry https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varian_Fry.
- [154](#) Hiram Bingham IV https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hiram_Bingham_IV

- [155](#) Laqueur *The Terrible Secret*, p. 186, citing CZAS 26-1235.
- [156](#) Beit Zvi, p. 73. Porat, p. 36. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 171, attributes the opposition to Eliezer Kaplan, the JA treasurer, quoted in Y. Gelber, *Toldot Hahitnadvut*, Jerusalem 1979, I, p. 682.
- [157](#) Gelber, *Zionist Policy and European Jewry*, pp. 192-3.
- [158](#) Beit Zvi, p. 192.
- [159](#) *Ibid.*, p. 88. Neustadt, who went to Istanbul on behalf of Histadrut, had been able to correspond with Zionist pioneers in all the occupied territories, bar Lodz, where the ghetto was sealed, and some regions in Nazi-occupied Russia. 'We have done nothing, or hardly anything, for so long' he wrote (26.5.42.). It was at the end of May that the Bund Report detailing the Final Solution in Poland was issued. Porat, pp. 29-30.
- [160](#) Porat, p. 76.
- [161](#) *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- [162](#) *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- [163](#) *Ibid.*, p. 108.
- [164](#) Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 129.
- [165](#) *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- [166](#) Minutes of JA Rescue Committee, 2.2.44. Beit Zvi, p. 310.
- [167](#) Lucas, p. 189.
- [168](#) Porat, p. 9.
- [169](#) This letter became the subject of a libel action by Schwalb against the authors of *Perdition*. Schwalb claimed that he had never written the letter. After four years, the case was dismissed. The letter had previously been printed by Brenner, p. 237 and *Holocaust Victims Accuse* pp. 26-8. <https://tinyurl.com/y4dt2o9n>
- [170](#) Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy during the Holocaust*, p. 351.
- [171](#) Days of Redemption, [Allan Arkush](#), *Jewish Review of Books*, [Spring 2022](#), <https://tinyurl.com/2p8rrzdh>
- [172](#) Margaliot, *The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry during the Years 1933-39*, p. 255. Proceedings of the Second Yad Vashem Historical Conference, Jerusalem 1977, cited in Brenner, pp. 144-5.
- [173](#) Nicosia, *TRPQ*, p. 61; Giladi, p. 51.
- [174](#) Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, New York 1981, p. 588. <https://tinyurl.com/y4eSyzpd>
- [175](#) Black, pp. 293, 295.
- [176](#) Silberklang, *Jewish Politics and Rescue*, p. 337.
- [177](#) Beit Zvi, p. 123.
- [178](#) Porat, p. 41.
- [179](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 187.
- [180](#) Tony Greenstein, Review of '*The Arabs & the Holocaust*' *JHLS*, Vol. 1, 2011
- [181](#) Cesarani, *Final Solution*, pp. 132-3.
- [182](#) Tony Kushner, *Western Allies and the Holocaust - Rules of the Game*, pp. 391, 393, 395.
- [183](#) David Dilkes, *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan*, O.M., 1938-1945, London: Cassell: 1971, p. 242.
- [184](#) Wasserstein, p. 165.

- [185](#) Ibid., p. 345.
- [186](#) Sompolinsky, pp. 88-9.
- [187](#) Ibid., pp. 128-9.
- [188](#) Ibid., p. 209.
- [189](#) Feingold, Failure to Rescue European Jewry: Wartime Britain and America, p. 115.
- [190](#) Wasserstein, pp. 184, 188.
- [191](#) Foreign Relations of the US: Diplomatic Papers, p. 134, Bermuda Conference to consider the Refugee Problem, April 19-28, 1943, and the implementation of certain of the conference recommendations (840.48) Refugees/3633, *The British Embassy to the State Department*, Aide Memoire, Refugees from Nazi-occupied Territories, Wasserstein, p. 194. <https://tinyurl.com/3yytycyx>
- [192](#) Ibid., pp. 92-3.
- [193](#) Urbach, p. 52.
- [194](#) Ibid., p. 52-3.
- [195](#) 'Jewish' was subsequently deleted from the name of the Cabinet Committee on Jewish Refugees. Colonial Secretary Oliver Stanley argued that no distinction should be made between Jewish and non-Jewish refugees, Wasserstein, p. 183.
- [196](#) Wasserstein, p. 115-16, 131.
- [197](#) Breitman, p. 209.
- [198](#) Kushner, Ambivalence or Anti-Semitism, p. 181. Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 184.
- [199](#) Wasserstein, p. 183.
- [200](#) Sompolinsky, p. 68.
- [201](#) Pamela Shatzkes, Holocaust and Rescue, Impotent or Indifferent? Anglo-Jewry 1938-1945.
- [202](#) Sompolinsky, pp. 70-1.
- [203](#) Ibid., p. 200.
- [204](#) Ibid., p. 197.
- [205](#) JC 5.2.93.
- [206](#) Ibid.
- [207](#) JC 26.2.93.
- [208](#) JC 5.2.93.
- [209](#) JC 5.2.43.
- [210](#) Letter to JC: Professor Geoffrey Alderman, 26.2.93. <https://tinyurl.com/yyu4czgo>
- [211](#) Medoff, Conflicts between American Jewish leaders and dissidents, citing Wise to Thurman, 20.11.44, p. 448.
- [212](#) Ibid., p. 447.
- [213](#) Department of State Memorandum of Conversation, 19.5.44. cited in Brenner, *51 Documents* pp. 197-200.
- [214](#) Medoff, The Holocaust, America and American Jewry, pp. 129-31.
- [215](#) Stanley Heller, *Zionist Betrayal of Jews*, p. 62.
- [216](#) JC 14.1.83, 'Commission Splits Up.'
- [217](#) Ibid., pp. 446-7, Conflicts between American Jewish leaders and dissidents.
- [218](#) Hurwitz, The Struggle over the creation of the War Refugee Board (WRB), p. 21.

- [219](#) Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p 130.
- [220](#) Beit Zvi, pp. 305-6 citing Jabotinsky Institute File No. 47, see also Medoff, p. 447.
- [221](#) Hurwitz, *The Struggle over the creation of the War Refugee Board (WRB)*, p. 20.
- [222](#) Hilberg, pp. 1210-11.
- [223](#) Morse, p. 41.
- [224](#) The David S Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, *Rescue Resolution*, <https://tinyurl.com/vtbh5hw>
- [225](#) Breckinridge Long (1881 -1958), <https://tinyurl.com/kdooxmt>.
- [226](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 93. Morse, pp. 45-6, 51. It was an obliquely worded cable, number 354. What made this worse was that Long was in possession of a great deal of information concerning the extermination of the Jews.
- [227](#) Morse pp.301, 303-4.
- [228](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 88-97.
- [229](#) *Ibid.*, p. 347. See Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, pp. 175, 260.
- [230](#) Friedman, *The US State Department and the Failure to Rescue*, pp. 26-43.
- [231](#) Kushner, *The Western Allies and the Holocaust: Rules of the Game*, p. 384.
- [232](#) Breitman, p. 210.
- [233](#) Braham, p. 1103.
- [234](#) Reitlinger, p. 466.
- [235](#) Medoff, *The Holocaust, America and American Jewry*, p 132.
- [236](#) <https://tinyurl.com/y5748lq9> See Medoff, p. 447, *Conflicts between American Jewish leaders and dissidents*, citing Wyman and Medoff, 'Race Against Death: Peter Bergson, America and the Holocaust', NY 2002. Morse suggests that the WRB was responsible for the direct rescue of 'several hundreds of thousands and the sustenance of additional thousands', p. 381. Medoff p. 132, *The Holocaust*, suggests it saved a total of more than 200,00. 'That is, to use Prof. Bauer's term, a "large number."'
- [237](#) Morse, p. 316.
- [238](#) Yechiam Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy during the Holocaust*, p. 359.
- [239](#) Suarez, *State of Terror*, p. 115.
- [240](#) R Silverberg, *op. cit.* p. 334.
- [241](#) Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection*, pp. 35-6, states that Roosevelt's proposal was for the rescue of half a million Jews during the war.
- [242](#) *Wall Street Journal*, December 2nd, 1976. See also Haim Geniz, *The American Jewish Committee and the Admission of Nazi Collaborators into the United States, 1948-1950*. <https://tinyurl.com/yqqr6vsp>
- [243](#) Hilberg, pp. 1235-7.
- [244](#) Yechiam Weitz, *The Positions of David Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Tabenkin*, p. 192.
- [245](#) Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 247.
- [246](#) Suarez, *State of Terror*, pp. 119-125.
- [247](#) *Ibid.*
- [248](#) Lilienthal, *Zionist Connection* p. 57, citing *Yiddish Bulletin*, Free Jewish Club, 19.5.50.
- [249](#) NYT 27 October 1946. See Tom Suarez, *State of Terror*, pp. 215, 219-25.
- [250](#) Alfred Lilienthal, *'What Price Israel'* (Chicago 1953) pp. 194-5.

Chapter 13

The Church and the Holocaust

'Not you, Mr. Hitler, but the Lord is my Fuehrer!' (Pastor Niemöller) ¹

The churches' record in Nazi Germany was a mixed one. They concentrated above all on protecting their organisations' independence. Instead of challenging Nazi race policies the German churches were drawn into implementing them. Prior to 1875-6, it was the churches, not the state, who registered births. The churches turned over their records to the Nazi state in order that it could determine who was and was not Jewish.²

However, there were many examples of hostility to anti-Semitism, the Nazis and their treatment of the Jews amongst ordinary Catholics and the lower clergy, both Catholic and Protestant. There was the cleric who was arraigned before the Nazi Peoples' Court in 1943 for having said in a store that the Allied bombing of Cologne was revenge for the persecution of the Jews, adding with reference to a picture of Hitler that 'This guy is to blame for everything.'³

One Protestant pastor, Karl Steinbauer, a strong critic of local Bishop Hans Meiser, was imprisoned for giving a sermon in September 1935 in which he repeated the biblical words 'Salvation comes from the Jews.' Steinbauer's refusal to produce a Certificate of Aryan Descent led to his being barred from teaching religion. He noted that Christ and the Apostles would also have failed the test! He was imprisoned several times, including at Sachsenhausen.⁴

Franz Jägerstätter, a sexton of the church of St. Radegund in Austria, went to the guillotine as a conscientious objector on 9 August 1943. Jägerstätter refused to fight for Hitler. This did not stop fellow Austrians criticising him. The municipality of Sankt Radegund initially refused to put his name on the local war memorial or approve a pension for his widow until 1950.⁵ Jägerstätter has since been declared a martyr and beatified.⁶

A Catholic priest in Neustadt an der Aisch was summoned for saying that 'the Jews should not be cast out since they too are human beings.'⁷ Priests who adopted a pro-Nazi stance were the exception: 'most rejected the Nazi dogma of hate towards part of mankind.'⁸

Yet in seven German provinces, the German-Lutheran church declared that Christian Jews had no place in a German Evangelical Church.⁹ Christian Jews were Jews or the descendants of Jews who had converted to Christianity.

The German Protestant Church was split between the German Christians, headed by Reich Bishop Ludwig Müller, and the Confessing Church. After the July 1933 church elections, German Christians dominated the ecclesiastical bodies of all but three of the 28 regional Protestant churches although, as time went by, they lost their primacy.

The German Christians deJudeified the scriptures and rejected the Old Testament whereas Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich, a staunchly conservative cleric, 'offered a pungent theological defence of the Old Testament'.

On 11 September 1933 Martin Niemöller founded the Pastors Emergency League [PEL]. It opposed the idea that Christianity was an Aryan religion. A crucial stage in the formation of the Confessing Church was the Synod of Barmen from May 30-31, 1934 [10](#) whose Declaration opposed any interpretation of Christianity based on race. Drafted by Karl Barth it made no mention of the persecution of the Jews:[11](#)

Politically, Barmen and the Confessing Church failed by not going far enough. They protected their own domain, the autonomy of the church, but they did not defend their weaker neighbours nor attack the evil of the Nazi regime.[12](#)

Niemöller had initially welcomed Hitler's rise to power in 1933. He gradually abandoned his support for the Nazis as a consequence of his opposition to the 'Aryan Paragraph' which stipulated that members of an organisation had to be of Aryan descent, yet:

When the churches called upon all pastors to submit proof of Aryan ancestry, most of the clergymen complied. [13](#)

In 1936, he signed a petition of Protestant churchmen which opposed the Aryan Paragraph. Niemöller opposed non-Aryans occupying prominent positions in the Church and Bishop Otto Dibelius wanted to ordain only Aryans. Niemöller explained that because of the widespread anti-Semitism in Germany at that time, Jews should avoid taking prominent positions. It was argued that these views 'fatally damaged his moral leadership' and prevented the Confessing Church's ability to resist National Socialism on the Jewish Question.[14](#)

Niemöller's opposition to the Aryan Paragraph led to his arrest on 1 July 1937 and he spent the rest of the war in Sachsenhausen and Dachau. Leo Stein, who spent 22 months in Sachsenhausen with Niemöller, described how he declared that 'Whoever is an anti-Semite and persecutes the Jews can never be a real Christian. Hitler is the true anti-Christ.' Niemöller described an audience in 1932 with Hitler, who had promised not only to protect the Church but that

while there would be 'restrictions against the Jews there will be no ghettos, no pogroms, in Germany'.¹⁵

By the end of 1933 the Nazi leadership was becoming disenchanted with Bishop Müller given the growing strength of the PEL. On 23 August the Bavarian Synod supported the opposition of Bishop Meiser to amalgamation with the Reich Church. Julius Streicher, the Gauleiter of Franconia, attempted to place a speaking ban on Meiser, but was forced to withdraw. Bishop Theophil Wurm was arrested on 6 October and Meiser on 11 October. This led to demonstrations of 10,000 on the streets of Nuremberg.¹⁶

Wurm and Meiser were conservative priests who opposed Niemöller but they were fiercely protective of the independence of the Bavarian churches. As Kershaw observed, 'fervent Protestantism undoubtedly tended to foster acceptance of Nazi racial stereotypes.' However, there were also Nazi Catholic priests such as the one in Bamberg district who shouted 'Let them go, they're nothing but Jew-servers' at 30 people who left the church in protest at his pro-Nazi sermon. But on balance Catholics were more likely than Protestants to take issue with the Nazis' racial policies.¹⁷

Very few churchmen stood out against the deportation of the Jews. Pastor Lichtenberg of St. Hedwig's Cathedral in Berlin was the only Catholic priest who prayed openly for all Jews. Sentenced to two years' imprisonment, he died on the way to Dachau.¹⁸ Heinrich Grüber, a Protestant minister, spoke out against the treatment of the Jews, firstly the Christian Jews then the Jews as a whole. Grüber was one of only two non-Jewish witnesses at the Eichmann trial.¹⁹

Most of the Protestant church, including the Confessing Church, stayed silent on the persecution of the Jews, with the exception of the Christian Jews. The Protestant Church had, since the early 19th century, developed a theology of religious nationalism in which Germany was God's chosen nation.²⁰

Bishop Clemens von Galen of Münster, who spoke out against the treatment of the Disabled, was silent on the Jews and supportive of the war. In 1946 Galen attacked the Nuremberg trials saying they weren't about justice but defaming the German people. The auxiliary bishop of Munich, Johannes Neuhäusler, pressed for leniency for Oswald Pohl, head of the SS-WVHA, (SS Main Economic and Administrative Office of the Concentration Camps), and Otto Ohlendorf, head of *Einsatzgruppen D*. Both were executed in 1951.²¹

The German Protestant Church and Bishop Hans Stempel, the official delegate of the Evangelical Church and other clergymen associated with the German Christians, were heavily involved in securing the release of convicted war criminals and the commutation of death sentences.²²

Helen Fein argued that in those countries where the majority of Jews were saved, it was because the authorities of the dominant church protested.²³ Fein wrote that ‘church protest proved to be the single element present in every instance in which state collaboration was arrested – as in Bulgaria, France and Romania.’²⁴ However this does not mean that there was a causal link between church protest and the survival of Jews or that there weren’t other, equally significant, factors such as the strength of the Left and the Communist Party. There was no evidence that this was the case in Romania in particular. In Italy Church protests were muted at best.

In the Netherlands, church protests and resistance were in vain. In Norway the Lutheran Church preferred disestablishment rather than pledge loyalty to Quisling. It was the only church whose Chief Bishop had been interned in a concentration camp.²⁵

In Britain there were pools of Christian anti-Semitism, for example the Chesterbelloc Circle. *The Catholic Herald* questioned the reports of Nazi atrocities and after the war it ignored the liberation of the concentration camps. Instead it ran a six-month correspondence on whether there was a world Jewish conspiracy.²⁶ The Archbishop of Westminster attacked Jews in 1940 for their communism.

The Silence of Pius XII and the Catholic Church

The German Catholic church at Fulda on 28 March 1933 withdrew the ban on Catholic membership of the Nazi Party.²⁷ Given the choice between condemning the attacks on German Jews or the attacks on the Church, the Conference opted for the latter.²⁸ Cardinal Bertram refused, in August 1943, to support Margarete Sommer’s ‘Draft for a Petition Favouring the Jews’ on the grounds that there was insufficient proof that the Jews who were deported were in danger.²⁹

On 3 May 1933, in the course of the negotiations leading up to the Concordat between the Nazis and the Vatican, Bertram reassured the clergy that the Hitler Government ‘sincerely desired the aid of the Church in a joint

campaign against Marxism, atheism and immorality.³⁰ No sooner was the Concordat signed, however, than conflict arose between the Catholic Church and the Nazis.³¹

On 14 March 1937 Pius XI issued *Mit Brennender Sorge* ('With Burning Concern') which, although not mentioning the Jews, nonetheless condemned the idea of a national religion, stating that 'God's Commandments are not dependent on time, place, state nor race'. It was the only papal pronouncement against the Nazis during their rule.³² In Germany the Gestapo confiscated all the copies it could find.³³ On 19 March a second encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* was published attacking 'atheistic communism' in far more explicit phrases than *Mit Brennender Sorge* had attacked racism.³⁴

The Catholic Church was consistent in rejecting the primacy of race. During Hitler's May 1938 visit to Mussolini, *L'Osservatore Romano*, in a front page article, condemned Nazi ideas about purity of blood, forbidding Catholics to teach such notions.³⁵

Pius XII's failure to speak out about the extermination of European Jewry has come in for much criticism. This failure was dramatised in a 1963 play by Rolf Hochhuth, *The Deputy*, which portrayed the Pope as having been indifferent to the Holocaust. *The Deputy*, together with the controversy over Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and the Eichmann trial itself 'effectively broke 15 years of near silence on the Holocaust in American public discourse.'³⁶

Another critic of the German Catholic Church was Guenter Lewy. However, Lewy also criticised Hochhuth for having 'personalized a problem which cannot adequately be understood in terms of personalities.'³⁷

Documents released in the 1970s show that the Pope knew from the beginning of 1942 that the Jewish deportees were destined for annihilation. One of the first to make the Pope aware was the Archbishop of Vienna, Theodor Innitzer.³⁸ A group of German historians, headed by Professor Hubert Wolf, examined a number of documents from the million released from Vatican Archives during early March 2020, which confirmed this.³⁹

In August 1942 Ukrainian Archbishop Andrzej Szeptycki informed the Vatican about atrocities that he had witnessed in Lvov Ghetto. A letter from the United States, based on information from the Geneva Office of the Jewish Agency, was sent to the Vatican on 27 September 1942 including a detailed account of the mass killing of Jews across Nazi-occupied Poland. It was passed to the Vatican by Myron Taylor, Roosevelt's personal envoy. The German

historians found proof that Pius XII read the report on the day it was received. The report specifically mentioned the murder of about 50,000 in Lvov and 100,000 in Warsaw.

On 18 September the Vatican received a report from an Italian businessman. He had visited Poland and reported to Giovanni Battista Montini, later Pope Paul VI, of slaughter of 'shocking' proportions and of the liquidation of the Jewish ghettos in Poland. The historians also cited an internal memorandum from a papal adviser, Angelo Dell'Acqua, that cast doubt on the authenticity of this information. It needed 'to be verified because the Jews also tend to easily exaggerate.' [40](#)

Following OB Pius XII began receiving reports of the mass murder of Jews across Eastern Europe, including from a Catholic chaplain in Benito Mussolini's army. Pius kept silent after heeding the advice of Angelo Dell'Acqua.

According to an interview with David Kertzer, when Pius XII was asked by Roosevelt in 1942 whether the Pope could provide any evidence confirming the Nazi slaughter of Europe's Jews, 'the pope said no... his main adviser on Jewish matters advised him against acknowledging the evidence they had, saying that Roosevelt would use it for anti-German propaganda.'

Kertzer agreed that

'what motivated Pius was a desire to preserve his church, not the lives of endangered Jews – and not even the lives of endangered Catholics in Nazi-occupied countries, notably Poland.'[41](#)

Pius XI had been set to release a papal letter condemning racism and antisemitism, when he died in February 1939. Pius XII ensured that hundreds of copies of the encyclical were destroyed.

Shortly after becoming Pope in March 1939, Pius began meeting clandestinely with an envoy of Hitler, Prince Philipp von Hessen. When 1,259 Italian Jews in Rome were rounded up on October 16, 1943 Pius XII was advised by Dell'Acqua not to protest.

Found in the archives is a detailed, vehemently antisemitic memo written by Dell'Acqua advising the pope not to say anything as Italy's Jews were being rounded up and sent to their death." Monsignor Angelo Dell'Acqua subsequently becomes the Cardinal Vicar of Rome. Pius' main expert during World War II with regard to the Jews was therefore himself an anti-Semite.[42](#)

The behaviour of the Vatican was that of a political and economic, not a religious, body. Its primary concern was defending its own narrow interests. Its

behaviour should not be confused with that of the Church as a whole. Eugenio Pacelli, Papal Nuncio to Germany (1917-29) ascended to the papacy as Pope Pius XII in 1939. He was vehemently anti-communist and had acted as a 'moderating' influence on Pius XI.⁴³ The anti-Nazi pronouncements of Pius XI were not repeated.⁴⁴

The most glaring example of Pius XII's indifference to the fate of the Jews was when, on 15-16 October 1943, literally under his very windows,⁴⁵ Rome's Jewish community were rounded up. 1,015 were deported to Auschwitz after the release of half-Jews and Jews in mixed marriages. This was despite an appeal from Bishop Alois Hudal of the Austrian-German church in Rome to General Reiner Stahel saying that the Pope would be forced to speak out.⁴⁶ Pius XII kept his silence and Cardinal Maglione did not protest when he met Weizsäcker.⁴⁷

There is a contrary view that by the day of 'the *razzio*' (round-up) over 4,700 Jews had already found sanctuary in the Vatican or in monasteries and convents in Rome and any protest would have endangered them. Pius ordered that religious buildings, monasteries and convents, were to give refuge to Jews. The Pope had spoken out in his 1942 Christmas message, which although it did not explicitly mention the Jews was taken by the Nazis as referring to them. Diego von Bergen, German Ambassador to the Holy See, boycotted the Pope's Christmas Eve liturgy in retaliation. Pius reassured Bergen that he and Germany were at one regarding Bolshevism.⁴⁸

Thousands of Jews were hidden in 180 ecclesiastical places of refuge in Rome and Vatican City. Jews were also sheltered in Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer residence and he took personal responsibility for the care of the children of Jews deported from Italy. Sixty Jews lived for nine months at the Gregorian University, and a considerable number in the cellar of the Pontifical Biblical Institute.⁴⁹ Over 5,000 Jews survived in Rome.⁵⁰

As Susan Zuccotti notes, the frequent anti-Jewish articles in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican newspaper, disappeared during the papacy of Pius XII from 1939 to 1958. The last such article, by Bishop Giovanni Cazzani, appeared on 15 January 1939. Nonetheless at no time did the newspaper mention, still less condemn, the Holocaust or indeed any other Nazi atrocities.⁵¹

Zuccotti argued that it was only after the *razzio* that Rome's Jews sought sanctuary in the Church's institutions and she disagrees with Lapide's

contention that there was a Papal directive to hide and help Italy's Jews.⁵² Furthermore, she argues that the Vatican had been warned by both Eitel Mollhausen, the German Ambassador to Italy and Weizsäcker, of the forthcoming round-up.⁵³ The Vatican had failed to notify the Jews.

Pius's failure to protest the roundups were because he didn't want to weaken the Reich in the face of the Bolshevik threat.⁵⁴ He 'feared a Bolshevization of Europe more than anything.'⁵⁵ Just three days after the *razzios*, Pius urged the Nazis to increase their military presence in Rome as he feared the partisans.⁵⁶ This was why Pius opposed the Allies' call for Germany's unconditional surrender. In his 1943 Christmas address the Pope called for a negotiated peace.⁵⁷

Bishop Preysing of Berlin wrote to Pius 13 times in 15 months.⁵⁸ In March 1943 Preysing asked Pius XIII to save the Jews of Berlin who were facing imminent deportation. Preysing was, from 1941 onwards, in touch with the Kreisau Circle, a group of about twenty-five German dissidents led by Helmuth James von Moltke, who was executed in January 1945.⁵⁹

In a letter to Preysing in March 1944 Pius XII explained his reasons for not speaking out about the Holocaust – fear for the physical destruction of Rome and of communism. There is no document that sheds more light on Pius XII's attitude to the Holocaust than his letter to Preysing.⁶⁰

Until his arrest Pastor Lichtenberg had directed the Office of the Special Relief of the Diocese of Berlin which provided relief and help to Jews facing deportation. Margarete Sommer took over, working under the direction of Preysing, the strongest opponent of Nazism amongst the bishops.⁶¹

The Catholic Church had already established a pattern, beginning with Mussolini and then Franco, of supporting fascism against what it saw as its communist enemies. None of this stopped the Anti-Defamation League's Joseph Lichten defending Pius's silence in a pamphlet for the National Catholic Welfare Conference.⁶²

In Slovakia and Hungary the Vatican played a key role in stopping the deportations, though in Slovakia, which was governed by a Catholic priest, Father Tiso, not one priest in its parliament voted against a post-hoc authorisation of the deportations. Although Slovakian bishops criticised the deportation of the Jews in a pastoral letter on 22 March 1943, many priests refused to read it out. Clerical opposition was so strong that it wasn't published with the Church's official seal.⁶³

In Hungary over 20,000 passports were issued by Angelo Rotta, who personally hid some 200 Jews in his palace and urged Catholic priests to do likewise.⁶⁴ Eugene (Jeno) Levai concluded that in the final period of the Nazi occupation, there was virtually no Catholic Church institution in Budapest which did not shelter Jews.⁶⁵ However, requests to the Vatican by John Pehle of the WRB asking the Pope to broadcast appeals to the clergy and laity to hide Jews elicited no response.⁶⁶

Fear of communism was why Pius XII also 'subordinated his response to the murders of Catholics in Poland'.⁶⁷ The Vatican remained silent about the murder of its own priests, apart from 'a few brief scattered notices' in Poland ⁶⁸ and the Netherlands.⁶⁹ After the invasion of Poland *L'Osservatore Romano* only referred to 'population transfers' or 'exile'. The first accusations of silence came not from Jews but from within the Polish Church. The exiled Bishop Karol Radonski of the diocese of Wloclawek wrote to Rome complaining that the Pope 'is silent as if he cared nothing for his flock'.⁷⁰ Radonski attacked Pius as '*et papa tacet*' ('and the Pope remains silent'). The Apostolic Administrator of the Wartheland, Hilarius Breitingner, also wrote to Pius XII saying that people were asking why he remained silent.⁷¹ As Eichmann told Sassen in his interview:

The Roman Catholic Church? I never heard it raise its voice loud enough, in any case not enough for me to feel compelled to pay any attention.' ⁷²

The Vatican's record was a mixed one which depended on its local representatives and the degree of opposition to anti-Semitism in the particular country. The contrast between *L'Osservatore's* treatment of German-occupied and Soviet-occupied Poland could not have been greater.⁷³ But whatever the failings of the Catholic Church, which were many, its record was incomparably better than that of the Zionist movement, especially given that it was based in enemy territory. Pinchas Lapide argued that between 700,000 and 860,000 Jews were saved from deportation and death because of the intervention or influence of Pius XII.⁷⁴

Braham wrote that 'by far the most reliable reports' came from the Nuncios, the diplomatic representatives of the Vatican. Cesare Orsenigo told the future Pope Paul VI that 'the most macabre suppositions about the fate of the non-Aryans are admissible.' An outspoken collaborationist, Orseniga wrote on 13 April 1940 deploring the 'almost openly hostile attitude towards a Germany at war which goes as far as a desire for a complete defeat' on the part

of the clergy. When asked to oppose the genocide of Jews, Orseniga related in a letter to Pius that 'charity is well and good but the greatest charity is not to make problems for the church.' [75](#)

Braham accepted that some of the Nuncios made 'considerable efforts' on behalf of the Jews subject to deportation but that their failure to speak out was their chief failure. He describes how in April 1943, the Vatican Undersecretary of State Monsignor Domenico Tardii urged that the Vatican had the right to intervene diplomatically for humanitarian purposes but that Cardinal Maglione 'remained unmoved.' [76](#)

The Vatican also stayed silent over the murder of the Disabled despite receiving reports at the end of 1940.[77](#) Bishop Galen only spoke out on 3 August 1941 after two preceding sermons denouncing the Gestapo's confiscation of Catholic property.[78](#)

When the deportation of Jews from Münster to the Riga Ghetto began in December, Galen was silent. He not only failed to condemn what was happening but implicitly justified it when he said that by throwing off God's laws the Jews 'condemned themselves to ruin.' [79](#)

In Sweden the Lutheran Church held, on 15 and 22 November 1942, special services for the arrested Jews of Norway.[80](#) On 3 October 1943 a pastoral letter signed on behalf of the Danish bishops was read out condemning the anti-Jewish persecutions as contrary to the gospels.[81](#)

In the Netherlands, on 11 July 1942, the Protestant and Catholic Churches sent a joint telegram to the Nazi authorities criticising the deportations. The Nazis 'requested' the Churches not to read the telegram out at services on 26 July. The Synod of the Reform Church acceded to the request and although the 1,572 Protestant Jews were saved, they were eventually deported to Theresienstadt where they survived.[82](#) The Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, Johannes de Jong, refused the request and the Nazis retaliated by deporting 245 Dutch Catholic Jews, including Edith Stein, to Auschwitz.[83](#) De Jong ordered his priests to deny the sacraments to Dutch Nazis.[84](#) The Gereformeerde church was the most determinedly anti-Nazi. Comprising 8% of the population it saved perhaps 25% of those who survived by hiding.[85](#)

In Toulouse Archbishop Jules-Géraud Saliège drew up a declaration which instructed the clergy to condemn from the pulpit the deportation of the Jews. Saliège withstood pressure from the Prefect of Toulouse to withdraw his pastoral letter and he was backed up in this by the Vatican's *L'Osservatore*

Romano and Radio Vatican.⁸⁶ Laval warned a representative of the Nuncio, Monsignor Carmine Rocco, that the French police would drag Jews out of the churches. Laval implemented his threat and ordered the arrest of all priests who had hidden Jewish children. In the Lyon Diocese a number of priests were arrested for reading out declarations or sheltering Jewish children on church property and more than 120 priests were deported to the East.⁸⁷ Jesuit Elder Chaillet, the assistant of Archbishop Pierre-Marie Gerlier of Lyons, was accused of hiding 80 Jewish children.⁸⁸ His assistant, Abbe Glasberg, a priest of Jewish origins, is credited with the rescue of thousands.⁸⁹

In July 1942 a joint declaration, initiated by Cardinal Emmanuel Célestin Suhard of Paris and signed by all the Cardinals and bishops of occupied France, protested the deportations to Marshal Pétain. In France ‘the highest dignitaries of the Church repeatedly used their pulpits to denounce the deportations and to condemn the barbarous treatment of the Jews.’⁹⁰

In Serbia, when the army shot four to five thousand Jewish men as ‘hostages’, most neutral countries protested vigorously, except the Vatican. Weizsäcker commended the Nuncio: ‘among all the governments ... the Vatican had conducted itself most cleverly.’⁹¹

In Croatia there was extensive collaboration by the Catholic clergy, including participation in the Holocaust. Pius XII never publicly condemned the Croatian genocide whilst informally recognising the puppet state. Cardinal Eugène Tisserant, who had urged Pius to write an encyclical on genocide wrote that ‘I fear that history will reproach the Holy See with having practiced a policy of selfish convenience and not much else.’ After the war the Vatican financed the escape of the Croatian war criminals, including Pavelić.⁹²

In Lithuania, Archbishop Brizgys of Kaunas forbade the clergy ‘to aid or intercede for the Jews in any way’⁹³ and he congratulated Hitler on having liberated Lithuania from the Soviet Union.⁹⁴ In Vidukle, Father Jonas hid 30 Jewish children in his church and when German officers, tipped off by an informer, broke open the doors he challenged them to kill him first, which they did.⁹⁵ When the German army withdrew from Lithuania in 1944 Brizgys left with them.⁹⁶

The Church and the Hungarian Holocaust

The reaction of Hungarian church leaders to the rise of Hitler was to welcome him. Gyula Czapik, Archbishop of Eger and the second highest dignitary in the Catholic Church, deplored 'the fatal error' in not identifying with the Nazis. Bishop László Ravasz, leader of the Reformed (Calvinist) Church, characterised the German drive for power as driven by religious and ethical principles.⁹⁷

Nonetheless, when the deportations began, Ravasz went to Horthy and insisted that the Jews were being mistreated. However, Horthy accepted the reassurance of the Nazis and their friends in government rather than the 'friends of the Jews'.⁹⁸ Nonetheless, Horthy began to shift his stance in early June and complained to Sztójay that the measures against the Jews were inhumane.⁹⁹

Cardinal Serédi, the leader of the Catholic Church, remained silent. On 27 May and again on 17 June, Bishop Apor of Győr urged Serédi to issue a public declaration, lest his silence be taken for agreement.¹⁰⁰ On 15 June Ravasz urged Serédi to issue a joint declaration opposing the deportations. On 27 June the Papal Nuncio conveyed the Pope's desire 'that the Hungarian bishops take a public stand in defence of Christian principles and especially on behalf of the Christians.' Stung by Apor's call, Serédi issued a pastoral letter of 29 June. The letter was extremely weak, mainly concerned with the deportation of Christian Jews.¹⁰¹

After Serédi's letter Sztójay offered some concessions. Converts could form their own organisation and the deportation of the Budapest Jews was suspended.¹⁰² The letter was read in some churches on 1 July and withdrawn on 6 July when István Antal, the Justice Minister, agreed that there would be no more deportations of Christian Jews.¹⁰³

The reaction of Jews was immediate. Kasztner saw long lines of Jews in front of the Franciscan Church and the smaller Rokus Church.¹⁰⁴

In the following week more Jews applied for baptism than had done in the previous 151 years.¹⁰⁵ From 19 March to July 1944 there was a conversion fever. Officially there were 4,770 conversions registered in Budapest but about 80,000 Jews were in possession of conversion certificates.¹⁰⁶

The terrible conditions in Győr Ghetto and the inclusion of Christian Jews in the anti-Jewish measures, led Bishop Apor to write to Minister of Interior Jaross, who threatened to imprison him. Archbishop Gyula Czapik and Bishops Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár and Endre Hamvas of Csanád

expressed shock over the cruelties they had witnessed and made repeated representations.¹⁰⁷ Bishops József Grósz, Ferenc Virág and Sándor Kovács publicly raised the issue of ghettoisation and deportation.¹⁰⁸ Most of their actions were in vain. It is estimated that Bishop Hamvas managed to save about 200 Christian Jews.¹⁰⁹

Even after the deportation of the local Jews, Shvoy continued to speak out. During the Nyilas terror he was interned.¹¹⁰ Czapik was equally vociferous and had the pastoral letter of Serédi read out in the churches, even though it had been withdrawn. On 24 and 27 October Serédi contacted Ferenc Szalasi and on 17 November Angelo Rotta, together with the Swedish minister, handed Szalasi a note. After the start of the death march, Serédi demanded the safeguarding of their right to life.¹¹¹

Aron Márton, Bishop of Transylvania, 'openly called on the Hungarian government to frustrate the deportation of the Jews.' ¹¹² On 18 May with the local Jews still in the Kolozsvár ghetto, 'he movingly condemned the measures adopted against the Jews in contrast to his Protestant counterparts in the area, who kept silent.' ¹¹³

The Holy Cross Society was devoted to the interests of Jews who had converted to Christianity. It was established under Count Gyula Zichy in October 1939. Its Protestant counterpart, the Good Shepherd Committee, hid 1,500 Jewish children. After the German occupation, the Holy Cross Society was heavily involved in protecting converts and Jews, under the leadership of Mrs Bela Ronai, who was deported by the Nazis. In November Nyilas raids led to its closure.¹¹⁴

The most active in trying to save Jewish lives were those associated with the ecclesiastical institutions of the converts. ¹¹⁵ Serédi's public silence 'bewildered the Papal Nuncio and some bishops.' ¹¹⁶ Serédi died in March 1945. His successor Cardinal József Mindszenty, was voluble about the post-war trials of Szalasi, Baky, Endre and the other war criminals, all of whom were executed. There was 'virulent agitation' by the Catholic Church against the trials. Stress was laid on the role the Jews played in the judicial proceedings.¹¹⁷ As Bishop of Veszprem, Mindszenty had agreed to a Nyilas request for a service celebrating the deportation of local Jews.¹¹⁸ A number of priests took an active part in the weak resistance movement.¹¹⁹

The worst example of clerical collaboration with the fascists was that of a Minorite monk, Andras Kun, who wore a gun and personally killed and

tortured his victims. He reportedly ordered the Nyilas to fire in the 'holy name of Christ.' [120](#) He was hanged by a People's Tribunal after the war.

The rescue efforts of Christians were mainly concentrated in Budapest where hundreds of Jews – especially children – were rescued by members of Christian religious orders. They were hidden, fed and protected in the convents, monasteries and institutes of the various denominations. During the autumn and winter of 1944, there was practically no Catholic institution in Budapest where Jews did not find a refuge.[121](#) Levai gives details of hundreds of Jewish refugees saved by institutes like the Sisters of Mercy. One such was headed by Jane Haining, the Scottish matron of the Girls' Home sponsored by the Scottish Mission. Arrested on 25 April she was deported to Auschwitz where she died in the summer of 1944.[122](#) Endre described, to the Council of Ministers, how:

unfortunately ... clergymen of all kinds and ranks in the Christian denominations are in the forefront of the efforts to save the Jews. Never before have protection and intervention reached such heights as today. [123](#)

Throughout the Holocaust years, only one rally for rescue was held in the nation's capital: a march by more than 400 rabbis, organized by the Bergson Group and the Orthodox Va'ad ha-Hatzala, three days before Yom Kippur. Jewish leaders feared the spectacle of rabbis marching through Washington would cause antisemitism and embarrass the president, and President Roosevelt's Jewish advisers urged him to refrain from meeting the leaders of the march. The president heeded their advice.



On 6 October 1943 over 400 rabbis lobbied Roosevelt to take action to save Europe's Jews. American Zionists, led by Stephen Wise, ridiculed and attacked the march. The man in uniform was Dr J.M. Gordon, National Commander of the Jewish Legion of Veterans. To Gordon's left are, left to right, Rabbis Eliezer Silver, Israel Rosenberg and Bernard Levinthal. Front row far left is Rabbi Nathan Baruch.

Early Zionist leaders tried to keep out thousands of 'unhealthy' Jews fleeing pogroms

November 30, 2021 at 1:18 pm | Published in: Europe & Russia, Israel, Middle East, News, Palestine, UK, Ukraine



Jewish refugees arrive in the port of Haifa, Israel, December 9, 1948. (PhotoQuest/Getty Images)

November 30, 2021 at 1:18 pm

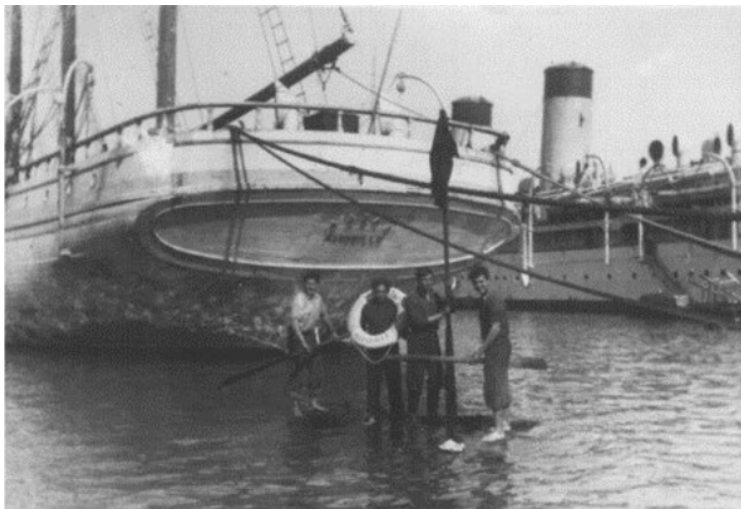
Middle East Monitor

30.11.21

According to Professor Gur Alroey of Haifa University, tens of thousands of Jews seeking refuge in Palestine during the British Mandate were the victims of a Zionist policy of 'selectivity' which meant rejecting or deporting Jewish migrants who were deemed sick or unfit.

The price of this policy was that tens of thousands of Ukrainian Jews being murdered.

Chaim Weizmann even tried to persuade the British to limit Jewish immigration quotas.



The youth wing of the Revisionist Zionist movement *Betar*. Revisionist Zionism was politically close to European fascism and its members trained in seamanship and naval warfare, with the blessing of Mussolini, at Italy's Civitavecchia naval base.



Betar cadets parading in uniform in 1936 in Nazi Germany. Alone among Jewish youth groups they were allowed to wear uniforms.



A news photograph of the "Boycott Nazi Germany" rally held in Madison Square Garden on March 15, 1937

Massive rally in support of boycotting Nazi Germany in New York's Madison Square Gardens in March 1937.



Anti-fascist demonstration in Detroit against the American fuhrer, Fritz Kuhn.

THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

FEBRUARY 5, 1943

THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

From Professor S. BRODETSKY
(President of the Deputies)

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

SIR.—I am writing as Chairman and at the direction and with the unanimous consent of the representatives of all the bodies forming the Consultative Committee—namely, the Joint Foreign Committee, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the British Section of the World Jewish Congress, and the Agudas Israel—in reference to Rabbi Dr. Schonfeld's letter published in your issue of January 29.

The Consultative Committee was set up in response to the obvious need to co-ordinate the public activities of the Jewish Community at this critical time.

The Consultative Committee has throughout been in touch with leading figures in public life—lay and clerical; has considered and put forward to the competent authorities proposals for practical steps to rescue the Jews of Europe, and is continuing in every possible way to endeavour to secure immediate and effective action for this great task. Every suggestion that has been made to the Committee has been considered and acted upon where possible, and any help that has been offered has been welcomed.

A unique and exceedingly important feature of the existing situation is that the nation as a whole, through distinguished representatives in every walk of life, has shown its anxiety and determination that everything possible should be done to come to the rescue of the Jews in this tragic phase of the Nazi terror. Accordingly, there have been constant communications with the Consultative Committee ever since the crisis arose, with a view to achieving every possible step that might be useful in this direction.

Rabbi Schonfeld suggests that all this co-ordinated activity amounts to nothing, and that he was therefore prompted to undertake the task himself. He says that an offer was made to the Consultative Committee "in the early stages inviting them to co-operate. As a matter of fact, knowledge of Dr. Schonfeld's action came to me and the Consultative Committee by chance, when his independent action was already under way when he was subsequently seen by myself and representatives of the Committee, it was quite plain that he was not prepared to take into account important matters arising from the activities of the Consultative Committee. The intervention of an unauthorised individual, however well-intentioned, in a situation of this sort naturally brings confusion and may have damaging effects, which it is the duty of the Consultative Committee to prevent.

Rabbi Schonfeld's letter is disingenuous and misrepresents the facts. I am sure the community is in the best position to judge whether such action as his serves to further the cause that we all have at heart.

I am, &c.

S. BRODETSKY.

Woburn House,
Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1.

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

SIR.—I yield to none in my respect and allegiance to the duly recognised leaders of the community, and I would hasten to deplore in no uncertain terms any encroachment upon their authority, or conflict with their decided policy.

The expression of this view, however, should never be interpreted to mean that members of the community having surrendered such authority to chosen leaders, however able, are entitled to stand by and watch their brethren being led like lambs to the slaughter.

The important body of Parliamentary and Church opinion that has been mobilised in support of the resolution formulated by Dr. Schonfeld makes nonsense of any suggestion that injury to our cause can result from this independent line of action. To some extent Dr. Brodetsky, willy-nilly,

has invited such action by his admission (*vide* speech at annual meeting E.Z.F.) that the famous declaration of the United Nations still remains at the stage of a pious wish. Obviously no one who has it in his power to translate this pious declaration into the beginnings of practical measures would be content with a line of approach to this grievous problem which in fact holds out as the only hope to those dying in tens of thousands that there is some prospect of their end being avenged.

Whatever view may have been taken in the first instance as to the desirability of the move being made outside the recognised channels, the fact that respected and formidable non-Jewish opinion has now been committed in support of Dr. Schonfeld's resolution lays the onus of non-interference upon the communal leaders. At this grave crisis in our history any attempt to sabotage, in an effort at face-saving, this important move, designed to help and containing every promise of success, would receive short shrift from the community.

I am, &c.

ARTHUR DOLLOND.

158, Bishopsgate, E.C.2.
158, Bishopsgate, E.C.2.

Letter from Selig Brodetsky, the first Zionist President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, in the Jewish Chronicle (5 February 1943) replying to a letter the previous week from the Chairman of the Chief Rabbi's Rescue Committee, Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld.

Brodetsky explained why he had decided to sabotage the efforts of Rabbi Schonfeld to gain parliamentary support for the entry to Britain of Jewish refugees from Nazi occupied Europe. His reasons were that Schonfeld's efforts were '*unauthorised*' and therefore unwelcome, despite the Board of Deputies itself doing nothing.



Professor Selig Brodetsky, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews

PARLIAMENT

SLAUGHTER OF EUROPEAN
JEWRYBritain's Efforts to Rescue
VictimsHOME SECRETARY'S HEAT
WITHOUT LIGHT

Mr. Morrison showed some asperity in answering a suggestion by Miss Rathbone that the Home Office was not doing enough to admit to this country persons escaping from Nazi persecution.

Her question asked how many men, women, and children had during the past six months been granted visas for this country, how many of these had been admitted, and how many were Jews or non-Ayran in danger from Nazi persecution.

Mr. Morrison replied: The number of visas which I specially authorised during the six months to December 31 last was 900, of which 478 were for males and 422 for females. 183 of the visas were to enable children from Vichy France to come here to join relatives in this country. All those to whom visas were granted and who arrived here have been admitted, but figures are not available without special inquiry, as to how many have, so far, arrived, nor have I the particulars asked for in the last part of the question.

Miss Rathbone: Is not the Minister aware that the extreme meagreness of our own efforts and the rigidity of our Regulations are a serious impediment to people in Allied and neutral countries to show generosity? Must we not set an example?

Mr. Morrison (warnly): I think the observations of the hon. lady are grossly unfair. This country and the British Empire can stand up to distinctly favourable comparison with any other country in the world.

Mr. W. E. Woolley (Lib. Nat., Spen Valley): Is it not a fact that this country is now looking after 225,000 refugees?

Mr. Morrison: I forget the number, but it is very substantial. I am sorry if I was a little heated, but I do resent implications that this country has not done a considerable amount.

Mr. De La Bere (Con., Evesham): The Home Secretary is quite right.

Further Questions

The Home Secretary was asked on Thursday last week in the House of Commons by Professor A. V. Hill whether there had been any change since the declaration of the United Nations on December 17 in the policy of his Department with regard to the issue of visas for Jewish or other refugees who manage to escape from enemy or enemy-occupied countries.

Miss Rathbone asked further if he would state for the guidance of those who desired to apply for visas for individual cases what were the existing regulations governing this matter. She also asked if he would give special attention to the requests for visas for this country for endangered Jewish or other persons still in enemy-occupied countries whose relations here had reason to believe that the endangered person would be received into a neutral country if the authorities of that country were first assured that a visa for this country would be available.

Mr. Morrison replied to all three questions in a sentence: "I cannot at present add anything to the statement made on Tuesday by the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Attlee)." Miss Rathbone pressed the question, and Mr. Morrison said: "We are in the fullest consultation with the Allied Governments in the matter."

Meeting of Members

Our Lobby Correspondent writes: Members of both Houses met in a Parliamentary Committee Room on Wednesday to discuss the best means of securing action in connection with the massacre of Jewish and other victims. The notice for the meeting said it was felt that the condemnation and abhorrence so fully expressed by the Government and by the other United Nations in the declaration of December 17 should only be a first step towards taking every possible action for the rescue of as many as possible of the survivors. The invitation to members to attend was signed by the following:

Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Marquess of Crewe, Earl of Lytton, Viscount Cecil, Bishops of Chichester, Chelmsford, London, and St. Albans, Lord Davies, Lord Desman, Lord Gorell, Earl of Huntingdon, Lord Wedgwood, Commons: D. Adams, C. G. Amos, Vernon Bartlett, G. Benson, R. Boothby, W. J. Brown, Leslie Burgin, Colonel H. W. Burton, W. Craver-Elliott, Clement Davies, G. Dolecki, J. Dugdale, Captain G. S. Ellston, D. Owen Evans, Sir Francis Fremantle, Sir Robert Gower, D. R. Grenfell, S. S. Hammetley, Isa Hannah, Professor A. V. Hill, Quintin Hogg, T. L. Horabin, Sir Austin Hudson, Denis Kendall, Commander Stephen Kings-Hall, Commander O. Locker-Lampson, F. C. Loftus, G. de M. Mander, J. Martin, Sir John Mellor, Fred Messer, Major Geoffrey Owen, D. N. Pritt, Miss Rathbone, G. Rees, Sir Robert, Sir Waldron Smithers, R. Sorensen, A. Spearman, Sir Murray Suter, Sir Thomas J. Walker, Mrs. Beatrice Wright, Cecil Wilson, Graham White, Vice-Commander J. Wright, Sir Robert

THE PARLIAMENTARY
COMMITTEE

Jewish Officials' Attitude

From RABBI Dr. SOLOMON SCHONFELD

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

SIR,—Owing to the grave implications involved, I cannot refrain from drawing the attention of the community to a deplorable situation.

At the last meeting of the Deputies it was admitted that little practical progress had been achieved in steps of rescue of the tens of thousands of our brethren who are daily being slaughtered in Central Europe. And a month had elapsed since the United Nations declaration.

In face of such a calamitous situation, together with a few leading Churchmen and Parliamentarians, I undertook to rouse and organise wide support for a Motion to be tabled in both Houses of Parliament, asking His Majesty's Government . . . to declare its readiness to find temporary refuge in its own territories, or in territories under its control, for endangered persons who are able to leave those countries. Support for the Motion was widespread. Within ten days, two Archbishops, eight Peers, four Bishops, and 48 members of all Parties had signed notice of meeting to consider the Motion.

This effort was met by a persistent attempt on the part of Professor Brodetsky and some of his colleagues to sabotage the entire move. Without even full knowledge of the details, he and his collaborators asked members of the House to desist from supporting the new effort. What makes such action indefensible is the fact that an offer was made to the Deputies' Consultative Committee, in the early stages, inviting them to co-operate or to carry on the action. To do nothing themselves and to prevent others from doing is strange statesmanship.

Notwithstanding all the opposition, the Episcopate of England and Wales has supported the Motion. The Parliamentary meeting will be held, and we hope the Motion will receive the widest possible support. But the efforts of some communal Jewish leaders to stop it have left an unfortunate impression. More than one M.P. has expressed a feeling of becoming wearied of trying to help the victims in face of such sectarian Jewish opposition.

I am, &c.,

SOLOMON SCHONFELD,
29, Lordship Road, N.16.

Jewish Chronicle 29.1.43. Col. 1 – Herbert Morrison opposes allowing more than a token number of Jewish refugees into Britain. Column 2 letter from Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld about Selig Brodetsky's *'persistent attempt... to sabotage the whole move'* to rescue Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany.



Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS (left) and Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's Deputy and head of the RHSA, the *'engineer of the Final Solution'* (centre)



Moshe Sharrett (Shertock) Israel's second Prime Minister and Political Secretary of the Jewish Agency from 1931-1948 and David Ben Gurion, Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive from 1935 to 1948, becoming Israel's first (and until Netanyahu) Israel's longest serving Prime Minister.



Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld in uniform and



Stephen Wise, leader of American Zionism and friend of Roosevelt. Kept silent about the Holocaust from August to November 1943. Implacably opposed to rescuing Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany if it meant them going anywhere but Palestine.

Letters to the Editor

C O N T I N U E D

'Sabotage' of bid to assist refugees

I refer to the recent correspondence on the efforts made in 1943 by the late Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld to facilitate the entry into Britain of large numbers of Jewish refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe.

As Dr Schonfeld's closest associate from 1939 to 1950, and as an assistant to Lord Wedgwood of Barlaston, I can throw some light on the activities of the Board of Deputies — of which I was then the youngest member — in sabotaging Rabbi Schonfeld's most noble efforts.

In December, 1942, after the United Nations declaration that tens of thousands of Jews in Central Europe were being slaughtered weekly, Dr Schonfeld and a group of leading churchmen and parliamentarians undertook to organise wide support for a motion to be tabled in both Houses of Parliament. The motion asked the British government to issue a declaration on the lines that,

"in view of the massacres and starvation of Jews and others in enemy and enemy-occupied territories, this House asks His Majesty's government, following the UN declaration read to both Houses of Parliament on December 17, 1942, and in consultation with the dominion governments and the government of India,

"to declare its readiness to find temporary refuge in its own territories, or in territories under its control, for endangered persons who are able to leave those countries;

"to appeal to the governments of countries bordering on enemy and enemy-occupied territories to allow temporary asylum and transit facilities for such persons;

"to offer those governments, so far as practicable, such help as may be needed to facilitate their co-operation;

"and to invite the other Allied governments to consider similar action."

With a letter of warm support from Lord Wedgwood, we succeeded within ten days in obtaining the signatures of two archbishops, four bishops, eight peers and 50 MPs of all parties for a meeting to consider the motion.

We were enthusiastically assisted by two outstanding parliamentarians, Eleanor Rathbone and Leslie Hor-

Belisha. Lord Wedgwood became an ardent admirer of Rabbi Schonfeld: his wholehearted support surpassed our expectations.

However, the tireless efforts of Professor Selig Brodetsky, president of the Board of Deputies, and Lavy Bakstansky, general secretary of the Zionist Federation, resulted in the collapse of this move. Two incidents are engraved in my memory.

Brodetsky instructed Adolph Brozman, secretary of the Deputies, to ask MPs to refrain from supporting the proposed motion.

In January, 1943, I met the professor, at his request, at a London railway station on his arrival from Leeds, where he delivered lectures in mathematics on Mondays and Tuesdays. At that meeting, he admonished me for helping Dr Schonfeld in his effort, stating that only the Board of Deputies and the Jewish Agency were privileged to act in rescue matters.

When I told him that the Chief Rabbi, Dr Joseph Hertz, was co-instrumental in securing help from leading church dignitaries in this effort to assist victims of Nazi oppression, Professor Brodetsky ended the meeting by saying that, as a member of the Board of Deputies, I had to obey the rules and abide by the decisions of the Board's foreign affairs committee.

Three or four days after that meeting, I was invited by Lavy Bakstansky to attend a meeting of the ZF's inner committee at its Great Russell Street offices. At that gathering, I was shown a letter from Dr Stephen S. Wise, written in his capacity as chairman of the American emergency committee for Zionist affairs.

Addressed to "Dear Joe" — Lord Wedgwood — at the House of Lords, the letter asked him to withdraw his support for Dr Schonfeld's committee for rescuing victims of Nazi massacres. Bakstansky told me, in no uncertain terms, that he and his colleagues would do everything possible to sabotage Dr Schonfeld's move.

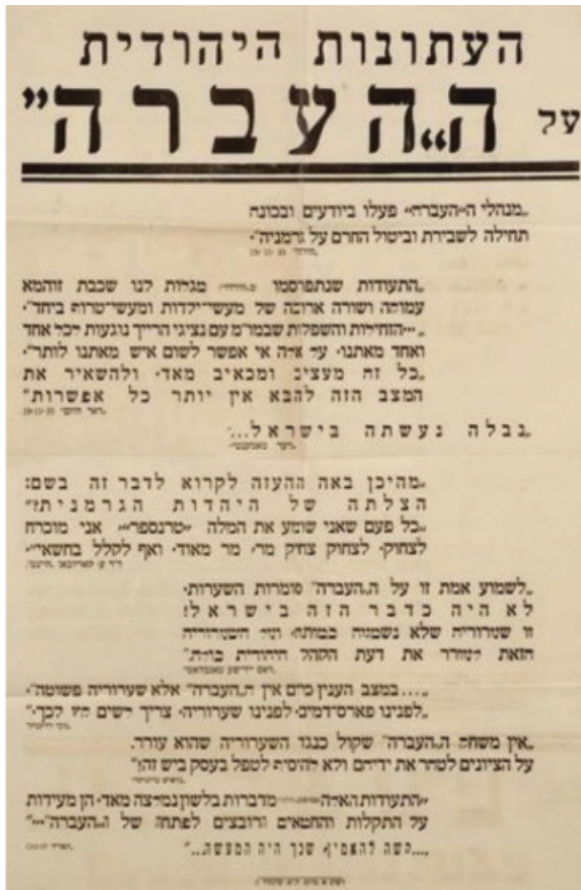
Brodetsky and Bakstansky did indeed succeed. Apparently, it was their mistaken belief that this rescue effort might interfere with the Jewish Agency's plans and politics. The Board did nothing — and prevented Rabbi Schonfeld from doing anything. More than one MP became disillusioned in the face of sectarian Jewish opposition.

Whether the British government would have changed its policy on refugee quotas is a matter of speculation. Whether Dr Schonfeld's efforts would have had positive results is also open to question. But one thing is certain: the sabotage by Jews of an effort to help Jews met with success.

Marcus Retter,
160 Riverside Drive,
New York, NY, USA.

Letter to the Jewish Chronicle (5 February 1993) from Marcus Retter, Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld's closest associate.

Retter explained the steps taken by Selig Brodetsky and Lavy Bakstansky, Secretary of the Zionist Federation, to sabotage his efforts to rescue European Jewry from the efforts of the Nazis to annihilate them.



Hebrew poster opposing Ha'ava.



Poster from the American Jewish War Veterans supporting the Boycott of Nazi Germany.



Rudolf Kasztner, the leader of Hungarian Zionism. Kasztner suppressed the Vrba-Wetzler Report which revealed that Auschwitz was an extermination camp, in order to help his negotiations with Adolf Eichmann for a train out Hungary for the Zionist and Jewish elite.



Rudolf Vrba escaped from Auschwitz with Alfred Wexler on 10 April 1944 and reached Slovakia on 24 April. He and Wexler wrote down what became known as the Auschwitz Protocols warning of the imminent deportation of Hungarian Jewry. Kasztner (above) received them at the end of April but he decided to suppress them to preserve his negotiations with Eichmann.

Letter to 'Palestinian Partisans' Raises International Storm

Yair Sheleg and Ha'aretz Correspondent | Aug 09, 2002 12:00 AM

Ha'aretz article (9 August 2002) which described the letter from Marek Edelman, the last commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Revolt, to 'Palestinian partisans' asking them to stop the bloodshed and enter into peace negotiations.

Last surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943



📍 Marek Edelman at the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes memorial in 2006 Photograph: Paweł Kula/EP/

The letter caused outrage because Edelman did not mention the word 'terrorism.' Israeli leaders were particularly incensed by its title: 'Letter to Palestinian partisans' implying that they were freedom fighters.



Edelman in his days in the Jewish Fighting Organisation (ZOB).

The record of the churches throughout Europe was a mixed one. Churches reflected the societies of which they were a part. The refusal of Pius XII to speak out about the Holocaust and Nazi atrocities against the Jews, Poles and others was shameful and cowardly. This is particularly true of the round-up of Jews in Rome. However this was not because of anti-Semitism so much as his vehement anticommunism and his desire to protect the Catholic Church as a political and temporal organisation

The failure to reveal the information about the Holocaust which was in its possession, as the recent opening of the Vatican archives demonstrates, was particularly reprehensible.¹²⁴ However there is no doubt that but for the churches, especially the Catholic church, tens if not hundreds of thousands more Jews would have perished. The same cannot be said of the Zionist movement, whose deliberate obstruction and sabotage of the rescue efforts of others consigned thousands of Jews to a slow and agonising death.

- [1](#) Leo Stein, *The National Jewish Monthly*, May 1941, <https://tinyurl.com/y3e9ym9e>
- [2](#) Hilberg, pp. 69-70.
- [3](#) Donald Dietrich, *Catholic Resistance in the Third Reich*, p. 178.
- [4](#) Karl Steinbauer, <https://tinyurl.com/y29oSrqr>
- [5](#) Beate Ruhm von Oppen, *Nazis and Christians*, pp. 395-6.
- [6](#) Franz Jägerstätter, <https://tinyurl.com/ssS6ubz>
- [7](#) Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, p. 252.
- [8](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 252-4.
- [9](#) Hilberg, p. 179.
- [10](#) Arthur A Preisinger, *The Church Struggle in Nazi Germany 1933-34 – Resistance, Opposition or Compromise*, pp. 11, 16, PhD thesis, Texas Tech University, 1991.
- [11](#) Synod of Barmen, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Synod-of-Barmen>
- [12](#) F. Burton Nelson, 1934: *Pivotal Year of the Church Struggle*, p. 290.
 - [13](#) Hilberg, p. 89.
 - [14](#) Robert Michael, *Theological Myth, German Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust*, p. 105.
- [15](#) Leon Stein, 'Niemoller Speaks!' *The National Jewish Monthly*, May 1941, <https://tinyurl.com/tcemnqw>
- [16](#) Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, pp. 164-9.
- [17](#) *Ibid.*, pp. 248, 250, 251.
- [18](#) Hilberg, pp. 1087-8. Pastor Lichtenberg was promised his freedom if he would abstain from preaching. He refused and was incarcerated in a concentration camp.
- [19](#) Arendt, p. 129.
- [20](#) Arlie Hoover, *German Christian Nationalism: Its Contribution to the Holocaust*, pp. 311, 315.
- [21](#) Phayer, *Pope Pius XII, the Holocaust and the Cold War*, p. 244.
- [22](#) Ronald Webster, *Opposing 'Victors' Justice*.
- [23](#) *New York Review of Books*, 27.5.82. Helen Fein, 'In Response to "Could the Hungarian Jews Have Survived?"' <https://tinyurl.com/y6y7dycg-hungary-anexchange/>
- [24](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 67.
- [25](#) *Ibid.* p. 116.
- [26](#) Kushner, *Ambivalence or Anti-Semitism?* pp. 178-9.
- [27](#) Lapide, p. 99.
- [28](#) Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, p. 256.
- [29](#) Phayer, *The Catholic Resistance Circle*, pp. 223-4.
- [30](#) Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches, 1933-1945*, pp. 26-7.
- [31](#) George Kent, *Pope Pius XII and Germany: Some Aspects of German-Vatican Relations*, p. 61. *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 70, No. 1. (Oct., 1964)
- [32](#) *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- [33](#) Lapide, p. 111.

- ³⁴ *Mit Brenender Sorge* was primarily concerned with the Church's own interests such as Catholic Education in Germany. Zuccotti, pp. 21-3
- ³⁵ Phayer, *Pope Pius XII, the Holocaust and the Cold War*, p. 234.
- ³⁶ Novick, p. 144.
- ³⁷ Lewy, p. 268.
- ³⁸ Braham, *Remembering and Forgetting*, p. 234.
- ³⁹ *ToI*, 30.4.20, 'Researchers say Vatican archives show Pope Pius XII knew of WWII killing of Jews,' <https://tinyurl.com/y3vr964o>
- ⁴⁰ *Ha'aretz* 3.5.20, Documents From Vatican Archives Show Pius XII Deliberately Ignored Reports on the Holocaust, <https://tinyurl.com/y4pkf3hs>
- ⁴¹ Revealed: What Pope Pius XII Really Did During the Holocaust, *Ha'aretz*, 6.7.22. <https://tinyurl.com/yck9a5cm> citing *The Pope at War*, David Kertzer.
- ⁴² Revealed: What Pope Pius XII Really Did During the Holocaust, *Ha'aretz*, 6.7.22. <https://tinyurl.com/yck9a5cm>
- ⁴³ Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany*, p. 70, quotes Papen describing in his memoirs 'how pleased he was that the German Government now had at its head a man uncompromisingly opposed to Communism and Russian nihilism in all its forms.' Leonidas Hill, p. 152, notes how in private letters to his family von Weizsäcker remarked that the Pope seemed far more friendly to the Germans than the Allies.
- ⁴⁴ Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 426.
- ⁴⁵ Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy*.
- ⁴⁶ Kent, *Pope XII and Germany*: pp. 77-78. Braham, p. 1065. Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 437, suggests that the inspiration for Hudal's letter came not from the Vatican but German diplomats who were opposed to the deportations.
- ⁴⁷ Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 436.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 421, 432.
- ⁴⁹ William Oddie, 'The Lie of Hitler's Pope,' *Catholic Herald*, 9.8.13., <http://tinyurl.com/ll3bgvy>, Steinberg, fn.2, p. 68 refers to how Italian Jews 'talk feelingly of men like Torquato Fraccon, a Christian Democrat militant shot by the Germans for having concealed Jews; and women like Idea Batistella, a modest peasant woman who hid a Jewish family in her home for more than a year.'
- ⁵⁰ Gilbert; *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy*; London: Collins, 1986; pp.622-3
- ⁵¹ Zuccotti, *L'Osservatore Roman and the Holocaust 1939-1945*, p. 250.
- ⁵² Zuccotti, *Pope XII and the Rescue of the Jews in Italy: Evidence of a Papal Directive?* p. 256. It is unlikely that there was a written as opposed to oral order. Catholic institutions in Rome and Italy clearly played a crucial role in the rescue of Jews. The existence of a written order seems somewhat irrelevant.
- ⁵³ Weizsäcker sent his assistant, Kessel, to warn leading members of the Jewish community, Leonidas Hill, p. 147.
- ⁵⁴ Zuccotti, *Under his Windows*, pp. 156-7, 167-8. Hill, pp. 150, 157. Hilberg, pp. 715-16 cites a telegram from Weizsäcker to Berlin of 28.10.43. that Pius XII had 'done everything not to damage relations with the German government.' Pius expressed 'his despair over the Allied pursuit of unconditional surrender.'
- ⁵⁵ Braham, p. 1067.

- [56](#) Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 439.
- [57](#) Phayer, Pope Pius XII, the Holocaust and the Cold War, p. 236.
- [58](#) *Ibid.*, p. 237.
- [59](#) Phayer, *The Catholic Resistance Circle*, p. 223.
- [60](#) Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*. pp. 440-1.
- [61](#) Phayer, *The Catholic Resistance Circle*, pp. 217-18, 220.
- [62](#) Novick, p. 144.
- [63](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, pp. 100-1.
- [64](#) Lapidé, pp. 159-60.
- [65](#) *Ibid.*, p. 161. Zuccotti, despite being extremely critical of Pius XII, accepts that the Church played a major part in the rescue of Italy's Jews, p.301. Zuccotti suggests that diplomacy rather than historical accuracy was the principal motivation of Lapidé for exonerating Pius XII, pp. 303-4.
- [66](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 110.
- [67](#) Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 446.
- [68](#) Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, p. 55. 'Two groups of people were singled out from the moment of their arrival for particularly sadistic treatment: priests and Jews.' Laurence Rees, *Auschwitz*, p. 50. It is estimated that 2,300 priests and nuns were killed and 5,400 imprisoned by the Nazis in Poland, Zuccotti, p. 96.
- [69](#) Lapidé, p. 203. Forty Protestant ministers and 49 Catholic priests died in German prisons and camps.
- [70](#) José M. Sánchez, *Pius XII and the Holocaust*, Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2002, p. 157. <https://tinyurl.com/ugpdh8h>
- [71](#) Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 423.
- [72](#) Sergio Minerbi, p. xv.
- [73](#) Zuccotti, pp. 257-8.
- [74](#) Lapidé, *Three Popes and the Jews*, pp. 214-15. Lapidé gave no indication as to how he had reached this figure. I estimate that the true figure is a third to a half of this.
- [75](#) Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust*, p. 76.
- [76](#) Braham, *Remembering and Forgetting*, pp. 234-6.
- [77](#) Kent, *Pope Pius XII and Germany: Some Aspects of German-Vatican Relations*, p. 67.
- [78](#) Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany*, pp. 265-6. See Beth Griech-Polelle, *Image of a Churchman-Resister: Bishop von Galen*, pp. 41-57.
- [79](#) Griech-Polelle, *Image of a Churchman Resister*, p. 51.
- [80](#) Hilberg p. 587.
- [81](#) *Ibid.*, p. 597.
- [82](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, p. 328.
- [83](#) Presser, pp. 147-8; Zuccotti, p. 313, suggests that the Protestant Jews were eventually deported too.
- [84](#) Phayer, *Helping the Jews is not an easy thing to do*, p. 430.
- [85](#) Mason, *Testing Human Bonds Within Nations*, p. 331.
- [86](#) Lapidé, pp. 189-90.

- [87](#) Lapidé, p. 192, citing the 1943 Bulletin of the U.S. National Conference of Christians and Jews.
- [88](#) Hilberg, pp. 682-3.
- [89](#) Morse, p. 68.
- [90](#) Lewy, p. 293.
- [91](#) Hilberg, p. 735.
- [92](#) Phayer, *Pope Piuix XI, the Holocaust and the Cold War*, pp. 244-6.
- [93](#) Hilberg, p. 316.
- [94](#) Fein, *Accounting for Genocide*, p. 94.
- [95](#) Lapidé, p. 213.
- [96](#) Vincentas Brizgys, Shoah Resource Centre, Yad Vashem, <https://tinyurl.com/yav7kyqg>
- [97](#) Braham, p. 1029.
- [98](#) *Ibid.*, p. 551.
- [99](#) Miklos Szinai and Laszlo Szucs, *The Confidential Papers of Admiral Horthy* (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1963) pp. 296-8, cited in Baron, 'The 'Myth' and Reality of Rescue from the Holocaust', pp. 18, 31 fn xxxii.
- [100](#) Levai, pp.202, 206.
- [101](#) Hilberg, pp. 896-7.
- [102](#) Braham, p. 1035.
- [103](#) Lapidé, p. 154.
- [104](#) Porter, p. 225.
- [105](#) Hilberg, pp. 898-9. 'The lines of would-be converts waiting outside ... the parishes of the Christian churches... surpassed those of 1938 and 1939' Braham, *Politics of Genocide*, pp. 462-3, 780, 789.
- [106](#) Braham, p. 814; Levai, p. 102.
- [107](#) Levai, p. 148.
- [108](#) Braham, p. 845.
- [109](#) Levai, p. 150.
- [110](#) Braham, pp. 622-3.
- [111](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1049.
- [112](#) *Ibid.*, p. 571.
- [113](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1046.
- [114](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1051.
- [115](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1050.
- [116](#) *Ibid.*, p. 730.
- [117](#) Sari Reuveni, *Anti-Semitism in Hungary 1945-1946*, p. 53.
- [118](#) Braham, p. 1047.
- [119](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1048.
- [120](#) *Ibid.*, p. 1049.
- [121](#) Lapidé, p. 161, citing Levai. Braham, fn 4, p. 1011.
- [122](#) Braham, p. 987.
- [123](#) *Ibid.* p. 748

[124](#) *Ha'aretz* 3.5.20, 'Documents From Vatican Archives Show Pius XII Deliberately Ignored Reports on the Holocaust' and *Ha'aretz*, 6.7.22, 'Revealed: What Pope Pius XII Really Did During the Holocaust'.

PART THREE

ZIONISM AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

For me, Zionist considerations take precedence over Jewish sentiments. Zionism is the most profound thing in Judaism ... for a Jew is not automatically a Zionist. David Ben-Gurion 11.9.39.) [↓](#)

¹ Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, p. 31.

Chapter 14

Yad Vashem - Weaponising the Memory of the Holocaust

*'It's not an awareness of the holocaust but rather the myth of the holocaust or even a falsification of the holocaust (in the sense that "a half-truth is worse than a lie") which has been instilled here (in Israel)' (Israel Shahak)*¹

Elie Wiesel, the Auschwitz survivor and prominent Zionist, criticised the world's silence over the Holocaust at the same time as demanding silence over Israel's treatment of the Palestinians.²

Holocaust memorial days, museums, institutes and exhibitions combine to form the Holocaust Industry. Sanitised web sites and curricula, more notable for what they exclude than what they include, provide a distorted Hollywood version of holocaust. history, whose purpose is to eliminate any anti-imperialist, anti-racist or anti-fascist politics. Their purpose is to instill 'Holocaust Awareness':

an official, propagandistic indoctrinating, churning out slogans and a false view of the world, the real aim of which is not at all an understanding of the past, but a manipulation of the present.³

At the centre of this manipulation stands Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust propaganda museum.

Holocaust awareness and a 'culture of victimisation' allowed a Jewish victim identity to become dominant at the same time as anti-Semitism was disappearing.⁴ The Holocaust took hold among American Jews 'not because they were victims but because they were **not** victims.'⁵ The decline in Holocaust awareness was seen as synonymous with a decline in Jewish identity itself. Holocaust Awareness increasingly became seen as identification with the Israeli state, as adherence to religious rituals became less important.⁶ The Holocaust enabled Israel to reverse roles. It became the victim and the Palestinians became the oppressor.

If it wasn't for the Holocaust, Israeli Apartheid would be no more defensible than Apartheid in South Africa a generation ago. The Holocaust has become Israel's 'get out of jail free' card. Holocaust memory has become 'an instrument of ideology rather than a means of connecting with the past.'⁷ Its prime purpose is to protect the Israeli state.

The Holocaust & the Creation of Israel's Foundational Myths

There was a time when Israeli schoolchildren made the pilgrimage to Masada, the desert fortress where, according to myth, in 73 AD the Sicari zealots chose to commit suicide rather than surrender to the Romans. The message they learnt was that unlike the Jews of the Diaspora, Israeli Jews would choose death rather than capture, resistance rather than submission.

The initial attitude of the Zionist leaders in Palestine to the Holocaust was one of shame at the Jews' lack of resistance to the Nazis. It was seen as a 'powerful validation of Zionism.' ⁸ 'Very harsh criticism was (already) directed at those who were being annihilated.' Instead of going passively into the gas chamber the Jews should have fought back unarmed, even if that meant being torn to pieces by German shepherd dogs. Yitzhak Gruenbaum of the JAE spoke of 'unparalleled feelings of burning shame.' What mattered was not the horror of death by gas and the torments of the deportation trains but the blow to Jewish national pride.⁹

It was not until 1959 that Israel observed Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Day and for many years Israeli prime ministers and presidents did not officially speak on the occasion.¹⁰ It was only in the wake of the Eichmann trial that the Holocaust and Auschwitz 'were embraced as a cornerstone of Israel's collective identity.'¹¹

In the late 1940s and early 1950s the Holocaust was barely mentioned in Israel. In a 220-page Israeli history textbook published in 1948, just one page was devoted to the Holocaust compared to 10 pages on the Napoleonic wars.¹² The first time the Holocaust became part of the syllabus, in 1953, just two hours were devoted to it. 'Israel's high priests believed that forgetting was essential to energize for the task of creating a nation, the banning of the Shoah ... was no exception.'¹³ Until 1960 school textbooks contained virtually nothing on the Holocaust.¹⁴

The survivors were an embarrassment and Israelis described them as 'sapon' (soap).¹⁵ Israelis were struck by 'shame, silence and widespread denial.'¹⁶ Hanzi Brand wrote of how, when she settled on Kibbutz Gvata Haim, the other members 'talked about their war to avoid hearing about hers.' Israelis listened to the survivors' stories with a 'forced patience' that was soon exhausted.¹⁷

If Israelis were ashamed of the Diaspora many holocaust survivors bitterly resented the Yishuv: 'You danced the hora while we were being burned in the

crematoriums' said Yosef Rosensaft, a Displaced Persons leader at Bergen-Belsen, who settled in America.¹⁸

The reception accorded to the non-Jewish wives of Polish Jews who, at great risk, had saved their husbands' lives, was shocking. Rather than welcoming them as heroes, they were seen as a threat to Israel's Jewish identity. 'A surge of mixed marriages and uncircumcised boys,' was how *Yedioth Ahranoth* described them. They were called 'Russian shiksa (or) whores.'¹⁹

The prevailing view in the Yishuv was that holocaust survivors represented the 'survival of the worst.'²⁰ In Ben-Gurion's view they were 'hard, evil and selfish people and their experiences destroyed what good qualities they had left.'²¹ They were 'a mob and human dust, without language, without education, without roots.'²² When Israelis did talk about the Holocaust 'the sentiments they expressed were less likely to be sympathy or sadness for the suffering of the victims and more likely to be denigration of their behaviour.'²³

The Eichmann Trial

The Eichmann trial marked the beginning of a dramatic shift in Israeli perception of the Holocaust.²⁴ The trial was intended to 'expunge the historical guilt that had been attached to the Mapai leadership since the Kasztner Trial.'²⁵ That was why, of the 102 witnesses, 90 had never even met Eichmann or even heard his name until after the war.²⁶ The trial was not about Eichmann but how Israel related to the Holocaust.

Nothing was left to chance. André Biss came to Israel but was prevented from testifying because he insisted on defending Kasztner.²⁷ Rudolf Vrba and Marek Edelman, two heroes of the anti-Zionist Jewish resistance, were excluded, the pretext being that Israel could not afford their fares.²⁸

The most glaring omission was the lack of any witness to the co-operation between Eichmann and the Zionists. When Freudiger testified this caused the only significant interruption as Hungarian survivors called him a collaborator and accused him of abandoning his position as a leader of the Orthodox Community.²⁹

'Extraordinary precautions' were taken to prevent the name of Hans Globke, the closest advisor to Konrad Adenauer, the German Chancellor, from being made public. In 1936 Globke, a senior official at the Interior Ministry, wrote a legal commentary on the Nuremberg Laws which became standard in

Nazi Germany's courts. It stipulated that sexual relations between Aryans and non-Aryans was a crime even if it took place outside Germany. In 1938 he introduced a regulation requiring Jews to take the first names, Israel or Sara.³⁰ He also played a key role in the development of Israel's nuclear weapons.³¹ Protecting Israeli-German military and financial relations was paramount.³² Israel was determined to avoid the issue of the role of ex-Nazi officials in the new German state.³³

The trial's purpose was not to prove the guilt of Eichmann, which was self-evident, but to remould Israel's national identity as one of victimhood. The Holocaust became a 'central element of Israeliness'.³⁴ Anti-Zionist Jewish resistance and the failure of the Zionist movement to make the rescue of European Jewry a priority were erased, both from the trial itself and Israeli memory.

In his opening speech, Hausner spoke in the name of the Jewish dead appropriating to the Israeli State the right to represent those who had died.³⁵ Hausner asked 'Why did you not resist?' Moshé Bensky, who survived a work camp near Krakow replied, 'Where could we go dressed in rags with our shaved heads?'³⁶ But this did not stop Hausner later attacking Hilberg because Arendt 'in her vicious and compassionless attitude to the Judenrat' drew upon his work.³⁷ Although Diaspora Jewry 'had degenerated until they went to their death like sheep' Hausner defended the Judenrate, whose collaboration had undermined Jewish resistance.³⁸

Zionist contempt for the Holocaust survivors was played down as the Holocaust became a foundational Zionist myth.³⁹ The emphasis in the trial was therefore on Jewish resistance, the Warsaw Ghetto in particular.⁴⁰ The message conveyed was that Israel's war against the Palestinians was a continuation of this resistance.⁴¹ The ghost of Kasztner, however, continued to haunt them, as they discovered when Arendt published *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.

From the early 1960s onwards, the Holocaust assumed greater importance in Israel. Golda Meir insisted that the Mufti be brought into the Eichmann trial in order to demonstrate a link between the Arab national movement and the Holocaust.⁴² It was through uncritical support for Israeli settler colonialism, in the case of Germany financially and militarily, that the world atoned for the Holocaust and the German state expiated its guilt.

People have focussed on the Supreme Court's decision to find Eichmann guilty and the imposition of the death penalty, whilst ignoring its decision that

'the Appellant had received no superior orders.' Eichmann was his own superior.⁴³ Israel's Supreme Court had exculpated both Himmler and Hitler.

It was only in 1998 that a lawsuit forced the Israeli Government to release the transcripts of the Eichmann trial. A movie *The Specialist* was made, directed by Eyal Sivan. It reflected Arendt's thesis on the banality of evil. Eichmann, whose enthusiasm for the annihilation of the Jews was never doubted, had nonetheless been a bureaucratic cog in the wheel.

The longer one listened to him, the more obvious it became that his inability to speak was closely connected with an inability to think, namely to think from the standpoint of somebody else.⁴⁴

The film broke a 35 year policy of suppression. Two years later *Eichmann in Jerusalem* was published in Hebrew.⁴⁵

Eichmann was an ardent Zionist. In an interview with Sassen, Eichmann declared 'I often said to Jews with whom I had dealings that, had I been a Jew, I would have been a fanatical Zionist. I could not imagine anything else.'⁴⁶

Baron Leopold von Mildenstein had required Eichmann to read Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* 'which converted Eichmann promptly and forever to Zionism. As late as 1939 he seems to have protested against desecrators of Herzl's grave in Vienna.

Eichmann attended in civilian clothes the 35th anniversary of Herzl's death.'⁴⁷ Eichmann had assumed command of IV-B-4, the Jewish desk in 1941 and was given the Zionist section (II, 1123).⁴⁸

The Eichmann trial chose to ignore the connection between the T4 programme and the Holocaust.⁴⁹ The court found that 'it has not been proved' that Eichmann knew that the Gypsies were being transported to destruction. This despite the fact that Eichmann had admitted during the police examination that he knew of it.⁵⁰

The trial verdict did not see the extermination of millions of people as a crime against humanity.⁵¹ Rather it was a crime against the Jewish people. The Eichmann trial was a show trial. It focused solely on the Jewish dead and failed to place the Holocaust in historical perspective. All other victims of the Nazis went unmentioned. The trial's purpose was not so much to understand history as to rewrite it.

The Attack on Hannah Arendt

Despite its claim to represent a wide spectrum of Jewish opinion, Zionism is a narrow, tribal form of Jewish nationalism. Zionism found it impossible to tolerate a free thinker such as Hannah Arendt. As Arendt observed:

many people in Zionist circles have become incapable of listening to opinions or arguments which are off the beaten path or not consonant with their ideology.⁵²

Bruno Bettelheim, a survivor of Dachau and Buchenwald, agreed with Arendt's questioning of the Zionist narrative in the Eichmann trial. The Holocaust was less about the history of anti-Semitism and more about the rise of totalitarianism.⁵³ For Arendt the Holocaust was about the fascist attack on human diversity rather than a specific attack on the Jewish people.⁵⁴

Arendt committed the ultimate sin. She had a 'universalist perspective' ⁵⁵ There was an 'unresolved tension between Jewish identity and particularism and universalistic aspirations.' ⁵⁶ Arendt was accused by Gershom Scholem of lacking '*ahavath Israel*', or love of the Jewish people. Arendt responded thus:

You are quite right – I am not moved by any "love" of this sort, and for two reasons: first, I have never in my life "loved" any people or collective.... I indeed love "only" my friends and the only kind of love I know of and believe in is the love of persons. Second, this kind love for the Jews would seem suspect to me, since I am Jewish myself"

She asserted that she didn't "love" the Jewish people. '*I merely belong to them as a matter of course, beyond dispute or argument.*'⁵⁷ It was a devastating put down. Arendt had turned her back on Zionism's racial nationalism. She saw the Jewish diaspora, not the Israeli state, as the centre of the Jewish universe, whereas for Zionism 'the Jewish individual has no existence in the diaspora.'⁵⁸

Arendt rejected Zionism's reduction of Jewish history to the 'return' to Palestine. She saw anti-Semitism as 'a manifestation of profound changes underway in European societies rather than a renewal of an ancient antipathy.'⁵⁹ The myth of the Jew as victim was a 'substitute for their history' and reduced them to a tribal identity.⁶⁰

According to Zionism, the Jews were not history-makers but history-sufferers, preserving an identity of goodness, sinned against but never sinning. Jews were absent from European and world history. Jewish victimhood was essentialised and eternal.⁶¹ Jews were cardboard cutout victims with no agency of their own.

The Zionist movement exploded with fury when Arendt published *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. A torrent of abuse descended on her.⁶² Arendt's crime was to highlight what the Eichmann trial had been designed to avoid.

The campaign, conducted with all the well-known means of image-making and opinion-manipulation, got much more attention than the controversy.... (it was) as

though the pieces written against the book (and more frequently against its author) came “out of a mimeographing machine” ... the clamor centered on the “image” of a book which was never written, and touched upon subjects that often had not only not been mentioned by me but had never occurred to me before.⁶³

Arendt was accused of ‘justifying the perspective of the perpetrators’.⁶⁴ A refugee from the Nazis, she was portrayed as a Nazi sympathiser. Even the more sophisticated Zionist critics indulged in personal abuse.⁶⁵ One French weekly asked whether Arendt was a Nazi. ⁶⁶ Arendt had claimed that ‘the Jews had murdered themselves’ and why had she done this? Out of “self-hatred!” ⁶⁷

The attacks on Arendt were based on ‘the exact opposite of what I did in fact write.’ In a letter to Mary McCarthy, Arendt complained ‘what a risky business to tell the truth on a factual level without theoretical and scholarly embroidery.’⁶⁸

The Holocaust could only be understood on Jewish national soil. Arendt was ‘incapable, of sensing the Jewish experience because she was from “there”, as if “there” was not where the Holocaust had occurred.’⁶⁹ What most annoyed her critics was that no twentieth-century political scientist had made such an impression internationally. To Walter Laqueur ‘the Arendt cult was a riddle.’ ⁷⁰

How the Holocaust Reinforces the Racism of Israeli Youth

Each year thousands of Israeli children go to Auschwitz, not in order that they might learn about the dangers of racism but in order to reaffirm and strengthen their own racism. The tours instil in them militarism and nationalism, the message being that only by being strong can Auschwitz never happen again. What they don’t learn about is why the Holocaust occurred and the social, economic and political roots of racism and fascism. The lesson they are encouraged to draw is that opposition to the ‘Jewish’ state by the ‘Arabs’ is driven by the same factors that led the Nazis to exterminate Europe’s Jews.⁷¹

Auschwitz has supplanted Masada as the site of Israel’s indoctrination of its young. Instead of a murky battle 2000 years ago, the Holocaust provides the setting for Zionism’s national myths. Auschwitz is used to impart the message that Jews too can be racists and pogromists.⁷²

Shulamit Aloni, Israel’s former Education Minister, described how these trips ‘were turning students into aggressive, flag-waving xenophobes.’⁷³ The final ceremony for such trips was in Warsaw where a poem from Haim Gouri

was recited in which the Holocaust victim and the partisan in the forests is merged with the 'IDF paratrooper taking revenge against his enemies.' [74](#) The Holocaust reinforces Zionism's tribal racism.[75](#) Gideon Levy wrote:

I have yet to hear a single teenager come back from Auschwitz and say that we mustn't abuse others the way we were abused. There has yet to be a school whose pupils came back from Birkenau straight to the Gaza border, saw the barbed-wire fence and said, Never again. The message is always the opposite. Gaza is permitted because of Auschwitz.[76](#)

Zionist holocaust history views non-Jews as subhuman 'emulating, for all intent and purposes, the racist ideas of the Nazis.' [77](#) 40% of Israeli teenagers (15-18) and 44% of young Israelis (21-24) said they thought that Arab Israelis should be barred from being elected to the Knesset.[78](#) 'The genocide of European Jewry [is] being used as part of the negation of what is happening to the Palestinians.'[79](#)

Holocaust Remembrance Day has become one of the most effective ideological influences on Israel's national-chauvinistic ethos.

Once again they will use our murdered families in order to glorify the Israeli army and its heroism against Gaza and against the village of Bilin, ... Once again they will draw a line as straight as a snake between the German and Ukrainian murderers and the Palestinians, who in 1948 tried to defend their homeland from those who came to dispossess them.[80](#)

Why Did the Holocaust Grow in Importance as Time Elapsed?

For years the Holocaust was a taboo subject for America's Jewish elites. Novick suggested a number of reasons for why the Holocaust became 'a central symbol of Jewishness... a thread of mean-spirited moralism' closely connected to US Jewry's rightward turn.[81](#)

Mention of the Holocaust was originally seen as indicating communist sympathies. When the campaign to save the Rosenbergs from execution was at its height, it was 'a rare public event' for the Holocaust not to be mentioned and at their funeral the *Song of the Warsaw Ghetto* was sung.[82](#)

West Germany was a crucial American ally in the Cold War. Mention of the Holocaust was therefore seen as a communist cause.[83](#) For more than 15 years after the war, historians barely touched the subject.[84](#)

Why then the contemporary concern with the Holocaust compared to its treatment in the period immediately after the Second World War? Laor's

explanation was that this was about:

consolidating a new ideology of exclusion. Now it is the Jews who are the insiders... the genocide and the Jews served in the construction of a European identity... [85](#)

It is Muslims and Arabs who are the outsiders in Europe today and the Holocaust plays a central role in their demonisation. This is especially true in Germany. When every party in the Bundestag, from the neo-Nazi *AfD* to *Die Grünen* condemn BDS as 'anti-Semitic' then it is clear that the Holocaust serves as a unifying ideology for a racist European political hegemony.[86](#) Holocaust ideology serves the same political purposes as anti-Semitism once did.

The Holocaust has been instrumentalised to ward off, if not demonise, criticism of Israel whilst also being used to justify anti-communist interventions abroad. It has become part of America and the West's imagined collective memory and self-identity.[87](#) NBC's serialisation of *Holocaust* in April 1978, was watched by 100 million people. The Holocaust entered into America's political consciousness.[88](#)

The Holocaust as a Divine Punishment

The Holocaust has become Zionism's political Iron Dome. It has shielded it from criticism, not least in Germany and given Israel permanent immunity for its crimes against the Palestinians. The case for an ethnically pure Jewish state is based on the supposition that if it had existed in 1939 then the Holocaust could have been prevented.

This 'what if' argument conveniently avoids the fact that in their hour of need the Zionist project proved wanting. Far from saving European Jewry, Zionism was an obstacle to their rescue. There isn't one single instance of the Zionist movement campaigning for the United States or Britain to lower their immigration barriers or admit refugees from Nazism.

There hasn't been a war involving Israel 'that has not been perceived, defined, and conceptualized in terms of the Holocaust.' Israel has mobilised the Holocaust 'in the service of Israeli politics.' [89](#) When the claims of the Palestinian refugees are set against those of the Holocaust, 'the dispossession of the Palestinian people... is minimized and blurred.' Auschwitz has become a 'license to come up with more kinds of fences, walls and military guard towers.'[90](#)

Walter Goldsmith suggested that ‘the holocaust mortgage has now been settled and should be used less frequently’. Yet the debt continues to grow.⁹¹ The Holocaust is not only a mainstay of Zionist propaganda, it provides the interface for conflict between Israeli Jews.⁹² There is a desire to make one’s opponents suffer as the Jews suffered. Oriental Jews have painted graffiti such as ‘Ashkenazim - Back to Auschwitz’ on Jewish property.⁹³ Supporters of the settlers shout ‘Hitler was right’ at Jewish peace activists ⁹⁴ and secular Jews have daubed swastikas on the walls of synagogues and defiled religious artifacts.⁹⁵

There is a widespread belief amongst the Orthodox, which Ovadia Yosef, Israel’s Sephardi Chief Rabbi gave voice to, that the Holocaust victims were punished for their previous sins.⁹⁶ This is also true of secular Zionism. After the announcement by the JA of the Holocaust, *Davar*, the paper of the Histadrut, referred to the extermination of Europe’s Jews as ‘punishment from heaven’ for not having come to Palestine.⁹⁷ This belief is also prevalent amongst Christian Zionists.

Rabbi Giora Radler told his students that the Holocaust was ‘a divine punishment designed to make the Jewish people leave the diaspora.’ Radler went on to say that Hitler was ‘completely right’ albeit that he was on the wrong side.⁹⁸

Yad Vashem & Rewriting the History of Jewish Resistance

The first proposal to establish a memorial to Jews killed in the Holocaust came in September 1942 from Mordechai Shenhavi, at a board meeting of the JNF.⁹⁹ Most of Europe’s Jews were still alive. It was seen as ‘the very last opportunity to score any financial success.’ ¹⁰⁰ In May 1945 Shenhavi stressed the urgency because ‘otherwise, other communities in the Diaspora would do so first and Palestine would lose its leadership in memorialising the tragedy.’ ¹⁰¹

At the time the JA had not even acknowledged the Holocaust. It is difficult to think of anything more macabre than the Zionist leadership discussing how best to exploit the memory of those who were yet to be killed.¹⁰² The name proposed was ‘A Monument to the Destroyed Diaspora.’¹⁰³ It was as if these functionaries were looking forward to a fulfillment of their dream of an end to the Diaspora.

The 1953 Yad Vashem Law established the Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority. YV was placed in the hands of Ben-Zion Dinur, the Minister of Education and Culture.¹⁰⁴ In 1955 Dinur outlined what he considered the ‘fundamental lessons of the Holocaust’: ‘exile is not only a misfortune and adversity, but also is a transgression and a sin.’ The very name of the law

raised the armed actions of Jewish partisans, ghetto fighters and soldiers in allied armies to the same level of significance as the suffering and death of the 6 million.¹⁰⁵

Resistance to the Nazis had been the exception but in order to integrate the Holocaust into a seamless heroic nationalist myth it was necessary to exaggerate the role of the Jewish resistance and to deemphasise the victims. The Holocaust became ‘Holocaust and Heroism.’ Destruction became ‘Destruction and Uprising.’ This ‘prophesying the past’ resulted in much holocaust literature being ‘unfit for use.’¹⁰⁶

These myths are at the heart of Zionist holocaust history. The result has been to encourage among young Israelis a deep revulsion toward the behaviour of the Jewish victims that was extended to all diaspora Jews.¹⁰⁷

This found expression in the preference accorded to research studies devoted to resistance and revolt and it determined the character of the study of the Holocaust in Israel’s school syllabus. YV’s prioritising of resistance whilst exonerating the Judenrate, meant that they were incapable of producing a comprehensive work on the Holocaust such as those by Reitlinger and Hilberg.¹⁰⁸

In 1957 YV refused to publish Raul Hilberg’s *The Destruction of the European Jews*, because it failed to conform to their narrative. Director-General Joseph Melkman, explained that the problem was that Hilberg’s manuscript highlighted Jewish submissiveness.

Hilberg wrote that ‘The reaction pattern of the Jews is characterized by almost complete lack of resistance.’¹⁰⁹

There were very few cases of physical resistance against the Nazi murderers. All the attempts of organised revolt in the cities, with the exceptions of Warsaw and Bialystok, and a few small towns, went unrealized or were stifled before they could be carried out.

¹¹⁰

Although translated into various languages, Hilberg’s book was not translated into Hebrew.¹¹¹ ‘How could he ever be part of the Israeli “narrative strategy” of identity?’¹¹² Whilst Bauer accepted that Hilberg’s book was ‘monumental, brilliant ... (an) unsurpassed analysis of the Nazi bureaucracy’¹¹³

YV still refused to publish it despite it being ‘probably the most important book ever written on the subject.’ [114](#)

YV also refused to publish *I Cannot Forgive*, the story of Vrba and Wetzler’s escape from Auschwitz. Bauer told Yehoshua Ben-Ami:

I truly regret that Yad Vashem did not translate the book into Hebrew. On the other hand, his whole wild assault on Kastner and the underground Slovakian leadership is ahistorical and fundamentally mistaken... [115](#)

YV is part of the Israeli state, tasked with formulating a ‘hegemonic institutionalization of the Holocaust.’ [116](#) The intention behind its founding was to claim the Holocaust as the exclusive property of the Zionist movement. Israel lobby group, the ADL, was insistent that there must be a relationship between the Holocaust and support for Israel.[117](#) The Holocaust became transformed into a ‘bizarre cult of memory, death and kitsch’,[118](#) a ‘macabre worship of death.’[119](#)

YV historians Yisrael Gutman and Chaim Schatzker wrote a new textbook, *The Holocaust and its Meaning*, in 1983 which linked the Holocaust to the justice of creating the Israeli state. What was conspicuous by its absence was any interpretation of the Holocaust that imparted universal lessons such as opposition to racism. Shulamit Aloni attempted to change the approach to holocaust education in schools from an aggressively nationalist to a universalist one ‘but the reaction against the idea was so strong that the project was quickly abandoned.’ Aloni was soon forced out as Education Minister.[120](#)

Yad Vashem and Holocaust Amoralty

YV is situated a few hundred metres from the site of Deir Yassin (Givat Shaul), the village where a massacre of Palestinians took place in 1948 when over a hundred Palestinian civilians were butchered in cold blood by the Zionist terror groups, Irgun and Lehi. When a guide, Itamar Shapira, referred to this in a talk to visitors to YV, he was sacked.[121](#) Holocaust denial may be forbidden, but Nakba denial is kosher. Arabs who visit YV are often racially abused.[122](#)

Zionism has used the Holocaust to justify its exceptionalism: ‘no other people involved in a colonial-settler project were fleeing a form of persecution as longstanding and brutal as European anti-Semitism...’ [123](#) If the Zionist settlers were simply fleeing anti-Semitism then they would have gone to the USA or Britain like 99% of Russian Jews did.

But even if they had been fleeing persecution, did that give the Zionist settlers the right to visit the sins of their tormentors on the Palestinians? Did the Irish famine justify Irish-American participation in the extermination of the native population of North America?

Perhaps the most shocking example of YV's amorality was its refusal to condemn the attempt by Netanyahu to deport up to 60,000 African refugees for the double 'crime' of being neither White nor Jewish. *Ha'aretz* journalist Nir Gontarz described his reception when he rang YV and asked them to publicly condemn Netanyahu's attempt to deport the refugees:

One after the other of the senior staff there, including Mr. Avner Shalev [the director], slammed the phone down on me when I asked to speak to them... I asked them this morning to remove from their database the details I gave them in the past about my family.¹²⁴

The response of Colette Avital of the Organisations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel was that:

We as holocaust survivors think it's sad that we – precisely those who should have learned the lessons of our history – are behaving in this way toward a handful of people who are not endangering either Israel's demography or its future. ...

Yad Vashem has learnt no lessons from the Holocaust bar the racist fear that Israel's Jewish majority will be eroded if Israel admits non-Jewish refugees.

Righteous Among the Nations?

YV awards the title of 'Righteous Among the Nations' to those who risked their lives saving Jews from the Nazis. Just one Arab, Dr Mohamed Helmy, has been awarded the title unlike thousands of European recipients. Helmy, who hid Jews in Berlin, was posthumously awarded the title in 2013.¹²⁵ His family rejected the award.¹²⁶ It took until 2017 before a relative could be located who would receive the certificate from the Israeli ambassador. This took place at a ceremony in the German Foreign Ministry not the Israeli Embassy.¹²⁷ Just 70 Muslims out of a total of 22,000 recipients were, by 2007, considered 'Righteous', of whom 63 came from Albania.¹²⁸

Khaled Abdul-Wahab, the 'Arab Schindler', rescued Eve Weisel and her family and hid them with other Jews on his farm.¹²⁹ He was nominated in 2007 and again in 2010 to become 'Righteous' but was turned down both times.

Weisel wrote that the reason was because 'my hometown is Mahdia, on the eastern shore of Tunisia, and our rescuer, Khaled Abdul-Wahab, was an Arab Muslim.' ¹³⁰ Robert Satloff wrote that there were two main reasons that no

Arabs were among the list of the 'righteous' — 'first, many Arabs (or their heirs) didn't want to be found, and second, Jews didn't look too hard.' [131](#)

Si Kaddour Benghabrit, the rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris saved between 500 and 1,600 Jews. The Mosque was a point of refuge for the resistance and Jews. [132](#) Amongst those rescued was a famous Algerian Jewish singer, Salim Halali. The *Bâtisseuses de Paix*, an association of Jewish and Muslim women, submitted a petition in 2005 asking that YV should recognize Benghabrit. This was refused in accordance with their existing policy not to award Arabs such a title. Benghabrit's efforts to save Jews are depicted in the 2011 film *Free Men*. [133](#)

Yad Vashem as a Diplomatic Laundromat

YV is on the itinerary of all foreign dignitaries to Israel. In April 1976 it welcomed John Vorster, Prime Minister of South Africa, who was interned during the war for Nazi sympathies. [134](#) Since then it has played host to a variety of far-Right politicians, such as the Hitler-admiring Presidents of Brazil and the Philippines, Jair Bolsonaro and Rodrigo Duterte. [135](#)

In July 2018 YV hosted a visit by Viktor Orban, Hungary's Prime Minister. A year previously Orban had claimed that Admiral Horthy, who had presided over the deportation of half a million Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz, was an 'exceptional statesman'. [136](#)

Orban's visit was picketed by survivors of the Holocaust. [137](#) Orban had won a General Election earlier in the year by waging an anti-Semitic campaign against George Soros. Orban spoke of Soros and by implication all Jews as:

not national, but international; they do not believe in work, but speculate with money; they have no homeland, but feel that the whole world is theirs. [138](#)

This did not stop a bromance between Netanyahu and Orban. In January 2019 the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Saulius Skvernelis, paid a visit to YV despite the Lithuanian authorities making nationalist mass murderers of Jews into heroes. [139](#)

Daniel Blatman described YV as a 'hard-working laundromat, striving to bleach out the sins of every anti-Semitic, fascist, racist or simply murderously thuggish leader or politician.' [140](#)

Israel Shahak, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto and Bergen- Belsen wrote 'Of the Yad Vashem... theatre, I do not wish to speak, at all. It, and its vile

exploiting, such as honouring South Africa collaborators with the Nazis, are truly beneath contempt.’[141](#)

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum [USHMM]

In October 1980, Congress authorized the establishment of the USHMM in Washington. It opened in April 1993. From the start the USHMM had one overriding purpose – to harness the Holocaust to the cause of US imperialism. Founded at the end of the cold war, when I visited it in 1995 I saw Pastor Martin Niemöller’s famous saying at the entrance:

‘First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—Because I was not a Socialist...’ [142](#)

The original version began with Hitler’s first victims, the Communists. However that would not have been politically convenient so Niemöller’s statement was changed.[143](#) The USHMM:

downplays discriminatory US immigration quotas before the war, exaggerates the US role in liberating the concentration camps and silently passes over the massive US recruitment of Nazi war criminals at the war’s end. [144](#)

These museums have drained the Holocaust of any anti-racist or anti-fascist lessons. Like the British Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, the USHMM refused to include Gypsies in the Holocaust.[145](#) Executive Director Rabbi Seymour Siegel ridiculed such a suggestion as ‘cockamamie’ stating that ‘there should be some recognition or acknowledgement of the gypsy people... if there is such a thing.’

If the Jews were not the sole victims, then the legitimacy of the Israeli state itself is undermined and the idea that the Holocaust was the product of an eternal hatred of the Jews is redundant. As Museum Chairman Miles Lerman explained : ‘To put this museum on the opposite side of Israel – it’s inconceivable.’ [146](#) As a result the USHMM is on the side of the world’s only apartheid state.

Holocaust Uniqueness

For Zionism the Holocaust is unique, a Jewish-only affair.[147](#) Drawing universal lessons from the Holocaust meant the ‘plunder of [Jewish] moral capital’.[148](#) Gerhard Riegner declared that ‘Auschwitz was not only a national memory belonging to the Jewish people... it was also an important political asset.’ [149](#)

By treating the Holocaust as unique, the Zionist movement promoted the ‘evasion of moral and historical responsibility’ since everything is dwarfed by comparison.¹⁵⁰ Daniel Blatman wrote about how:

The holocaust...serves the right's proto-fascist, racist, victim-centered discourse, meant to whitewash the ongoing crime against the Palestinians and to put the Christian world in a position of eternal apology.¹⁵¹

Yehuda Elkana, a child survivor of Auschwitz and former President and rector of the Central European University in Budapest (before Orban forced it out as part of his campaign against George Soros) argued that what happened in Germany could happen anywhere, and to any people, describing how the ‘majority of Israelis are consumed by a profound hatred of the Arabs’. Elkana described:

a profound existential “Angst” fed by a particular interpretation of the lessons of the holocaust ... that we are the eternal victim. In this ancient belief... I see the tragic and paradoxical victory of Hitler. Two nations, metaphorically speaking, emerged from the ashes of Auschwitz: a minority who assert, “this must never happen again,” and a frightened and haunted majority who assert, “this must never happen to us again.”¹⁵²

Citing Thomas Jefferson’s maxim that democracy and worship of the past are incompatible, Elkana argued that ‘The very existence of democracy is endangered when the memory of the dead participates actively in the democratic process.’¹⁵³ For Zionism the Holocaust was inexplicable, beyond history. It was a ‘sacred and essentially incomprehensible event.’¹⁵⁴

Zionism opposes any comparison between the Holocaust and other genocides. Elie Wiesel was concerned about comparisons with the Khmer Rouge.¹⁵⁵ Whilst accepting that 1.5 million Armenians killed by Turkey was a ‘parallel, or a holocaust-related event’ Dawidowicz cited ‘the uniqueness of the fate the Jews experienced.’¹⁵⁶ Bauer also argued that there was ‘an element of uniqueness in the history of the (Nazi) Holocaust’ because Nazi ideology saw the Jews as being the ‘incarnation of the Devil’¹⁵⁷ as if this wasn’t true of all victims of genocide.

Every genocide is unique. The rationale of the murderers is irrelevant. What matters is what they did. The role that the Armenians played in the Ottoman Empire as a ‘middleman minority’ was very similar to that of the Jews.¹⁵⁸ The Turks even invented their own stab-in-the-back legend, holding the Armenians responsible for their defeat in the First World War.¹⁵⁹

Zionism has a history of downplaying the Armenian holocaust. In order to secure a charter, Herzl agreed to support Ottoman Turkey in the wake of its massacres in the mid-1890s, writing that:

Yesterday I telegraphed the N. Fr. Presse, a rather long Entrefilet (notice) presenting the local, undeniably critical situation in a manner friendly to the government.¹⁶⁰

Bernard Lazare, the original Dreyfusard, was a prominent supporter of the Armenians. Lazare resigned from the Zionist Actions Committee because he 'could find no place in Herzl's essentially reactionary movement.'¹⁶¹ In an Open

Letter, Lazare asked how Herzl could 'extend a welcoming hand to murderers, and no delegate to the Zionist Congress rises up in protest?'¹⁶²

Israeli diplomats and politicians supported Turkey's opposition to a memorial day to commemorate the Armenian holocaust. Israel opposed the concept of the Holocaust expanding.¹⁶³ Elie Wiesel, Arthur Hertzberg of the AJC and YV attempted to destroy an international conference on genocide in Tel Aviv in 1982 because it included sessions on the Armenian holocaust.¹⁶⁴ Israel's Foreign Ministry made strenuous efforts to sabotage the conference.¹⁶⁵

Holocaust scholar Israel Charny, who organised the conference, described the Armenian holocaust as a 'dress rehearsal for the Holocaust'. Israeli historian Bat Ye'or described how the Germans, allies of the Turks in the First World War, were present at the massacres and that 'this history lesson was remembered one generation later, when Hitler planned a genocide...'¹⁶⁶

What was unique about the Holocaust was the attempt to industrially annihilate whole racial groups. Not only the Jews, but the Gypsies and the Disabled. Yet historians have eliminated them. The diary of Adam Czerniakow records the presence of both German and Polish Gypsies in the Warsaw Ghetto yet Gutman ignored them in his study of the Revolt.¹⁶⁷

The slave trade, with the massive death rate on the Middle Passage and the working to death of millions of slaves, bore more than a passing resemblance to the extermination of the Jews.¹⁶⁸

Falsifying & Distorting the History of the Holocaust

Whereas the Bundist youth stayed in close contact with their leadership in Poland, the Zionist youth movements gradually lost touch with their parties in Palestine.

The response from Palestine 'lapsed into silence' causing a 'growing rift' between the youth leaders in Poland and Palestine.¹⁶⁹

Melech Neustadt, after visiting Istanbul in May 1942, reported that what disturbed his Zionist compatriots inside Europe was 'the paucity of the reports

which they receive from us. They complain bitterly about this in every letter.' Not one Palestinian emissary reached the ghettos of Poland in the war years.¹⁷⁰

The bitterness this caused necessitated amending the writings of their own dead comrades. Tuvia (Tova) Altman, a leader of the Hashomer Hatzair underground in Poland, wrote in December 1942 that 'Israel is dying before my eyes and I wring my hands and cannot help.' What they didn't publish was the following:

After all, you have erased me from your memory and what are we.... It takes all the restraint I can muster not to vent the bitterness that has accumulated for you and your friends for forgetting me so completely... Only the realization and the certainty that we will never again meet led me to write.... Do not give regards to anyone. I don't want to know about them.¹⁷¹

Prior to YV, Hakibbutz Hameuhad and Kibbutz Ha'artzi, established their own centres for holocaust research. The former established 'The Ghetto Fighters' House' and brought out a number of memoirs and diaries of those who had taken part in the resistance, such as that of Mordechai Tenenbaum-Tamarof (1948).¹⁷²

The diary of Tenenbaum-Tamarof was published with deletions, including passages deploring the inaction of the Yishuv, the WZO and the AJC.¹⁷³

If you only knew with what contempt and impatience, with what enmity and feurchtung [loathing] we receive every report of protest and academicism – infuriating, just infuriating. What a disproportion between the big 'to-do' and the inaction... I don't want some Stephen Wise or another Jew to shed crocodile tears for me; I don't want to give him material for lectures, for recitations.¹⁷⁴

This was deleted. Another victim of the censorship was Hayka (Chajka) Klinger who, when she went to Israel, couldn't find anywhere to publish her experiences. When she died her Ghetto Diary was published. However it had so many changes and erasures that researchers were recommended to consult the original.¹⁷⁵

Mordechai Anielewicz, leader of the Warsaw Ghetto, had a letter written to Yitzhak Zuckerman on 23 April subject to numerous alterations. The version that appeared in the Hashomer Hatzair collection 'differs completely from all the other versions, in both wording and tone.'¹⁷⁶

Others whose work was suppressed or altered included Zelig-Hirsch Kalmanovitch and Herman Krook, chronicler of the Vilna Ghetto.

In order that the anti-Nazi struggle of these young Zionists partisans could be harmonised with Israel's colonial repression and ethnic cleansing, it was necessary to change what these fighters had actually written. This dishonesty

was itself an admission that there was no continuity between the two. Hayke Klinger and the other Zionist resistance fighters fought the Nazis, not because they were Zionists but in spite of that fact. They fought as members of the ‘accursed Galut’. Hence why they were abandoned by their ‘comrades’ in Palestine. Their struggle was seen as irrelevant at the time and only later were they co-opted by Israel.

The “Guilt’ of the German People – Daniel Goldhagen

Daniel Goldhagen argued that the Holocaust could only have been perpetrated by Germans. The Holocaust had nothing to do with fascism.

It was demonological anti-Semitism, of the virulent racial variety, which was the common structure of the perpetrators’ cognition and of German society in general.¹⁷⁷

Describing the Holocaust as ‘demonological’ saved Goldhagen the need for any explanation. Indeed it defied explanation since its causes were supernatural. Goldhagen made no links between the Herero and Namaqua genocide in South-West Africa (Namibia) between 1904 and 1908 still less Prussian colonialism in West Prussia and Silesia. German commander General Lothar von Trotha issued what became known as the ‘extermination (*vernichtung*) order’. It was here that extermination and ideas of *lebensraum* first began.

The origins of the Holocaust began in Germany’s colonial empire. The first concentration camps were established in South-West Africa under Dr Eugene Fischer who conducted medical experiments on children. Fischer’s research inspired Hitler. In the 1930s, Fischer taught his racial theories to Nazi doctors. One of his students was Josef Mengele, the chief Auschwitz SS doctor.¹⁷⁸ Shark Island, a death by extermination camp was set up and 90 per cent of its inmates were worked to death. This became ‘a template for the Holocaust.’¹⁷⁹

Hitler made his views clear when he told his generals on 10 February 1939:

I have taken it upon myself to solve the German question, that is, to solve the question of space. You must take it as a fact that, as long as I live, this idea will rule my entire thinking.¹⁸⁰

Lebensraum, the search for ‘living space’ did not originate with Hitler but Imperial Germany.¹⁸¹ Dirk Moses argued that the Nazis were importing into Europe the style of rule that Europeans had employed in governing their empires. Franz Neumann called Nazism a ‘racial imperialism’ that sought to

integrate the population by promising it the spoils of conquest, which meant reducing the people of Eastern Europe to the level of colonial subjects.¹⁸²

Goldhagen emphasised that 'nearly 14 million Germans' (37.27%) supported the Nazis in the July 1932 election compared to the vote of 13.2 million (35.9%) for the workers' parties, the SPD and KPD. However Goldhagen made only passing reference to the November 1932 election when the Nazi vote fell to 11.7 million (33.1%).¹⁸³ The combined vote for the SPD and KPD, 13.2 million, (37.3%) was 1.5 million more than the Nazis.

The only exceptions to Goldhagen's generalisations about Germans were references to 'the core of the socialist movement, its intellectuals and leaders and the politically ineffectual left-liberal elite.'¹⁸⁴ German workers who had voted overwhelmingly for the Social Democratic and Communist parties in the 1932 elections were tarnished with the brush of anti-Semitism.

Goldhagen simply cannot deal with the German socialist movement because its historical existence represents a refutation of his entire theory.¹⁸⁵

Even Zionist historian Robert Wistrich conceded that 'opposition to anti-Semitism had become a badge of honor for the [German] workers movement.'¹⁸⁶

A Gestapo situation report after Kristallnacht reported how 'the Communists declared their solidarity with the Jews' and how this had found 'eager support in middle-class and especially clerical circles.'¹⁸⁷ Ian Kershaw wrote of how his 'admiration for the courageous minority – overwhelmingly communist workers – who fought uncompromisingly against the Nazis... is boundless... the vast proportion of them workers' who were put in 'protective custody' after 9 March 1933.¹⁸⁸ This entirely passed Goldhagen (and the Zionist historians) by.

When the Nazis came to power their first targets were the organisations of the working class. The trade unions were made illegal on 2 May 1933. The Communist Party [KPD] had effectively been made illegal at the time of the Reichstag fire (27 February) and formally banned the day after the 5 March election. The SPD was banned in the summer of 1933.

Goldhagen's book met with rapturous reviews from the press and derision from historians. Where Goldhagen staked out new territory was his assertion that the Nazi regime was, for most Germans, benevolent. Compare this to Kershaw's description of Germans' hostile attitude to the Kristallnacht

pogrom despite 'the conditions of extreme terror and intimidation in which people live.' [189](#)

Goldhagen argued that Germany during the Nazi period had a political system that was both dictatorial and consensual. Dictatorial in that no formal mechanisms – such as elections – existed to check Hitler's power or to remove him from office. Consensual in that the civil service as well as the broader German public accepted Hitler's authority as desirable and legitimate.

Goldhagen's proof of Nazi support was that the violence that they unleashed when they came to power 'did not deter voters' in the unfree March 1933 elections but increased their vote. This was like saying that Soviet repression had no connection with an increased vote for Stalin! [190](#)

In Nazi Germany dissent was fiercely punished. When Louis Birk, a house-painter of Wiesbaden, spoke about the poisoning of the Jews by gas and how the Nazi leaders would be punished, he was executed.[191](#) Goldhagen ignored all resistance to the Nazis within Germany. Gestapo files tell how in Hamburg in February 1943 people reacted to the Hitler salute with a slap in the face. There are numerous reports of how the Hitler salute had all but disappeared in working-class areas.[192](#)

Between 1933 and 1935 it is estimated that 75,000 members of the KPD were imprisoned, several thousand of whom were murdered.[193](#) Between 1940 and 1945, 1,807 Germans were executed in Brandenburg prison alone for political 'crimes', of whom 75 were under 20.[194](#)

There was a large youth rebellion which preferred swing or jazz music to marching songs. In Munich a youth group, the Red Anchor, targeted anyone alone and wearing a Hitler Youth uniform. In Leipzig in 1937 the Police carried out a major action against a group consisting of 1,500 youths who had banded together to attack leaders of the Hitler Youth. Their activities had spread to Berlin and Cologne Their two 17 year-old leaders were sentenced to three years in prison.[195](#) Of these and many more acts of resistance Goldhagen said nothing.

In Duisburg in 1943, the Edelweiss Pirates travelled in groups of 60 or 70 attacking leaders of the Hitler Youth with brass knuckles. In Cologne, where they had an estimated network of 3,000 supporters, there was a shoot out between the Pirates and the Gestapo in which the Chief of the Gestapo was killed. On 25 October 1944, Himmler ordered a crackdown and on November 10th 13 Pirates were publicly hanged in Cologne, including six teenagers.[196](#) It

took until 2005 before the German state accepted they were heroes not petty criminals.¹⁹⁷ The Pirates were mostly working class kids but all of this Goldhagen missed.

Goldhagen's objection to Nazi Germany was not that it was a fascist state but that it was anti-Semitic. He did not recognise any connection between the two. Thousands of ordinary Germans died or were murdered in the camps.¹⁹⁸ By August 1933 an estimated 80,000 prisoners were in 65 camps, the majority of them non-Jews.¹⁹⁹

Goldhagen attributed 'eliminationist' anti-Semitism to the German people arguing that 'most Germans, millions knew of the mass slaughters. Hitler announced many times... that the war would end in the extermination of the Jews.'²⁰⁰ This was true but Hitler's statements were seen as rhetorical. Trotsky was one of very few to predict the physical extermination of the Jews.²⁰¹

If Germans knew of the Holocaust then the same applied to the Allied and Zionist leaders. Hitler's speech prophesying the extermination of the Jews was described by the British Ambassador to Germany as 'relatively conciliatory.'²⁰²

When Germans defied the SA siege to buy in Jewish shops Goldhagen alleged it had nothing to do with opposition to anti-Semitism. It was merely to 'annoy the Nazis' even though annoying the Nazis could have fatal consequences. To Goldhagen workers who were ' beholden to Marxism... were, on the issue of the Jews, in general accord with the Nazis.'²⁰³ Yet even Goldhagen conceded that 10,000 Jews survived thanks to Germans who hid them.²⁰⁴

Goldhagen not only overstated the extent and depth of German anti-Semitism but he failed to mention the participation in the killing of Jews by Romanians, Croats, Ukrainians and Baltic nationals. By 1944 over one-third of Auschwitz's guard force were ethnic Germans living outside Germany. Goldhagen also failed to explain how German 'eliminationist anti-Semitism' had led to the 'euthanasia' campaign as well as the extermination of the Gypsies.²⁰⁵

If German 'eliminationist anti-Semitism' caused the Holocaust, then how should we understand British rule in India? From 1769 to 1900 between 40.8 and 52.3 million Indians starved to death.²⁰⁶ The British Raj held that 'high prices constituted the best security against a famine.'²⁰⁷ Up to 3 million died in the 1943 Bengal famine, which was caused by Churchill's policies not

drought.²⁰⁸ The gentlemen of the British Colonial Office killed more people than Hitler.

Peter Patrick estimated that between 9 and 30 million died in the Atlantic Slave Trade. It is estimated that some 800,000 died in Rwanda.²⁰⁹ Proportionately more Tutsis were killed than Jews in the Holocaust, yet Bill Clinton refused even to call what happened ‘genocide’. Over 1.5 million died in Cambodia. The killings only stopped when the Vietnamese army invaded. The Americans nonetheless opposed replacing Pol Pot at the UN General Assembly.²¹⁰ Were the British, Americans and Belgians ‘eliminationist’ murderers?

Yehuda Bauer was unsure how to react. When asked to defend Goldhagen at a conference at the USHMM Bauer was so negative that he went so far as to question the judgment of the Harvard professors who had accepted his doctoral dissertation! ²¹¹ At other times, Bauer seemed to resent Goldhagen taking the credit for what he had already discovered in suggesting that there was ‘a specific German way [that] led to the Holocaust.’ ²¹²

The “Guilt” of the Polish People - Claude Lanzmann

It was with good reason that Laor castigated the wilful blindness of one of the high priests of the holocaust religion. In 1985 Claude Lanzmann produced *Shoah*,²¹³ which was shown to audiences around the world. A nine-hour film, it was broadcast on Britain’s Channel 4 without any breaks. The *NYT* described it as ‘an epic film about the greatest evil of modern times.’²¹⁴ But *Shoah* was neither neutral nor dispassionate. Lanzmann blamed the Polish people for the Holocaust.

Shoah was a film very long on hows and very short on whys. For Lanzmann Nazi anti-Semitism and genocide were a continuation of Christian anti-Semitism.²¹⁵

Lanzmann argued that the Holocaust could not have occurred in France; forgetting Drancy and the Jews who were betrayed to the Gestapo. In the holding camp of Beaune-la-Rolande French peasants, prior to deportation, had frisked the Jewish women for valuables and searched the latrines for jewellery with sticks.²¹⁶ Any comparison between Warsaw and France was absurd: ‘Paris had no ghetto; hence no “Aryan side” and 30,000 Jews lived in the city openly until liberation.’ ²¹⁷

The Polish villagers in *Shoah* were regarded by the Germans as scarcely more human than the Jews. Lanzmann, however, alleged that the Nazis set up camps in Poland because they could count on Polish complicity, a claim no serious historian credits. In fact, Polish peasants living near Auschwitz were driven out and their homes populated with *Volksdeutsche*, or German settlers.

On the other hand there was co-operation between the Nazis and Polish resistance groups in the persecution of Communists and Jews, particularly in the former Soviet-occupied areas in the East as well as in areas like Radom district.²¹⁸ In June 1942 Poles from the Junacy labour service supported the SS in an *Aktion* against 40,000 Jews in the town of Tarnow. Local farmers brought a Jew whom they had caught in a nearby forest to the police station where he was killed.²¹⁹

The Polish police were reconstituted by the Germans in the autumn of 1939. They were particularly complicit in anti-Jewish operations, as were members of the ethnic German *Selbstschutz*.²²⁰ Jan Grabowski described the Polish police, who included nearly 18,000 armed men, as 'a murderous and criminal organization which was a key element in the implementation of the Final Solution.'²²¹

Jan Karski and Henrik Gawkowski, a train conductor, are the only Poles who are not treated negatively in *Shoah*.²²² When Karski was interviewed, Lanzmann removed all favourable references to Poles. The second part of the interview was discarded altogether, 'until Lanzmann was obliged into making the Karski Report.'²²³

Also missing was Wladislaw Bartoszewski who was a member of a clandestine network, the Zegota group, that rescued Polish Jews. Lanzmann found him 'boring,' 'incapable of reliving the past'²²⁴ In excluding Bartoszewski, Lanzmann was deceiving viewers into believing that all Poles were anti-Semitic. This duplicity cast a shadow over the whole film. There was also no mention of other victims of the Nazis such as the Gypsies.²²⁵

Until Lanzmann approached him in 1977, Karski had not spoken in public of his wartime mission. Despite praising *Shoah*, Karski sharply criticised Lanzmann's failure to interview Bartoszewski. '*Shoah* participates in the same distancing process. The horror took place in the East.'²²⁶

Lanzmann insisted that he had left out 'nothing essential' and that he had captured 'the real, true Poland'. The Nazis who were interviewed came off better than the Poles. When *Shoah* was shown in Warsaw a 'tsunami' of anger

greeted it. Lanzmann had not invented Polish anti-Semitism. Poland had been plagued by it in the inter-war years but Polish anti-Semitism was primarily a middle-class and, to a lesser extent, a peasant phenomenon, fed by the clergy. In the general elections of 1927 the SPD won 16% of the vote and the PSP received 18%.²²⁷

Shoah was based on ‘the absolute uniqueness and purely disjunctive nature of the holocaust.’²²⁸ His message became clear in the last few minutes of *Shoah*, with a group of Israeli soldiers at a memorial for the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Lanzmann’s next film in 1994, *Tsahal*, was an adulatory portrait of the Israeli military starring Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon.²²⁹

Israel and its Treatment of the Holocaust Survivors

Israel spends 5.2% of its GDP on the military, the second largest amount in the world, some \$24.3 billion,²³⁰ yet it keeps its holocaust survivors in poverty and penury. As Amos Rubin noted:²³¹

There are three different days committed to remembering the holocaust, but during the rest of the year, the Israeli government only thinks of holocaust survivors as a financial burden.

In the early 1950s Israel claimed reparations from Germany on behalf of the holocaust survivors. Despite being claimed on the basis of individual need Ben-Gurion was determined that ‘the major portion of the compensation will be claimed by the Jewish people as a collective body [i.e. the Israeli state] not as individuals.’²³² In 2007 it was accepted by Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik that Israel should apologise for having stolen these funds from the Holocaust survivors.²³³

The Jewish Claims Conference [JCC] was set up in 1951 as the legal successor to Jews who had a claim against Germany and Austria. The JCC was generous, at least with itself.²³⁴ In 2004 the salary and pensions contributions it was paying to its Executive Vice-President Gideon Taylor, was \$437,811 (£240,000).²³⁵

The JCC has been embroiled in controversies over fraud. Former President Rabbi Israel Singer was forced to resign in 2007 amid allegations that he had used his position as the secretary-general of the WJC to embezzle funds.²³⁶ In May 2013 31 people were convicted of fraud worth more than \$57 million.²³⁷

If Switzerland was reluctant to part with the assets of murdered Jews then the same was true of Israeli banks, which hoped that the survivors might die

first. It was only under pressure that Bank Leumi agreed to pay NIS 20m to the survivors. In 2004, a parliamentary inquiry found that Leumi owed NIS 300m (\$71.65m) to Holocaust survivors and their families.²³⁸

Israeli medical committees have done their best to reduce the entitlement of holocaust survivors to benefits ‘alter(ing) their disability evaluations in a manipulative way.’ Survivors have had to choose between buying medicine, food or fuel. This is how the ‘Jewish’ state treats the holocaust survivors and yet, none of the official Holocaust memorial bodies, such as the Holocaust Education Trust, says a word about these scandals. To them the Holocaust is about the Israeli state not the individuals who died or survived.²³⁹

Anne Frank

Anne Frank, the young Jewish girl hiding out in Amsterdam, is the best known Jewish holocaust victim. Yet Anne, who was betrayed to the Gestapo with her family, dying in Bergen-Belsen in early 1945, is a very ambiguous figure for Zionism. She is seen as lacking a specific Jewish identity. Anne represents Jewish universalism. Gutman complained that she was ‘a poor symbol of the holocaust victim because of her inadequate Jewish identity’ which was compared by Robert Alter to being freckled or left-handed.²⁴⁰ She wrote that ‘My first wish after the war is that I may become Dutch! I love the Dutch, I love this country...’²⁴¹ Palestine was not on her horizons. Zionism has therefore ignored her.

- ¹ Shahak, 'Falsification of the Holocaust', 19 May 1989, *Kol Ha'ir*, Jerusalem.
- ² Joseph Massad, 'Deconstructing Holocaust Consciousness,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXXII no. 1, p. 88.
- ³ Boaz Evron, (1983) 'Holocaust: The Uses of Disaster', p. 15, *Radical America* 17, No. 4, July-August 1983.
- ⁴ Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, p. 190. See Massad op. cit. p. 82.
- ⁵ Finkelstein, *Holocaust Industry*, p. 32.
- ⁶ Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, p. 149.
- ⁷ Rebecca Gould, *Beyond Anti-Semitism*, <https://tinyurl.com/yypbnhjp>
- ⁸ Ian Lustick, *The Holocaust in Israeli Political Culture*, p. 130.
- ⁹ Weitz, *The Yishuv's response to the destruction of European Jewry*, p. 212.
- ¹⁰ Lustick, op. cit., p. 129.
- ¹¹ Gulie Ne'eman Arad, 'Israel and the Shoah: A Tale of Multifarious Taboos,' *New German Critique*, p. 5.
- ¹² Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, p. 94.
- ¹³ Gulie Ne'eman Arad, p. 11.
- ¹⁴ Lustick, op. cit., p. 129.
- ¹⁵ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 183. Based on the myth that the Nazis used the fat from those murdered to produce soap. See also Amos Elon, *The Israelis: Founders and Sons*, p. 209.
- ¹⁶ Shoshana Felman, *Theatres of Justice: Arendt in Jerusalem*, pp. 231-232. Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 471.
- ¹⁷ Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, p. 83 citing Yisrael Gutman.
- ¹⁸ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 181, citing Aliav testimony, BGA, p. 57.
- ¹⁹ 'The Polish Women Who Saved Jews in WWII', *Ha'aretz* 30.8.20. <https://tinyurl.com/yxvu3nur>
- ²⁰ Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, p. 69.
- ²¹ Novick, op. cit. p. 69 citing Tom Segev, *The First Israelis* (New York, 1986) p. 138.
- ²² Gulie Ne'eman Arad, p. 8, citing Almog, *The Sabra*, p. 143.
- ²³ Lustick, op. cit., p. 131.
- ²⁴ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 361.
- ²⁵ Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 328. Lucas, p. 414.
- ²⁶ Porter, *Kasztner's Train*, p.451; Biss, *A Million Jews to Save*, p. 191.
- ²⁷ Biss, *A Million Jews to Save*, p. 191.
- ²⁸ Linn, *Escaping Auschwitz – A Culture of Not Forgetting*, p. 13.
- ²⁹ Arendt, p. 124.
- ³⁰ Measures to exclude and persecute Jews, <https://tinyurl.com/z7ft6cz5>
- ³¹ Hans Globke, 'Hitler's former henchman, was true architect of modern Germany', *The Times*, 4.3.21. In 1941 he took part in drawing up an ordinance that stripped Jews in the conquered nations of their citizenship and allowed their possessions to be confiscated. A legal precondition for the Holocaust. <https://tinyurl.com/c87x7e2v>
- ³² Lustick, op. cit., fn27, p. 150.

- 33 Lars Petersson, *Hitler's Deserters*, pp. 123-9.
- 34 Yitzhak Laor, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28:2, 26 January 2006, pp. 9-10, Children of the State. <https://tinyurl.com/y7usbenf> Review of Idith Zertal's *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*.
- 35 Anita Shapira, *The Eichmann Trial: Changing Perspectives*, p. 20.
- 36 Minerbi, *The Eichmann Trial Diary*, pp. 52, 57.
- 37 Abraham Turi, *Patterns of Jewish Leadership*, p. 59, also found Hilberg's analysis of the role of the Judenrat 'painful' to hear, pp. 181-2. He argued that one has to distinguish between different ghettos.
- 38 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 124. Linn, p. 9, Beit Zvi, p. 330.
- 39 Yitzhak Gruenbaum felt shame because 'the Jews went to the slaughter without any zeal arising in any of them to defend himself.' Beit Zvi, p. 94, citing 'Destruction and the Holocaust' p. 65.
- 40 Minerbi, *The Eichmann Trial Diary*, pp. 57-61.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 31. 'What a difference between those who died in combat and those killed in the Nazi ditches!' According to Yitzhak Tabenkin, 'The pre-5 June borders have brought down *shoah* on our heads, and this *shoah* is graver than the Nazi Holocaust ...' Zertal, p. 189.
- 42 Yablonka, *The State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann*, pp. 84-5.
- 43 Arendt, p. 249.
- 44 Barnouw, p. 85.
- 45 Linn, p. 92, notes, Yad Vashem was not in any way connected with the publication.
- 46 Brenner, *51 Documents*, p. 267, *Life Magazine* 28.11.60.
- 47 Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, pp. 40-1.
- 48 Hilberg, p. 426, T175, Roll 588.
- 49 Arendt, p. 107-8.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 245.
- 51 Barnouw, p. 78.
- 52 Letter to Gershom Scholem, 23.6.63; *The Jew As Pariah*, p. 249.
- 53 Norm Fruchter, 'Arendt's Eichmann and Jewish Identity,' *Studies on the Left*, <https://tinyurl.com/yhj6uud2>
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Chapter 15

'Anti-Semitism' The False Anti Racism of the Right

'But the state of Israel was not created for the salvation of the Jews; it was created for the salvation of the Western interests' (James Baldwin) [1](#)

Anti-Semitism, like all forms of racism, has changed as society has changed. Jews in the West today, unlike Blacks and Muslims, are not the targets of state racism. Anti-Semitism today is largely a marginal prejudice. Jews have been used as pawns by a political establishment that has ruthlessly exploited the Holocaust as a source of moral legitimacy for Israel and its imperialist backers.

Once they saw us as dangerous Semites infesting European society. Now instead we are their favourite pets: heroic colonists in the Middle East and successful citizens in the West. [2](#)

Much of what is called anti-Semitism is fuelled by the actions of Israel, whose atrocities are perpetrated in the name of all Jews. Every time the BOD issues a statement in support of Israel's war crimes, it reinforces the perception that Jews are responsible for what Israel does. [3](#)

Netanyahu boasted after the murder of four Jews in a kosher supermarket that: 'I went to Paris not just as the prime minister of Israel but as a representative of the entire Jewish people.' [4](#) If this is true then all Jews, wherever they live, bear a responsibility for Israel's crimes against humanity. This is how Zionism actively encourages and gives sustenance to anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism in Britain and the USA today, excluding the neo-Nazi White Supremacist fringe, is not based on racial hatred or state scapegoatism. Anti-Semitism is political not economic. Anti-Jewish prejudice has no roots amongst those social and economic groups which traditionally embraced anti-Semitism, the petite-bourgeoisie and middle class, for whom it was the ideological expression of economic competition. Nor does anti-Semitism today come equipped with ideologues, journals, papers and parties.

According to the Community Security Trust [CST], in 2006 'Israel's war against Hezbollah... saw the largest previous such 'spike' in anti-Semitic incidents.' [5](#) Exactly the same happened in 2009 when Operation Cast Lead, Israel's attack on Gaza, led to a 'record high' number of anti-Semitic incidents:

The number of incidents recorded did not return to relatively normal levels until April, some three months after the conflict ended. [6](#)

It is ironic that Israel, which describes itself as a 'Jewish state' contributes to the very anti-Semitism that was the pretext for its establishment.⁷

The belief that anti-Semitism is on the increase went hand in hand with a decline in anti-Semitism in the United States to the point that 'it presented no significant barriers or disadvantages to American Jews.'⁸ American Jews' perception of an increase in anti-Semitism was contradicted by the actual evidence. The same is true in Britain despite the CST's manipulation of the evidence.⁹

In 2018 there occurred the biggest ever mass killing of Jews in America, by a White Supremacist Robert Bowers, at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, when 11 Jews died.¹⁰ Trump, who repeatedly used anti-Semitic memes, had been campaigning at the time against a refugee caravan from Central America.

Bowers blamed the Jewish community for the influx of refugees. When Trump arrived in Pittsburgh he was accompanied by Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer, who provided him with political cover in the face of a demonstration by thousands of Jews protesting his presence.¹¹ The Israeli Government sent the then Education Minister Naftali Bennett to Pittsburgh in order to defend Trump.¹²

The symbolism was stark, ... Bennett posted a stream of tweets defending the president, just as Mr. Trump was leaving the synagogue to the distant chants of protesters marching through the Squirrel Hill neighbourhood, carrying signs that said "Words matter" and "President Hate is not welcome in our state."¹³

Bennett was upbraided by 89-year-old Edward Bleier, a former Warner Bros. President who explained that Trump's 'America First' was the slogan of American Nazis in the 1930s.

The fury, resentment and disgust of American Jews toward Israel's representatives only came pouring out afterward, in private conversations and across social media.¹⁴

Redefining anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism

It is doubtful whether there is a single anti-Zionist or supporter of the Palestinians who has not been accused of anti-Semitism. The Zionist 'logic' in conflating anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism is that people criticise Israel, not because of what Israel does but because it is a Jewish state.¹⁵ This is the 'new anti-Semitism'.

The assertion that anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism are the same can only have one effect - to legitimise genuine anti-Semitism. It is intended to force

people who are pro-Palestinian into either accepting that they are anti-Semites or abandoning support for the Palestinians. It renders the term ‘anti-Semitism’ meaningless.

If the price of support for the Palestinians is being called anti-Semitic, then for some people it will be a price worth paying. The Zionist accusation of ‘anti-Semitism’ actually creates anti-Semites.. As Akiva Elder wrote:

If describing the situation in the territories since 1967 is antisemitism, then I am an antisemite. If saying that Israel is increasingly suffering from the symptoms of apartheid is antisemitism, then I am an antisemite.¹⁶

Zionism has never opposed genuine anti-Semitism, which is why it is indifferent to the consequences of labelling anti-racists ‘anti-Semites’. If you accuse everyone you disagree with of ‘anti-Semitism’ then no one is anti-Semitic. Accusations of ‘anti-Semitism’ are a form of political terrorism.

What Israel’s supporters forget is that the initial opposition to Zionism came from Jews not Arabs. Zionism was seen as a form of Jewish anti-Semitism.

The anti-Zionism equals anti-Semitism argument drains the word anti-Semitism of any useful meaning. For it means that to be an anti-Semite, it is sufficient to hold any view ranging from criticism of the policies of the current Israeli government to denial that Israel has a right to exist as a state, without having to subscribe to any of those things which historians have traditionally regarded as making up an anti-Semitic world view: hatred of Jews per se, belief in a world-wide Jewish conspiracy, belief that Jews generated communism and control capitalism ...¹⁷

Crying ‘anti-Semitism’ devalues the currency.

Like the boy who cried wolf, the charge of “anti-Semitism” has been made so often against critics of Zionism and the Israeli state that people now have difficulty recognising the genuine article.¹⁸

The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia’s [EUMC] WDA was first published in January 2005. The WDA redefined anti-Semitism as criticism of the Israeli state.¹⁹ Anti-Semites were no longer people who disliked or hated Jews, rather they ‘demonised the State of Israel and questioned its legitimacy’.²⁰ If it is anti-Semitic to criticise Israel then what that means is that something can be anti-Semitic even though it is true.

The WDA ran into a barrage of criticism and the EUMC’s successor body, the Fundamental Rights Agency dropped it in 2013.²¹ Like Lazarus the WDA rose from the dead as the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism.²²

The WDA is intellectually bankrupt and internally contradictory. Indeed its assertion that Jews constitute a collectivity is itself anti-Semitic. The WDA contains eleven ‘contemporary examples’ of political speech which, ‘taking into

account the overall context' could be anti-Semitic. Seven of them relate to Israel. They include 'Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination' by 'claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.' This clause assumes that Jews constitute a separate nation.

If it is racist to deny Jews the right to self-determination then that must also apply to other nations such as the Kurds, the Catalans, the Basques and Scots. In which case the whole of the present British government is composed of racists!

Historically it was anti-Semites who accused Jews of being a nation apart. Which was why Theodor Herzl wrote that

It might more reasonably be objected that I am giving a handle to Anti-Semitism when I say we are a people – one people.' [23](#)

The assertion that Jews, whether they are French, Indian or British etc. are members of the same 'nation' is another way of saying that Jews form a separate race.

'Anti-Semitism' and the British Labour Party

The false 'anti-Semitism' campaign inside the Labour Party had as its purpose the removal of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader. Corbyn's acceptance of this narrative played a major part in his downfall. [24](#)

Anti-Semitism in the Labour Party historically has been a phenomenon of the Right not Left. Sidney Webb, the founder of the Fabians and former Colonial Secretary, summed up this mentality when he declared that

'French, German, Russian socialism is Jew-ridden. We, thank heaven, are free.' Why? 'There's no money in it.' [25](#)

The British Labour Party's fake 'anti-Semitism' campaign used all the dark arts of media manipulation. This was reinforced by lurid and scaremongering headlines in the Zionist press and tendentious and biased surveys of opinion which helped to produce a climate of fear amongst British Jews.

In 2015 the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism [CAA] produced a report which concluded that 45% of Britons have negative attitudes to Jewish people. [26](#) The Institute of Jewish Policy Research said of their claim that a majority of British Jews considered anti-Semitism today an echo of the 1930s that 'it is an incendiary finding.' It declared that 'there is simply no way to ascertain whether or not it is accurate' and that the report was 'littered with flaws'. [27](#)

Anshel Pfeffer wrote that if British Jews actually believed that anti-Semitism today is similar to that in the 1930s 'then it's hard to take anything they say about contemporary anti-Semitism... seriously.' He added that if Jews:

'think that the situation in Britain today echoes the 1930s when Jews were still banned from a wide variety of clubs and associations, when a popular fascist party, supported by members of the nobility and popular newspapers, were marching in support of Hitler, when large parts of the British establishment were appeasing Nazi Germany and the government was resolutely opposed to allowing Jewish refugees of Nazism in to Britain..., then not only are they woefully ignorant of recent Jewish history but have little concept of what real anti-Semitism is..'

Pfeffer accused those who held this belief of a 'a disconnect from reality which borders on hysteria.'²⁸

However the campaign against Corbyn came to embody this hysteria. The JC along with two other Zionist papers ran a joint front-page editorial which accused Corbyn of posing an 'existential threat to Jewish life in this country.'²⁹

What is not mentioned is that Jews are the perpetrators not the victims of racism. The level of Islamophobia, especially anti-Arab racism, among British Jews is high. It is no accident that surveys of Jews deliberately omit asking questions about their attitude to Muslims. Instead they ask Muslims questions about Jews!

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence, as well as my own personal experience, that Islamophobia is rife among British Jewry. There have been repeated scandals in the Board of Deputies over the racist and Islamophobic comments of Deputies.

Gary Mond, the BOD senior Vice-President, was suspended in January 2022 for 'liking' Twitter posts by Islamaphobe Pamela Geller. Geller had complained that French voters had voted 'for submission over freedom' by not voting for the fascist Marine Le Pen in France's Presidential elections.³⁰

Mond is a trustee of the JNF UK. Geller was quoted favourably by Anders Breivik, who murdered 77 people in 2011.

Geller justifies Breivik's attack on the Norwegian Labour Party summer youth camp because she says the camp is part of an anti-Israel "indoctrination training center."³¹

This came in the wake of the Chair of the JNF, Samuel Hayek's support for the neo-Nazi Replacement Theory, that Muslims are replacing Whites in Europe. Hayek had also claimed that Islam is a religion of violence unlike Judaism!³²

Although BOD Deputy, Roslyn Pine, was banned in 2018 for six years for describing Muslims as 'the vilest of animals' she is a member of a far-Right

What's App group that includes a number of other Deputies.³³

In the elections for the French Presidency, the far-Right Jewish pundit Eric Zemmour came fourth with 7%. Zemmour split the French Jewish community despite being called an anti-Semite by the Chief Rabbi of France, Haïm Korsia.³⁴ Among French voters in Israel Zemmour won an absolute majority (54%).³⁵

The head of Hillel House Jewish School in London wrote of his own experiences with Jewish parents:

As head of a primary school, I find it very disturbing to hear of Jewish parents, who only a couple of generations ago were themselves immigrants, refusing to agree to send their children to mix with those of coloured immigrants.³⁶

A survey of 50 Jewish residents in Hackney by Dr Yona Ginzberg found that 'most of the Jewish people interviewed expressed some anti-black sentiments which occasionally echoed the arguments voiced by the National Front.' [NF] Alderman estimated that in the 1979 General Election about 360 voters in Hackney North supported the NF.³⁷ Not one supported the Communist Party.

Jewish racism is a topic that is never talked about as Zionist groups like the CAA always ensure that the focus is on Muslim 'anti-Semitism'.

'New Anti-Semitism' is the False Anti-Racism of the Right

Opposition to 'anti-Semitism' has become the false anti-racism of the Right.³⁸ A particular favourite is the description of Israel as 'the *'Jew among the nations'*.'³⁹ What this means is that Israel is criticised, not for what it does but because it is a 'Jewish' state.

This betrays a fascist mentality that equates a state to a human being. Another variant of this is the phrase 'Israel has a right to exist'. My response was that 'human beings have a right to exist. States have no such rights.'⁴⁰

The new anti-Semitism is an establishment narrative designed to defend powerful interests using Jews as their alibi. It has no popular resonance. Most people understand that anti-Semitism is hostility to Jews as Jews not opposition to Israel.

When the European Union decided that goods produced in West Bank settlements should be labelled as such, it was described by Israel's energy minister, Yuval Steinitz, as 'disguised anti-Semitism'.⁴¹ When the US abstained

on UN Security Council Resolution 2334, which condemned West Bank settlements, Obama was described as 'a Jew hating anti-Semite'.⁴² When the European Court of Justice made the labeling of settlement goods mandatory, the settler Yesha Council described it as the 'lowest kind of anti-Semitism'.⁴³

In an interview with 'Democracy Now' Shulamit Aloni noted that 'Charges of anti-Semitism are a trick we use to suppress criticism of Israel coming from within the US. Coming from Europe we bring up the Holocaust'.⁴⁴ Redefining anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism has enabled western elites, and the far-Right even, to lay claim to the mantle of anti-racism.

At the same time as opposing 'anti-Semitism' Britain's tabloid press has engaged in the vilest racism towards refugees. Their behaviour is a carbon copy of the way they treated Jewish refugees from the Nazis.⁴⁵ *The Mail* and *The Sun*, both pro-Israel, employed a neo-Nazi sympathiser Katie Hopkins as a columnist.⁴⁶ Hopkins went on to share a platform with Ingrid Carlqvist, a holocaust denier.⁴⁷

Douglas Murray, the Islamophobic Associate Director of the Henry Jackson Society, which Stephen Pollard, the former *JC* editor helped found, described Carlqvist as 'Gatestone's Swedish expert'.⁴⁸ The Gatestone Institute, which has made Islamophobia into an art form, publishes Murray's writings.⁴⁹

The world of right-wing Zionists, Islamaphobes and anti-Semites is a small one. None of this prevented Tory Peer, Corbyn critic and former Executive Editor of *The Times*, Lord Daniel Finkelstein, from sitting on the Board of Governors of the Gatestone Institute and speaking at engagements for them.⁵⁰ There are some forms of racism and anti-Semitism which are kosher.

There has been a concerted effort by the Israeli state to control the monitoring and collation of anti-Semitism statistics internationally. Dina Porat, Head of Tel Aviv University's Kantor Centre publishes an Annual Report on Anti-Semitism throughout the world.⁵¹ which pays close attention to the BDS movement. According to Porat, 'It's obvious that anti-Israeliness and anti-Zionism are acquiring an increasingly anti-Semitic tone'.⁵² Despite her academic titles, Porat provided no evidence for this assertion.

From the late 1980s Israel's Monitoring Forum on Anti-Semitism sought to establish an 'Israeli hegemony over the monitoring and combating of anti-Semitism.' Tony Lerman, the principal editor of the *Anti-Semitism World Report*, a country by country survey of anti-Semitism, was pressurised by the London representative of Mossad into either closing down the project or

merging it with Porat's *Project for the Study of Anti-Semitism*. Lerman held a meeting with Mossad in an attempt to stop them undermining his work. In 1999 his *Anti-Semitism World Report* ceased publication.

It is remarkable that Israel's equivalent of MI6 should be involved in collating anti-Semitism statistics. Clearly the collation and interpretation of these statistics serves a wider Israeli political agenda.⁵³ Organisations which collaborate in this work, such as the UK's CST, are effectively Mossad projects manipulating and distorting anti-Semitism statistics in the interests of the Israeli state.⁵⁴

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- 4 Ha'aretz, 9.2.15., Barak Ravid, Netanyahu: I Will Go to Congress Like I Went to Paris to Speak for All Jews, <https://tinyurl.com/yyvlce2o>
- 5 Antisemitic Incidents Report Jan-June 2009, <https://tinyurl.com/muhwm97t>
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Anti-Semitic incidents in 2014 doubled from 535 in 2013 to 1168 in 2014. 'The single biggest contributing factor to the record number of antisemitic incidents in 2014; was the reaction to the Israel's attack on Gaza in the summer of 2014.' Anti-Semitic Incidents Report 2014 <https://tinyurl.com/yyehu75e>
- 8 Novick, p. 172.
- 9 See 'More Fake News – Zionist Claims that Anti-Semitism has increased by 30% in one year,' <https://tinyurl.com/y6hwqcsv> 31.7.17. The CST spins its reports in order to prove an ever increasing anti-Semitism. Their *Anti-Semitic Incidents Report 2018* <https://tinyurl.com/y468pdsj> showed an increase of 16% in incidents compared to 2017. Buried in the report is the admission that there was a 17% cent decrease in the number of violent anti-Semitic assaults from 149 to 123.
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- 11 "'We Are Stronger Than Trump's Hate": Thousands of U.S. Jews Deliver Defiant Message at Pittsburgh Protest,' *Ha'aretz*, 31.10.18. <https://tinyurl.com/ycx7jyxy>
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- 13 'Trump Finds Support After the Pittsburgh Massacre, From the Israeli Government,' *NYT* 1.11.18., <https://tinyurl.com/2p9dpzd5>
- 14 Allison Kaplan-Sommer, 'American Jews May Never Forgive Israel for Its Reaction to the Pittsburgh Massacre,' *Ha'aretz* 4.11.18. <https://tinyurl.com/y7pzu4bs>
- 15 'Israel now the Jew among nations, says Abe Foxman,' *JC*, 26.12.17. <https://tinyurl.com/y6nvoa8j>
- 16 'If Speaking Against Injustice Is Antisemitic, I'm an Antisemite,' *Ha'aretz* 9.2.22., <https://tinyurl.com/bpdf55na>
- 17 Tony Lerman, 'Sense on anti-Semitism,' *Prospect Magazine*, 20.8.02., <https://tinyurl.com/y3kclq6>
- 18 Tony Greenstein 'The seamy side of solidarity,' *The Guardian* CIF, 19.2.07. <https://tinyurl.com/yday5m9r>. CIF gave way to Zionist pressure, refusing to carry any further articles by me.
- 19 Working Definition of Antisemitism <https://tinyurl.com/y2d5tra3>
- 20 Andrew Baker, 'Defining Anti-Semitism in Europe,' *AJC, Jewish Week*, 7.12.13. <https://tinyurl.com/mryu5c79>

- 21 'EU drops its "working definition" of anti-Semitism,' *ToI*, 5.12.13. <https://tinyurl.com/bdh5xjk6>
- 22 The IHRA definition was adopted in Bucharest on 26.5.16. <https://tinyurl.com/y2khev5x>. However, the eleven examples were not adopted despite the attempt of the IHRA Secretariat to pretend otherwise. See Jamie Stern-Werner, *The Politics of a Definition, How the IHRA WDA Is Being Misrepresented*, April 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/ujcenam5>. I have emailed the Secretariat several times for clarification. They have refused to respond to my queries.
- 23 Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p.17.
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- 26 Annual Antisemitism Barometer 2015, <https://tinyurl.com/yxfmj978>
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- [45](https://tinyurl.com/yhcnpnmd) The *Daily Express* proclaimed on 19 June 1939 that the admission into Britain of some of the 936 Jewish refugees on the St Louis 'must not set a precedent. There is no room for any more refugees in this country... They become a burden and a grievance.' <https://tinyurl.com/yhcnpnmd> Morse p. 287. On 20.8.38 the *Daily Mail*: 'German Jews Pouring Into This Country' told of 'The way stateless Jews from Germany are pouring in from every port of this country is becoming an outrage.'
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Chapter 16

Israel's Relationship with the Far-Right

'When all enemies are Nazis, and Arabs or Muslims are enemies, Arabs and Muslims are Nazis.' (Ian Lustick) [1](#)

Proponents of a 'new anti-Semitism' rest their arguments on the assumption that anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are identical.[2](#) Anti-Zionism, it is argued, is merely the flag under which anti-Semitism flies whereas the opposite is in fact the case. It is support for Israel and Zionism which has always enabled anti-Semites to disguise or kosher their anti-Semitism.

John Hagee, the President of Christians United for Israel, is a good example of an anti-Semitic Zionist. In a sermon Hagee described Hitler as a 'hunter', an agent of God sent to drive the Jews to Israel.[3](#) Hagee was defended by Abe Foxman, National Director of the ADL, despite the fact that Senator John McCain was forced to distance himself from Hagee during his Presidential bid in 2008.[4](#) Foxman claimed that Pastor Hagee had devoted his life to combating anti-Semitism and supporting the State of Israel.[5](#)

The ADL is America's most influential Zionist organisation. It has consistently conflated anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism whilst claiming to be an anti-racist organisation. During the Apartheid era the ADL cooperated with South Africa's secret police, BOSS, in monitoring activists and infiltrating anti-apartheid organisations.[6](#) Since 2004 the ADL has taken between 500 and 600 American Police a year on trips to Israel.[7](#) It has repeatedly come into conflict with Black Lives Matter [BLM] and has attempted to co-opt them, fearing that it could find itself 'on the wrong side' of a popular mass movement.[8](#) In 2018, Starbucks dropped the ADL from their 'anti-bias' training because of pressure from BLM.[9](#)

When Ronald Reagan described, in 1985, the Waffen SS at Bitburg as being 'victims of the Nazis just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps' Foxman honoured him with the Torch of Liberty award. In a macabre parody, the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, in 1988, awarded Reagan, a supporter of the Contras and the Argentinian Junta, with the "Humanitarian of the Year" award.[10](#) As Yitzhak Laor noted, the struggle against racism has been 'transformed into a false ideology...' [11](#)

After the war, in 2022, between Russia and Ukraine, ADL began 'rehabilitating Ukrainian collaborators who helped Hitler exterminate Jews and

Poles.’¹² This was part of NATO’s normalization of Ukraine’s neo-Nazi militias. The ADL, which is normally so eager to sniff out ‘anti-Semitism’ where anti-Zionists are concerned, bent over backwards to exonerate Ukraine’s neo-Nazi militias of anti-Semitism. The ADL published an article by its Director of European affairs, Andrew Srulevitch, minimising Ukraine’s neo-Nazi problem.¹³

Srulevitch asked David Fishman, a professor of Jewish History at the Jewish Theological Seminary and a member of the academic committee of the USHMM, whether ‘torchlit marches in the middle of Kyiv with the red and black flags of UPA ... and pictures of Stepan Bandera, who allied with the Nazis during WWII, weren’t evidence of neo-Nazism?’ Fishman’s response was that:

“For Ukrainian nationalists, UPA and Bandera are symbols of the Ukrainian fight for Ukrainian independence. The UPA allied with Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union for tactical – not ideological – reasons,”

This was a bare faced lie. Bandera

‘found ideological common ground with Nazism. Bandera wanted to establish an ethnically pure Ukrainian nation state purged of Jews, Poles, Russians and other minorities.... the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and its military wing the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) were prepared to use genocide to achieve that objective. Hence their active involvement in the Holocaust.’¹⁴

Daniel Lazarre described how

Bandera envisioned the Ukraine as a classic one-party state with himself in the role of führer, or *providnyk*, and expected that a new Ukraine would take its place under the Nazi umbrella.¹⁵

Israel is widely admired by European racist and fascist parties such as Geert Wilders’ Dutch Freedom Party and Austria’s Freedom Party, which was founded after the war by Nazis.¹⁶ For the European far-right Israel is a model ethnonationalist state.

Another admirer of Israel is Germany’s Alternative for Germany [AfD] which is riddled with neo-Nazis and seeks to rehabilitate the *Wehrmacht*, which was heavily involved in the early stages of the Holocaust.¹⁷

Ruth Smeed of the BOD admitted that the British National Party website ‘is now one of the most Zionist on the web – it goes further than any of the mainstream parties in its support of Israel.’¹⁸ Tommy Robinson, Britain’s most prominent fascist, is a self-declared Zionist who attended the May 2021 pro-Israel demonstration outside the Israeli Embassy to a hero’s welcome.¹⁹

My interview with Richard Littlejohn on Channel 4’s *The War on Britain’s Jews*, was a good example of how racists use “anti-Semitism” to sanitise their reputation. Littlejohn claimed to be appalled by anti-Semitism yet he called

Palestinians ‘pikneys’, a racist term usually applied to Gypsies.²⁰ He also described the genocide in Rwanda as a fight between the ‘Mbongo’ and the ‘Mbingo’ tribes.²¹

In September 2009, Michal Kaminski, Chairman of the European Conservatives and Reformists [ECR] group in the European Parliament and a member of Poland’s far-Right Law and Justice Party,²² was a keynote speaker at the Global Counter-terrorism Conference in Herzliya, laying a wreath at YV.²³ His message was that in the ECR the Israeli state would have a strong friend. In October 2009 Israel’s Ambassador to the UN, Ron Prossor, spoke with Kaminski at a Conservative Friends of Israel [CFI] meeting.²⁴

When Vivian Wineman, President of the BOD, wrote to Conservative leader David Cameron asking whether the Tories had done due diligence on their new fascist friends, Kaminski’s Zionist allies rushed to his defence. Dean Godson, of the Policy Exchange think tank accused Wineman of ‘a certain form of left McCarthyism’.²⁵ The Jewish Leadership Council were described as ‘livid’ and ‘incandescent’ at Wineman’s letter.²⁶ The Jewish Chronicle’s Stephen Pollard went further, writing that “Vivian Wineman has destroyed that work [building bridges between the Board of Deputies and the Conservative leadership] with one stroke of his pen” ²⁷ describing someone who had spent his political life on the fringes of neo-Nazism as a friend of Jews.²⁸

The pogrom in Jedwabne caused a far-reaching debate in Poland.²⁹ Most of the population of the town opposed President Kwaśniewski’s belief that a national apology should be made. Jedwabne’s MP, Kaminski, was instrumental in urging residents to oppose the President’s apology and to boycott the ceremonial event on 10 July 2001. The campaign against an apology had ‘strongly anti-Semitic overtones,’ according to Dr Rafal Pankowski, author of *The Populist Radical Right in Poland*. The Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich observed that

Mr Kaminski was a member of NOP, a group that is openly far-right and neo-Nazi. Anyone who would want to align himself with the Committee to Defend the Good Name of Jedwabne ... needs to understand with what and by whom he is being represented.³⁰

In an interview with *Nasza Polska* in March 2001, Kaminski argued that ‘Poles should not apologise for what they did until Jews apologised to them for their actions which included “murdering Poles”’. Except that over 90% of Polish Jews could not apologise, since they had been killed. In areas occupied by the USSR the *Wehrmacht* was received joyfully by Poles.³¹

If you are asking the Polish nation to apologise for the crime made in Jedwabne, you would require from the whole Jewish nation to apologise for what some Jewish Communists did in Eastern Poland.” [32](#)

A statement which is a classic example of anti-Semitism, blaming all Jews for the alleged actions of a minority. As Howard Cooper observed, Pollard had ‘been recruited by the Conservatives to help dig them out of the hole, the moral abyss, into which they have fallen’ with their alliance with European fascists and anti-Semites. Compare this to Pollard’s role in the campaign about Labour ‘anti-Semitism’[33](#)

Another member of the ECR was Roberts Zile, MEP for Latvia’s LNNK. In March every year he took part in the “Legionnaires Day” rally with the veterans of Latvia’s Waffen SS.[34](#) He opposed the trial of Konrāds Kalējs, a close assistant of Viktors Arājs of the Arajs Commando, which participated in the killing of some 26,000 Jews in Latvia and Belarus, including 13,000 in the Riga and Rumbula massacres.[35](#)

On 16 March 2012, 2,500 Latvians attended the veterans’ demonstration that Zile took part in. Monica Lowenberg, whose family was murdered in the Libau and Riga massacres, laid a wreath at the Monument of Freedom in the centre. She was ‘jostled, harassed and made to feel unwelcome’ and told by young Latvian Waffen SS supporters that being Jewish she had no right to be in Latvia.[36](#)

Most shameful of all are the Tories’ new allies from Latvia, For Fatherland and Freedom [LNNK] party, whose sole MEP, Roberts Zile... attended the Conservative party conference in Manchester.[37](#)

The response of Eric Pickles, Chair of CFI and the British delegate to the IHRA, was that they were recycling ‘old Soviet smears’ and ‘endorsing Soviet propaganda’.

Pickles is normally one of the most vociferous critics of ‘anti-Semitism’ when Zionism is on the agenda. Efraim Zuroff described how ‘Up to a third of the Latvian SS legion were volunteers and deeply implicated in the Second World War-era massacres of Riga’s Jews.’ When the head of Latvia’s armed forces participated in the march, Latvia’s parliament voted to dismiss him. [38](#)

Israel Sheltered and Employed ex-Nazis

Obersturmbannführer Walter Rauff of the RSHA technical division (II-D) was responsible for modifying dozens of gas vans and mobile gas trucks used in the T4 programme.[39](#) They were initially equipped with bottled carbon

monoxide but this proved too expensive. Instead a pipe was connected from the exhaust to the inside of the trucks.⁴⁰ These 'Black Raven' vans were disguised with Red Cross emblems and used in 1941 and 1942, before more 'efficient' methods were developed, to kill 50 people at a time in 15 to 20 minutes. They were used in the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. Rauff was one of the three most wanted Nazi war criminals to escape. It is estimated that up to 250,000 people were murdered in these vans.⁴¹

Rauff's gas trucks enabled Chelmno to begin its deadly work.⁴² Chelmno was just 50 km from Lodz, the second largest Jewish ghetto in Poland. Just three vans on the Eastern Front were able to murder 97,000 Soviet captives between December 1941 and June 1942. None of this stopped Israel employing Rauff after the war.

An SS officer who was responsible for the murder of at least 100,000 people and was wanted by the Allies as a war criminal, was employed by the Israeli secret service. Instead of bringing him to justice it paid him for his services and helped him escape to South America.⁴³

On Passover 1993, Shlomo Nakdimon published an interview with Shalhevet Freier in *Yedioth Ahronoth*. In the late 1940s Freier had been a branch director in the Foreign Ministry's Political Department. He related how he had recruited Rauff in Italy 'with the assistance of Israeli, and apparently British intelligence'. Rauff set sail for Ecuador on 17 December 1949. Both the ticket and his passport were supplied by either Israeli or British intelligence.

A CIA document of February 1950 states that an Israeli agent, Ted Cross, helped Rauff to obtain Ecuadorian immigration papers. In 1958 Rauff moved to Chile where, after the coup against Salvador Allende in 1973, he headed the intelligence services. Rauff served as military adviser to Syrian President Hosni Zaim but was forced to leave after Zaim was deposed in a coup. In the late 1970s and 1980s, Rauff was the most wanted Nazi fugitive still alive.⁴⁴

Nor was Rauff the only former agent that Israel employed.⁴⁵ A CIA memo of 24 March 1950 describes relations between Cross and a Nazi, Janos Walberg.

Another Nazi who became an Israeli agent was Otto Skorzeny, who had freed Mussolini from his captors in September 1943. Skorzeny was employed as a hit man by Mossad.⁴⁶ When he died in Madrid in 1975 his handler, Yosef 'Joe' Raanan attended his funeral at his own expense.⁴⁷

Simon Wiesenthal and Beate Klarsfeld, two Zionist anti-Nazi hunters, were not interested in Israel's employment of Rauff. Richard Breitman, from the Nazi War Criminal Records Interagency Working Group reviewed Rauff's CIA file but ignored evidence suggesting that Israeli intelligence systematically employed Nazis in Arab countries'.⁴⁸

Donald Trump and anti-Semitic Zionism

The election of Donald Trump came as a shock to liberal Zionists. *Forward* columnist Naomi Zeveloff explained how she had thought 'it would seem impossible to hate Jews but love the Jewish state'. She soon revised her opinion warning that 'these two viewpoints are not as contradictory as they appear.' Quoting sociologist Steve Cohen, she wrote that:

There is actually "little correlation" between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism... To be sure, anti-Semitism is found among the anti-Zionist left. But it is also found among the Zionist right. Many people who dislike Jews like Israel and many people who are critical toward Israel are affectionate toward Jews. ⁴⁹

Trump threw the relationship between Zionism and anti-Semitism into sharp relief. Trump was America's most pro-Zionist President, yet he was also the most anti-Semitic.⁵⁰ Israeli leaders effusively welcomed Trump's election in 2016. Naftali Bennett declared that it was the end of the Palestinian state.⁵¹ Isaac Herzog, former leader of the Israeli Labor Party and today Israel's President, described Trump as:

an American leader who showed the commentators and the skeptics that we are in a new era of change and replacing the old elitist regimes!... I'm convinced that the defense and financial alliance with our strongest and most powerful ally will continue with a vengeance under your presidency. ⁵²

Herzog was right. Among Trump's first appointees was Steve Bannon, a Christian Zionist⁵³ and ex-CEO of *Breitbart*, magazine of the alt-Right, a White Supremacist movement that was ardently pro-Zionist.⁵⁴ Bannon had previously told his wife, Mary Piccard, that he didn't like the way Jews raise their kids to be 'whiny brats' and that he didn't want his daughters going to school with them. There were far too many Jews at the Archer School for Girls.⁵⁵

None of this stopped the ZOA inviting Bannon to speak at its 2016 and 2017 gala dinners.⁵⁶ According to Mort Klein, *Breitbart* "sympathetically reports on the scourge of anti-Semitic anti-Israel boycotts'. Bannon's anti-Semitism was kosher.⁵⁷

Another Trump appointee was Sebastian Gorka. Gorka was a member of *Vitézi Rend*, a far-right Hungarian military organisation that supported the Nazis during the war.⁵⁸ Gorka wore the *Vitézi Rend* medal to Trump's inauguration party and he was also allied with another neo-Nazi group, the Hungarian Guard.⁵⁹ These appointments were of no concern to America's Zionist leaders.

Trump attracted the support of White Supremacists such as Richard Spencer, the neo-Nazi organiser at Charlottesville, who praised Trump's 'de-Judaification' of the holocaust.⁶⁰ Netanyahu refused to condemn Trump's description of the neo-Nazis at Charlottesville as 'fine people'.⁶¹

On 20 August 2019 Trump tweeted that Jews who voted for the Democrats were guilty of 'great disloyalty'. Why? Because 'Israel was your country'.⁶² This is normally called anti-Semitism. Despite this Israel was one of the few countries in the world where Trump was more popular than unpopular!⁶³

There was no greater supporter of Zionism than Glenn Beck, a Fox News presenter, who was later dismissed for anti-Semitism. Beck openly recommended the work of Nazi sympathiser Elizabeth Dilling, who had spoken of 'Ike the kike' and Kennedy's 'Jew Frontier' (New Frontier). Beck devoted an entire show to the Rothschilds, interviewing conspiracy theorist G. Edward Griffin, who described the Protocols of the Elders of Zion 'as accurately describing much of what is happening in our world today'.⁶⁴ The Protocols were a warrant for genocide.⁶⁵

Beck accused George Soros of being a 'puppet master' who had collapsed economies and regimes around the world.⁶⁶ Even Abe Foxman described his claim that the Jews killed Jesus as 'one of the top four most destructive of anti-Semitic lies'.⁶⁷ None of this prevented Beck from addressing the Knesset. Beck's reception was akin to a 'rock concert'. MK Michael Ben-Ari, a Kahanist (who had previously torn up a copy of the New Testament)⁶⁸ said, 'I think Glenn Beck should take my seat in the Knesset'.⁶⁹

Israel's Support for Ukrainian neo-Nazis

It is an irony that a state which calls itself 'Jewish' should nonetheless find its best friends from amongst regimes and political forces that have so much in common with the Nazis. It is a reminder that the character of a state is not

derived from its ethnic composition but from the circumstances in which that state came into existence and the class nature of that state.

Israel supplied weaponry to the Azov Battalion, many of whose members openly admitted to having neo-Nazi sentiments.⁷⁰ Its official insignia is a reversed image of Wolfsangel, a sign used by SS Panzer Division 'Das Reich'.⁷¹

Azov's founder, Andriy Biletsky, a former member of Ukraine's parliament, headed a neo-Nazi group, Patriots of Ukraine.⁷² Biletsky had previously said that:

our nation's historic mission at this critical juncture is to lead the final march of the white race towards its survival. This is a march against sub-humans who are led by the Semite race.

In 2018 the United States banned the supply of weapons to the Azov Battalion.⁷³ The Israeli Government had no such qualms. Instead of stopping exports the Government, in response to a petition by Israeli human rights activists, asked the Tel Aviv District Court to slap a gag order on legal proceedings and hold its hearings behind closed doors, which of course it did.⁷⁴

Bolivia

Israel also armed Bolivia's military regimes despite knowing that Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie was part of the regime. Barbie's death squads used Israeli Uzis.⁷⁵

In August 1973, Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban visited Bolivia, and was asked whether he had spoken to Bolivia's leader, Hugo Banzer, about Klaus Barbie. Eban responded that it was an internal matter and for Bolivia to decide whether or not to extradite Barbie to France.⁷⁶ Although the Israeli Labor Party cut relations with the British Labour Party because of the 'anti-Semitism' smears against Corbyn and the Labour left, they refused to criticise Bolivia for harbouring the Gestapo chief of Lyons.⁷⁷

India

Jews have lived in India for over a millennium without problems. After Kristallnacht the Indian National Congress issued a declaration against Nazi Germany. Both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru condemned the Nazi treatment of Jews.

To the BJP government of Narendra Modi Israel is the ideal ethno-nationalist state. India is Israel's largest arms customer and Israel is the third largest weapons supplier to India.⁷⁸ The BJP is the political arm of the RSS which was inspired by German fascism.⁷⁹ Netanyahu viewed Modi as a 'kindred spirit'.⁸⁰

V. D. Savarkar, an early mentor of the RSS and ideological godfather of Hindu nationalism described Indian Muslims as a potentially traitorous people 'like the Jews in Germany'.⁸¹ Shrenik Rao wrote of his trip to India in 2008 and his visit to Nagpur, 'the epicentre of Hindu nationalism'.

In 2004, when now-Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, school textbooks ... portrayed Hitler as a hero, and glorified fascism. The tenth-grade social studies textbook had chapters entitled 'Hitler, the Supremo,' and 'Internal Achievements of Nazism.'

A section on the 'Ideology of Nazism' read:

Hitler lent dignity and prestige to the German government. He adopted the policy of opposition towards the Jewish people and advocated the supremacy of the German race.

A poll conducted by *The Times of India* in 2002 found that 17% of Indians saw Hitler as 'the kind of leader India ought to have'.⁸² *Mein Kampf* has gone through numerous editions in India and has been a bestseller for decades. It is especially popular among businessmen who see it as a self-help guide. By 2010 the number of copies of *Mein Kampf* sold was 100,000.

Audrey Truschke, a Professor of South Asian history, was once told 'Madam, you are a great leader like Hitler.' This was meant as a compliment! Truschke spoke of how 'A prejudiced attitude against Muslims has served as a binding glue between Israel and India'.⁸³ There has been a 'profound admiration of generations of Hindu nationalists for Zionism'.⁸⁴

Guatemala

Israel was complicit in the genocide of up to a quarter of a million Guatemalans, 83% of whom were Mayan Indians, during the 1970s and 1980s.⁸⁵ When the Carter Administration and Congress suspended military aid in 1977 to Guatemala's military regime, because of its human rights abuses, Israel filled the gap. Israeli President Ephraim Katzir signed an agreement for military assistance within months of Congress's decision. Israeli arms, training and advisors were crucial in the war which the Guatemalan military under President Rios Montt waged against Guatemala's own citizens. 'Israel did not

put “strings” on its arms or advice and was indifferent to the repressive practices of the Guatemalan military.’ [86](#)

Paraguay

Paraguay welcomed Nazi war criminals after the war. These included Josef Mengele, the SS doctor who selected who would live and who would die at Auschwitz, Eduard Roschmann, one of the commanders of the Riga Ghetto and Hans-Ulrich Rudel, a Nazi pilot personally revered by Hitler.

Israel didn’t open an embassy in Paraguay until 1968. When Israeli ambassador Benjamin Varon was asked about Mengele his standard answer was, ‘The Israeli Government is not searching for Dr Mengele, the Federal Republic of Germany is’. In 1964, West Germany asked for Mengele’s extradition but Alfredo Stroessner refused. ‘Once a Paraguayan, always a Paraguayan’ was his retort.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry completely ignored the reports Varon was sending about information he had on Mengele. [87](#) In the 1980s, Varon said he knew of a plan to catch Mengele that was then cancelled. When Varon reported to Israel on the whereabouts of Nazi war criminals, he was told: ‘You’re a diplomat, not a Nazi hunter.’ [88](#)

According to the minutes of a 1969 Israeli Cabinet meeting, an agreement was reached between Israel and Paraguay whereby Paraguay would accept ‘60,000 Muslim Arabs who are not communists’. It was the same year that Mossad stopped hunting Nazis. In 1971, Nazi hunter Tuvia Friedman demanded that Israel capture Mengele but the authorities refused. At the ceremony to celebrate the establishment of diplomatic relations Netanyahu stated that:

You’ve done much for your country, much for our country... this follows the example and I would say practice of Paraguay for many, many years. Paraguay helped Jews escape Nazi Germany. We will never forget this.

The only thing that concerned Netanyahu was that Paraguay was pro-Israel. Its previous ruler Stroessner had run the country as a police state for 35 years, and was responsible for the torture of tens of thousands of Paraguayans, hundreds of whom ‘disappeared’.

The US Embassy used Paraguay’s good relations with Israel to ward off Congress’s attempts to restrict aid. Israel koshered these anti-Semitic regimes. A CIA document from 1984 stated that despite reports on Mengele hiding in

the country, 'the Israelis maintain good relations with Stroessner's regime'. In January 1986, in an interview with CBS's *60 Minutes*, Stroessner used his strong relationship with Israel to ward off criticism of his regime.

In 1992 secret documents were accidentally discovered in Asunción, Paraguay's capital. Known as the 'Archive of Terror' they documented the murders, kidnappings, torture and detention centres in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, and Peru. They included details on over 50,000 people who were murdered, 30,000 people who 'disappeared' and 400,000 political prisoners. Israel supplied each of these countries with weapons and training.⁸⁹

Poland

On 26 January 2018 a Holocaust Law was enacted which made it a criminal offence to say that Poles were 'responsible or complicit in the Nazis' crimes'.⁹⁰ The penalty of imprisonment was removed after an agreement between Netanyahu and the Polish Government but it still remained a civil offence. Dina Porat, the chief historian at YV, approved an agreement which adopted this distorted view of the past and which whitewashed Polish complicity in the Holocaust.

Netanyahu's deal was bitterly criticised by Yehuda Bauer.⁹¹ Bauer observed that 'the State of Israel finds the economic-political-military relations with Poland more important than such a small business, the Holocaust.' This had always been the Zionist attitude. Bauer had just woken up to the fact.

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Chapter 17

The World Jewish Conspiracy has been replaced by the Global Islamic Conspiracy

'It should have been through us that Europe learned to tolerate Islam. Tragically what has happened is the opposite. It is through us that Europe intensified its hatred of Muslims.' (Yitzhak Laor) ¹

The invocation of a common Judeo-Christian heritage is a neo-conservative construct,² 'an ideological invention invoked against Islam...' ³ whose effect if not purpose is to erase the memory of feudal anti-Semitism and the inconvenient fact that the Holocaust occurred in Christian Europe not Muslim Arabia.

During the first three Crusades tens of thousands of Jews were massacred as the Crusaders set out from places like the Rhineland.⁴ Jews fought side by side with Muslims in the Battles of Hattin (1187),⁵ Jerusalem (1099) ⁶ and Haifa (1099).⁷ Yet that too is conveniently forgotten.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Islam became the enemy.⁸ The sources of conflict in the world were seen as cultural rather than ideological and economic. Culture became a substitute for race. Western civilisation was defined as the gold standard. The Clash of Civilisations became the standard narrative: 'Non-western civilizations have attempted to become modern without becoming Western.' ⁹ Hezbollah and Hamas, ISIS and the Taliban were all rolled into one – a single outpost of barbarism and fundamentalism. Missing was any analysis of Western responsibility for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. The Clash of Civilisations was a blunt instrument without any explanatory or analytical powers.¹⁰

Muslims replaced Jews at the centre of an international conspiracy. Islam was seen as monolithic, with a breadth of unity and purpose. Islam was portrayed as an anti-Western ideology. If a claim of political homogeneity had been made against Judaism then the air would be thick with allegations of anti-Semitism. However anything was permissible when it came to Islam.

Nick Griffin, leader of the British National Party, called Islam a 'vicious, wicked faith' whilst denying that this was a metonym for an attack on Muslims.¹¹ Robert Spencer of *Jihad Watch*, described its mission as 'exposing the role that Islamic jihad theology and ideology play in the modern global

conflicts.’ [12](#) This attack on Islam has also been taken up by the mainstream Right.[13](#)

Historically attacks on Judaism were the prelude to attacks on Jews. Notable amongst these was Martin Luther’s 1543 treatise *On the Jews and their Lies*.[14](#) The most significant contribution to this onslaught was Johann Eisenmenger’s *Entdecktes Judenthum* (1700), a study of the Talmud which supplied anti-Semites with two volumes of quotes concerning the perfidy of the Jews.[15](#)

Catholic priest Justinas Pranaitis, the author of *The Talmud Unmasked* (1892) alleged a Jewish conspiracy against non-Jews. Pranaitis gave ‘expert’ testimony in the 1913 Kiev blood libel trial of Mendel Beilis who was charged with murdering a Christian boy as part of a religious ritual murder. However Pranaitis was discredited under cross-examination and Beilis was acquitted.[16](#)

Religion is a reflection of society and it changes as society changes. That is as true of Judaism as it is of Islam. It was Western imperialism which imposed an austere version of Islam, Wahhabism, upon the Arabian peninsula, as a means of legitimising the repression necessary to safeguard western interests. The possibility of an Islamic Reformation was destroyed by the West.[17](#)

Having captured Riyadh’s Masmak Fort in 1902, Ibn Saud allied himself with the British who armed and funded him against his Arab adversaries, notably Sharif Hussein bin Ali of Mecca and King of Hejaz. Saud’s state was a British protectorate between 1915 and 1927.[18](#) The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was created in 1932 and in 1937 Standard Oil discovered oil. First British and then American imperialism supported the House of Saud.

After 1945 the United States increasingly dominated the Middle East. In Iran in 1953, after the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, MI6 and the CIA organised a coup to overthrow the nationalist Mohammad Mossadegh. In the process it drove the opposition into the mosque. When the Iranian revolution overthrew the Shah in 1979, the United States backed Ayatollah Khomeini against a workers’ revolution.[19](#)

In the late 1980s the United States encouraged the growth of the Mujahideen as a counterweight to the Soviet Union and the liberal government of the Peoples’ Democratic Party of Afghanistan. Hillary Clinton admitted that the United States created Al Qaeda.[20](#) ISI, Pakistan’s CIA, acted as midwife to the Taliban.

Israel is seen by the far-Right as a bulwark of the fight against Islam and that is how it sees itself. According to Geert Wilders, whose Freedom Party came second in the March 2017 Dutch general election, 'If Jerusalem falls into the hands of the Muslims, Athens and Rome will be next.'²¹ Wilders is representative of a European far-Right that sees in Israel its ideal ethno-nationalist state. Wilders described the opposition of the Palestinians to Zionism as 'an ideological battle, between the mentality of the liberated West and the ideology of Islamic barbarism.'²²

Israel too has promoted conservative Islam. In the 1980s Israel was instrumental in the creation of Hamas.²³ When Zionist propagandists paint Hamas as the devil incarnate, they do so with all the righteousness of the colonial hypocrite. Avner Cohen, who worked for Israel's Religious Affairs Department until 1994, noted that

Hamas, to my great regret, is Israel's creation Israel for years tolerated and, in some cases, encouraged them as a counterweight to the secular nationalists of the Palestine Liberation Organization and its dominant faction, Yasser Arafat's Fatah.²⁴

The former Military Governor of Gaza, Brigadier General Yitzhak Segev, told David Shieler of the *NYT* that 'he had financed the Islamic movement as a counterweight to the PLO and the Communists. The Israeli Government gave me a budget and the military government gives to the mosques.'²⁵ According to former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Charles Freeman, 'Israel started Hamas. It was a project of Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence agency.'²⁶

When the PLO wanted to co-operate with Hamas, the price was the Islamicisation of the PLO and the elimination of its left wing. Imperialism understands that Islamic movements, because they are conservative and anti-modern, are also anticommunist. Divide and rule and confessionalism were first patented by the British in India and Ireland. Just as in Palestine, partition was the result.²⁷

In Egypt, following Nasser's rise to power in 1954, the British and Americans viewed the Muslim Brotherhood as allies in the fight against secular nationalism. Former CIA officer Robert Baer described the 'dirty little secret' in Washington in the early 1950s, namely that 'the White House looked on the Brothers as a silent ally, a secret weapon against—what else?—communism.'²⁸

The Right portrays the Quran as racist and chauvinist yet omits to mention that Jewish religious texts contain far worse passages. The Talmud describes how Jesus had been punished in hell by being immersed in boiling excrement.²⁹ When a pious Jew passes by a non-Jewish cemetery, he must

curse the mothers of the dead.³⁰ According to Hatanya, the book of the Lubavitch, ‘all non-Jews are totally satanic creatures in whom there is absolutely nothing good.’ During the Lebanon War, according to Shulamit Aloni this was used to persuade military doctors and nurses to withhold help from wounded Gentiles.³¹

According to Rabbi Yitzhak Ginzburg of Lubavitch ‘If you saw two people drowning, a Jew and a non-Jew, the Torah says you have to save the Jewish life first.’³² Israel Shahak witnessed an Orthodox Jew refuse to allow his phone to be used on the Sabbath to call an ambulance for a non-Jew who had collapsed. When this was publicised the rabbinical authorities backed the Orthodox Jew. Dead scriptures have been brought to life in Israel.³³ Benzi Gopstein of Lehava advocated the burning of mosques and churches citing Maimonides, yet he has suffered no legal penalty.³⁴

In 2009 two Rabbis, Yitzhak Shapira and Yosef Elitzur wrote *Torat Hamelech*, a guide to how to kill non-Jews according to religious law. It advocated murdering innocent civilians, including children and infants, at times of war. They wrote:

There are times in which we will want to harm the innocent from the outset. And their presence and their killing is actually beneficial and helpful to us. For example, harming the infants from the wicked king’s family, who are currently innocent; their killing helps us to harm and pain the king so that he will stop fighting us.³⁵

Israel’s Attorney General, Yehuda Weinstein, refused to prosecute the authors because in Israel, the only people prosecuted for racism are its victims, Palestinians like Raed Salah.³⁶

Blaming the Arabs – The Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini

Although the Mufti was a reactionary leader of the Palestinians, claims that he played a significant part in the Holocaust are without foundation. This did not stop the Mufti playing a ‘starring role’ in YV’s *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*. The article on the Mufti is longer than the articles on Himmler and Heydrich combined and longer than the article on Eichmann. It is only slightly exceeded in length by the entry for Hitler.³⁷

Contrast the Zionist focus on the Mufti with their indifference to trying other Nazi war criminals. The 1946 American Jewish Conference put forward no proposals for the trial of any individual bar one – the Mufti.³⁸ If the Israeli

state has been silent about its association with Walter Rauff and Otto Skorzeny, then it has been voluble about the Mufti.

Haj Amin al-Husseini was appointed Mufti in 1921 by British High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, despite coming a poor fourth in elections for the post. Only one of the top three candidates should have been appointed. The position gave him a powerful base, controlling the income of the Waqfs (religious foundations) and establishing a network of Islamic schools. British imperialism and the Zionist leaders always preferred reactionary Arabs to secular nationalists.

The Mufti focused Palestinian anger on the Jews rather than the British, whereas the Congress of the Youth and the Istiqlal (Independence Party of Palestine) argued that Britain was the principal enemy of the Palestinians.³⁹ The Mufti admonished nationalists that because of their clashes with the British, it:

...might cost the support of the Arabs' friends in London. The struggle should, as in the past, be directed against the Jews.... The emergence of the Congress of Youth and the Istiqlal Party with their outright rejection of British imperialism in general and British rule in Palestine, in particular, was typical of the growing feeling that Britain was the principal enemy of the Palestinian Arabs. Zionism was only one facet of, and totally dependent upon, British imperialism.⁴⁰

British repression targeted Istiqlal which criticised Husseini for his timid attitude to the British and his nepotism.⁴¹

During the October 1933 riots the British fired upon a mass demonstration in Jaffa killing 19 and injuring 70. It became known as the 'Jaffa Massacre'. The Mufti exerted his influence to defuse the protests. High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchope 'greatly appreciated this attitude.'⁴² When Istiqlal criticised the Mufti for co-operating with the British, the Mufti 'struck back with full force.'⁴³

The Arab Revolt and General Strike of 1936-39 led to the radicalisation of the Palestinians and the formation of the Arab Higher Committee under the Mufti's leadership. The AHC did its best to end the strike and during the first two months Husseini dissociated himself from the rebels and assured the British that he was a moderating factor.⁴⁴ After the Arab Revolt, the Mufti lost most of his influence.

The Mufti's support for the Nazis ignored their record of support for the Zionists. He kept the Palestinians in ignorance of Hitler's racial doctrines and the fact that anti-Semitism in Germany had led to increased Jewish

immigration into Palestine. Even though the Palestinians bore no responsibility for the Holocaust they ended up being blamed for it.⁴⁵

Like William Joyce [‘Lord Haw Haw’], the Mufti made radio broadcasts to the Arab countries on behalf of the Nazis. However his opposition to the Jews was primarily motivated by his opposition to Zionism not adherence to Nazi racial doctrines.⁴⁶ Abu Iyad, one of the founders of Fatah, told him that ‘Hitler placed the Arabs in fourteenth place, after the Jews, in the hierarchy of races.’⁴⁷

Many colonial leaders like Subra Chandra Bose of the Indian National Army and Congress⁴⁸ and Aung San’s Burmese Independence Army, which supported the Japanese, saw the Nazis as no different to the Allies. Both Hitler and Churchill were White Supremacists.⁴⁹ The Mufti operated according to the principle of ‘my enemy’s enemy is my ally’ rather than because of any ideological affinity with the Nazis. What was astounding was that Zionist terror group Lehi did the same.⁵⁰

The Mufti lobbied the Nazis to prevent Jews emigrating to Palestine just as the Zionists lobbied the Gestapo to prevent Jewish emigration to any country bar Palestine. The Mufti learnt of the Final Solution and the death of three million Jews from Himmler in the summer of 1943.⁵¹ His efforts to stop Jews emigrating from Nazi-occupied Europe, coupled with his broadcasts and recruitment to three Muslim SS divisions, meant that he was undoubtedly a war criminal, albeit a minor one.

A wall was devoted to the Mufti in YV, its purpose being to ensure that ‘the visitor is left to conclude that there is much in common between the Nazis’ plan to destroy the Jews and the Arabs’ enmity to Israel.’⁵² There is no mention of the 12,000 Palestinian Arabs who fought in the British Army against the Nazis.⁵³ Also forgotten are the 233,000 North African volunteers who fought the Nazis in the Free French Army, making up half of their number.⁵⁴

Contrary to the suggestion that the Mufti represented all Arabs, support for the Nazis was marginal in the Arab countries. There were no mass fascist parties. The major working-class parties were the communist parties, until Stalin nearly destroyed them when he supported the Partition of Palestine in 1947. There are though some Israeli academics who are willing to rise above the racist stereotypes that equate Palestinians and Arabs with the Nazis.⁵⁵

An estimated 40,000 North Africans died fighting for the liberation of Europe in 1944-45.⁵⁶ After the French defeat in 1940 some 180,000 Arabs were captured. Of these just 130 agreed to serve in special Arab units of the

German army and when Mussolini attempted to form an Arab Legion just 13 agreed.⁵⁷ Of the 97,715 casualties in the French army, 52% were Arabs. Hundreds of Arab prisoners were interned in concentration camps. It is estimated that 1,500 were murdered because of their left-wing politics, resistance activities or Nazi racism.⁵⁸

With the defeat of the Nazis the Mufti was totally discredited. When the UN passed Resolution 181 partitioning Palestine, the AHC formed an Army of Sacred Struggle, which most Palestinians simply ignored. When he died in 1974 he was neither mourned nor remembered. He had long since disappeared from the Palestinians' memory.⁵⁹ Only the Zionists fondly remembered the Mufti.

The SS Handschar Division was sent to Villefranche de Rouergue, France for 'retraining' on the Jewish Question. On 17 September 1943 they rebelled, the only SS Division to do so. Some of them joined the French Resistance and one, Božo Jelenek, earned the Croix de Guerre.⁶⁰

During the rebellion they captured nine German commanders, five of whom were executed.⁶¹ The Nazis took savage reprisals when they quelled the rebellion and up to 165 were executed and 265 were sent to Neuengamme concentration camp where dozens died.

When Villefranche-de-Rouergue was liberated in 1944, the local population decided to pay tribute to the mutineers by naming one of its streets Avenue des Croates (Bosnian Muslims were seen as Croats of the Islamic faith). Every 17 September they commemorate "the revolt of the Croats".⁶²

The Balkan Muslims were much more favourably disposed towards the Jews than their Christian neighbours.⁶³ 'The Bosnian Muslim clerics issued three declarations publicly denouncing Croat-Nazi collaborationist measures against Jews and Serbs.'⁶⁴

It is often suggested that the Nazis supported the Arabs but Section II-112 of the SD was quite clear that 'Any attempt to foster anti-Jewish sentiment among the Arabs in Palestine is strictly prohibited. Provoking the Arabs against Jewish immigrants only serves to harm the Reich.'⁶⁵

Arab "anti-Semitism"

Zionism's goal was both to equate the Palestinians with the Nazis and to try and hold them responsible for the Holocaust. This was very convenient

since Palestinian opposition to Zionist colonisation could then be attributed to a desire to finish what Hitler had started.

Kasztner described how he had learnt from Eichmann and Wisliceny about the role of the Mufti.⁶⁶ During the Eichmann trial the Israeli press tried to link the Mufti with Hitler. *Ma'ariv* went so far as to suggest that the Final Solution was inspired by the Mufti.⁶⁷

Netanyahu crudely tried to blame the Holocaust on the Mufti. In a speech to the 37th World Zionist Congress in 2015, he stated that Hitler had only wanted to expel the Jews until the Mufti persuaded him to kill them. Netanyahu effectively exonerated Hitler.⁶⁸ Netanyahu had previously written that the Mufti was 'one of the initiators of the systematic extermination of European Jewry.'⁶⁹ Netanyahu was following in his father's footsteps.⁷⁰ Ben-Gurion, too, asked, 'Is he not aware that the Mufti was a counselor and a partner in the extermination schemes?'⁷¹

Idith Zertal described how:

'The transference of the holocaust situation on to the Middle East reality... not only created a false sense of the imminent danger of mass destruction. It also immensely distorted the image of the holocaust, dwarfed the magnitude of the atrocities committed by the Nazis, trivializing the unique agony of the victims and the survivors, and utterly demonizing the Arabs and their leaders.'⁷²

Distortion of the Holocaust has been part of a concerted attempt to rewrite the history of Arab Jews and their relations with their Arab neighbours. Historically the Arab countries of the Maghreb were a haven for Jews escaping persecution, including the Inquisition.⁷³ Bernard Lewis⁷⁴ and Yehoshafat Harkabi,⁷⁵ Israel's first academic orientalist, accepted that 'Arab anti-Semitism was a symptom of the conflict, 'functional and political not social.'⁷⁶

Third World "Anti-Semitism"

Since Israel arms and trains the military of most of the world's dictatorships, support for liberation movements is routinely deemed 'anti-Semitic'. Nahum Goldmann wrote about how Israel's 'remaining friends are reactionary states like South Africa or the Nicaragua of Somoza.'⁷⁷

Israel expanded its arms supplies and training missions in the 1970s to death squad regimes in Latin America, such as El Salvador and Colombia. Rabbi Rosenthal of the ADL accused the Sandinistas, after the overthrow of dictator Anastasia Somoza, of having forced the country's entire Jewish

community into exile. What was the Sandinistas' offence? The close ties between the Sandinistas and the PLO.⁷⁸ Edgar Bronfman, President of the WJC explained that although anti-Semitism was a 'red herring':

If Nicaragua wants to receive a more sympathetic hearing from world Jewry, she must make a gesture that would indicate that she has begun to mitigate her hostility towards Israel.⁷⁹

New Jewish Agenda representatives visited Managua and spoke to the Sandinista leaders, after which their President, Rabbi Gerald Serotta, stated that 'there is no policy of anti-Semitism or bias on the part of any official body.'⁸⁰ According to the Nicaraguan Ambassador, allegations of anti-Semitism were made in order to 'support President Reagan's Central American policy.'⁸¹

A similar campaign was waged against Hugo Chavez. New Labour Foreign Office Minister Dennis MacShane openly supported George Bush's failed coup in Venezuela, accusing Chavez of anti-Semitism and comparing him to Mussolini.⁸²

Fred Pressner, President of the Confederation of Jewish Associations of Venezuela, in a letter to the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, wrote:

You have interfered in the political status, in the security, and in the well-being of our community. You have acted on your own, without consulting us, on issues that you don't know or understand.⁸³

According to ADL's Nathan Perlmutter, a country that failed to back the right against the left in Latin America 'is a country that will be indifferent to catastrophe in the Middle East.'⁸⁴

When the Nationalists achieved power in South Africa in 1948, the leaders of the Jewish community struck a deal. In return for the Nationalists abandoning their anti-Semitism the Jewish community would support Apartheid. Throughout the war Afrikaner nationalists had supported the Nazis. The Afrikaner Broederbond, which included future Prime Ministers Daniel Malan, Hendrick Verwoerd and John Vorster, supported Nazi Germany. 'Hitler's *Mein Kampf* shows the way to greatness', Vorster explained.⁸⁵

South Africa's Jews were the most pro-Zionist in the world.⁸⁶ Chief Rabbi Bernard Casper supported the Declaration of Emergency as a 'step (that) was necessary for the saving of life and the restoration of order.'⁸⁷ South Africa's Jews 'resented' calls by American Jews for pressure to be put on the South African government to end Apartheid.⁸⁸ Benjamin Pogrand, formerly of the *Rand Daily Mail*, accused South Africa's Jews of 'callously linking up with the Nationalist government' in support of the resettlement of Africans.⁸⁹

Harry Schwartz of the South African BOD and Chair of Anglo-American mining, had a 'serious problem' with the ANC's links with the PLO.⁹⁰ The Board had 'long refrained from what it calls politics'.⁹¹ It was only in 1985 that the Board called for an end to Apartheid whilst complaining that Black activists would not meet with them. The BOD had long abandoned Jewish anti-Apartheid activists. It was only when Apartheid was crumbling that South Africa's Jewish community tried to embrace the Jews that they had ostracised.⁹² In Britain, UJS attacked ANC speaker, George Johannes, at the 1986 NUS Conference for 'anti-Semitism' because he equated South Africa and Israel.⁹³

Israel not only broke the 1977 UN arms embargo, Resolution 418, against South Africa but it created the South African arms industry.⁹⁴ It was the Israeli Labor Government which developed close ties with South Africa. The Kibbutz Artzi Federation of 'left' Zionist party Mapam, was as enthusiastic about ties with Apartheid South Africa as Mapai.⁹⁵

The ANC supported the Palestinians because they saw a close similarity with their own struggle. As Henrik Verwoerd, the architect of Apartheid observed:

The Jews took Israel from the Arabs after the Arabs had lived there for a thousand years. In this I agree with them. Israel like South Africa is an apartheid state.⁹⁶

Israel was the only state not invited by SWAPO to Namibia's independence celebrations because of its extremely close military ties with South Africa's occupation of Namibia.⁹⁷

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Chapter 18

Zionist Collaboration with Argentina's neo-Nazi Junta

'When I saw that Argentine Jewish leaders refused to focus on the issue in its true dimensions, and began to recognise the extent of Jewish passivity, I was stunned -amazed. I would forget my torturers, I declared, but never the Jewish leaders who acquiesced calmly in the torturing of Jews.' (Jacobó Timerman) [1](#)

Herzl mentioned two areas as possible sites for Zionist colonisation, Argentina and Palestine.[2](#) Jewish philanthropist Baron Maurice de Hirsch, who was not a Zionist and with whom Herzl negotiated in vain, spent millions of francs, via the Jewish Colonization Association, establishing settlements in Argentina, Canada and after his death in 1896, Palestine.[3](#) Although nominally independent, Argentina became part of Britain's informal empire.[4](#)

It was only in 1944 that Argentina cut off diplomatic relations with Nazi Germany and it was not until March 1945 that it formally declared war. After 1945, President Juan Perón made Argentina a safe haven for Nazi war criminals including Eduard Roschmann, "the Butcher of Riga," who was responsible for killing 40,000 Jews, and the Croatian fascist leaders, including Ante Pavelić.[5](#)

Peronism was not a fascist but an authoritarian, militarist movement. It sought the rapid industrialisation of Argentina whilst confronting Argentina's landed interests. It adopted pro-labour policies and was responsible for the growth of the CGT into a mass labour union. Peronism arose during a world boom but soon the economy started to decline.[6](#) In 1955 Perón was overthrown in a military coup.

In 1973 Perón returned to power in vastly different political and economic circumstances, with the Montoneros – a powerful guerrilla group – conducting a war against the military and business leaders. Perón turned on the left wing of the Peronist movement. When Perón died in 1974, his second wife Isabella took over and in March 1976 there was a coup under General Videla.[7](#)

Israeli Collaboration with the Junta

Videla presided over the world's first post-war neo-Nazi government. Under a 'dirty war' 30,000 Argentinians died under torture and then 'disappeared', dumped from planes in the sea or secretly buried. Up to 13% were Jewish, even though Argentina's Jews comprised less than 1% of the

population. The Junta saw their enemies on the left as being led and organised by Jews.⁸

After the military coup the Israeli Committee of Solidarity with the Argentine People [COSPA] was formed. On 27 March 1978 the Israeli Committee for the Boycott of the World Cup in Argentina was founded, mostly by members of COSPA or Israeli militants who did not belong to the Zionist Labour parties or Rakah, the Israeli Communist Party. Rakah did not take part because the Soviet Union was in alliance with the Junta.⁹

Relations between Israel and Argentina flourished after the Junta took power despite the Junta's virulent anti-Semitism.¹⁰ This was under both the Labor Alignment and Likud governments of Yitzhak Rabin and Menachem Begin.

Argentina had long been Israel's largest trading partner in Latin America. When in 1978 the US decided to restrict arms sales to the Junta on human rights grounds, Israel stepped into the breach. One-third of Israel's total arms sales of \$1.2 billion in 1980 went to Argentina and El Salvador alone.¹¹ By 1981, Argentina was buying 17% of its arms from Israel.¹²

The perception was that 'the Jewish state's concern for the disappeared was subordinated to political and commercial considerations.'¹³ The arms sales could only be detrimental to the cause of the detainees.¹⁴

Israel's Foreign Ministry claimed that its arms sales were often undertaken as a means to protect Argentina's Jews and that its military relations with Argentina had saved hundreds of Jews. However, the number of individuals located in this manner was minimal compared to those who disappeared.¹⁵ Edy Kaufman dismissed the Ministry's claim: 'So far, commercial considerations seem to have prevailed. Arms are being supplied regardless of the possible consequences concerning the well being of the recipient country's Jewish community.'¹⁶ Marcel Zohar of *Yediot Aharonot* reported that Israel preferred friendship with Argentina over saving Jews.¹⁷

The 'extremist wing' of the Junta had a variation on the international Jewish conspiracy, the Andinia Plan, according to which Argentina had three enemies: Marx, Freud and Einstein.¹⁸ *Daia*, Argentine Jewry's communal leadership, adopted the traditional policy of the Judenrat - collaboration. Timerman's sister described how she tried to get them to take some action 'but it was useless'¹⁹

The Junta made empty promises to end the distribution of neo-Nazi literature.²⁰ At the same time papers such as *Papeles* proclaimed Buenos Aires to be the 'capital of the Aryan world' and adorned their covers with pictures of Hitler and Mussolini. Tributes to the 'martyrs' of the Nuremberg Trials filled their pages:

The appearance of this magazine – alongside the older and equally anti-Semitic monthly, *Cabildo*, is seen here as an indication that the military Government of General Viola is stepping up its campaign against Argentina's 300,000 Jews. Both *Papeles* and *Cabildo* linked the Jews with communism and blamed both for the international outcry over human rights violations in Argentina.

At a time when no newspaper seller would risk trying to sell any magazine of the outlawed left or the combative wing of the Peronist movement, the continuing circulation of Fascist and anti-Semitic magazines, with the connivance of the authorities, is regarded as underlining the growth of extreme tendencies in the Videla Government...

The Daia... leaders have had private meetings with the authorities... Public protests, Jewish leaders argue, would just make a bad situation worse.²¹

Israel's Silence Over the Persecution of Argentinian Jewry – A Mirror Image of Zionist Behaviour During the Holocaust

None of this prevented the AJC sending a delegation to General Viola just before his inauguration as President in March 1981 in an effort to improve the Junta's reputation. Delegation members were impressed with his knowledge of Jewish affairs.

Israel Shahak wrote that 'in the face of this well-known anti-Semitism in Argentina the State of Israel, the Jewish state, the defender of the Jews, made not a single protest...' ²² A report presented to Spanish judge Baltazar Garzán revealed that HIAS secured a promise from Brazil to provide temporary asylum for 350,000 Argentine Jews and that Rabbi Alexander Schindler of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations obtained a promise from US state department officials in 1976 to provide 100,000 visas to Jewish refugees from Argentina if necessary.²³

Shulamit Aloni, the founder of Ratz, Israel's Civil Rights Party, described how she tried to get the situation in Argentina debated in the Knesset: 'Not only did they shut me up, but the late Knesset member Yigal Horowitz threatened me personally and ordered me not to open my mouth.' She was told that the subject could not be debated despite the fact that the parents of

children who had disappeared came asking members to raise their plight.²⁴ Yitzhak Shamir made sure that 'in the name of security' the issue was not aired in the Knesset.²⁵

Menachem Savidor, the Speaker, refused to allow a debate until the parents appealed to the Supreme Court. Only in late June 1983 did the Knesset hold a debate. Six months later the Junta was toppled.²⁶ Savidor admitted that he had prevented a Knesset debate on the situation of Argentina's Jews at the Government's request in order not to harm Israel's military links with Argentina.²⁷

Members of the Knesset presented eight urgent motions regarding the issue between 1976 and 1981. None of these were approved for debate.²⁸ Years later the Knesset debated the issue and formally demanded extradition of the Argentinian murderers. It acted following reports that 40 former officers of the military Junta were arrested in Argentina on the orders of President Nestor Kirchner, who was prepared to extradite them to Spain.

MK Yossi Sarid (Meretz) proposed the move, saying that it was a "hypocritical discussion since all the facts have long been known and the government of Israel never once lifted a finger and cooperated with the Argentine murders because of their interest in arms deals."²⁹

Sarid told how 'In Argentina, Israel sold even the Jews for the price of its immediate interests.'³⁰ Argentina's return to civilian rule marked the end of Israel's military relationship with Argentina. In 1985, President Raul Alfonsin moved to cut off military contact with Israel entirely.³¹ What Israel did in Argentina was no different from what the Zionist movement had done during the Holocaust.

While the Jewish factor has an effect on Israeli foreign policy, it is not a decisive one nor the main one taken into account in the policy calculations of the Israeli government. The heritage of David Ben-Gurion determined that 'in our relations (with foreign countries) we should be guided by one criteria...and that is whether it is good for the Jews.'³²

The 'Jewish factor' refers to actual living Jews whereas 'the Jews' means Israel as the collective Jew. Ben-Gurion believed that 'the state constitutes the highest goal of Zionism and the Jewish people... whose mere existence serves the needs of the Diaspora.'³³ Like fascism Zionism believes that 'the individual is meaningless; the collectivity (the state, nation or race) is paramount.'³⁴

On 2 April 1982 the Falklands/Malvinas war broke out between Britain and Argentina. Israel became Argentina's major arms supplier³⁵ and it supplied

Argentina with emergency replacement military equipment.³⁶ After it was defeated, Argentina spent more than \$1 billion on arms from Israel.³⁷

Like a Victorian grave robber, Israel called for the murdered Jews who were not wanted when they were alive to be brought to Israel for burial. Israel's last service for the Junta occurred in 2017. It ignored an Interpol warrant and refused to extradite to Argentina an Israeli citizen, Teodoro Gauto, accused of war crimes. Gauto, a non-Jew, came to Israel from Argentina with his Jewish wife. The reason given was that in 14 years he had not committed any crime in Israel.³⁸

Jacobo Timerman

The person who brought the Junta's anti-Semitic terror to the world's attention was Jacobo Timerman, a liberal Zionist and editor of *La Opinion*. Arrested and tortured in April 1977, Timerman was released under house arrest a year later and expelled to Israel in October 1979. The following is an account of his treatment:

A hysterical voice began shouting Jew, Jew, Jew! The others join in and form a chorus ... Now they're really amused and burst into laughter. Someone tries a variation, while still clapping hands: 'Clipped prick. clipped prick.' It seems they are no longer angry, merely having a good time. I keep bouncing in the chair and moaning as the electric shocks penetrate my clothes.³⁹

At his 'trial' before a military tribunal, every session of Timerman's interrogation began with the question, 'Are you a Jew?'⁴⁰ Whilst interrogating non-Jews was a job, interrogating Jews was a pleasure. A political opponent could be turned, but a Jew remained a Jew forever.⁴¹ The *Buenos Aires Herald* told how Jews took it for granted that if 'they go to prison, they will be treated far more harshly than Gentiles.'⁴² Jewish prisoners were given 'a double dose of torture and harassment' which 'was known to the Israeli embassy which maintained relations with "moderates" within the military junta.'⁴³

According to Timerman's son, Héctor, Israeli Ambassador Ram Nirgad visited their house, after he had been released and asked Timerman to sign a letter saying that he was well-treated and had no problems with the government. Timerman refused and said he'd rather remain in detention.⁴⁴

Once in Israel, Timerman came under attack from the Zionist movement. The *JC's* correspondent in Argentina, Jose Smilg, an apologist for the Junta and Argentine's Jewish leadership, alleged that it was Timerman's fight from abroad

for human rights which was ‘inspiring a rash of anti-Semitic articles in the Argentine press.’ [45](#)

Smilg alleged that *La Opinion* had ‘supported the Left wing of the Peronist Party during the return of Perón.’ Its real offence was that it had protested against acts of anti-Semitism. The Jewish community organisations stayed silent because, according to Nehemias Resnizky, the former President of Daia, ‘that would create a confrontation with highly powerful sectors of the army.’

Ma’ariv withdrew from agreeing to publish Timerman’s book *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* because it was ‘not interesting’ and would not sell. It became an international best seller.[46](#)

The ‘Jewish’ state was more important to the Zionist lobby in the United States than Argentina’s Jews. Timerman was attacked by right-wing Zionists who believed he ‘asked for what he got’.[47](#) US neo-conservatives reserved their criticism not for the Junta but the Carter administration’s human rights policies. Jean Kirkpatrick, Reagan’s Secretary of State, fatuously distinguished between ‘authoritarian’ regimes that respected religion and family and totalitarian ones.[48](#) They argued that the Junta enjoyed good relations with Israel, which was ‘an important supplier of arms and military equipment to Argentina.’ This was cited as evidence that the Junta could not be called anti-Semitic. Christopher Hitchens was told by Irving Kristol, a prominent neo-con, that he didn’t believe that Timerman had suffered anything like that which he had described.[49](#)

During a visit by former Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, whilst under house arrest, Timerman told him that he had not been humiliated by the torture but by the ‘silent complicity of Jewish leaders.’ [50](#) This was equally true of Israeli leaders. Israel normally takes great pride when its citizens are given international awards. Not so when Timerman received the Golden Pen of Freedom Award. The venue was shifted from the Knesset to the Hebrew University.[51](#)

In Israel Timerman was among the first to oppose the Lebanon War. When he wrote *The Longest War*, criticising Israel’s invasion he became ‘almost persona non-grata.’ Israel’s Deputy Foreign Minister, Yehuda Ben-Meir, described his book as ‘a collection of calumnies and lies arising from his own self-hatred.’ [52](#) When Timerman died, on 11 November 1999 he received glowing obituaries internationally but Israeli papers ‘provided only terse reports of his death.’ [53](#)

The Jewish Disappeared

In 1988 Dr Marcus Weinstein set up the *Asociación de Familiares de Desaparecidos Judios* for Jews who had disappeared and not been traced.⁵⁴ Marcus's son Mauricio was the only Israeli citizen to be murdered.

The relatives of the Jewish Disappeared wrote in the weekly *Mundo Israelita* (Jewish World) ⁵⁵ that they were 'deeply disappointed by the fact that the Israeli state, the international Jewish organisations and the Jewish leadership in Argentina are taking no interest in this subject'. Dr Marcus Weinstein described how 'Israel's indifference to the matter began back during the days of the dictatorship, and has continued to this day.'⁵⁶

Marcel Zohar, *Yedioth Ahronoth* correspondent in Argentina between 1978 and 1982, described how Israel's government refrained from processing immigration applications from left-wing Jews.⁵⁷ The unwritten instruction was to refuse any help to Jews defined as 'too left-wing.'⁵⁸

In 2002 the Israeli Government set up a committee to investigate the disappearance of Jews but it took care not to offend the Argentinian Government. Its interim report omitted Israel's role during the dictatorship. It also rejected the demand to take legal action against the officers who tortured and killed Jews. This was consistent with Israel's stance regarding the trying of Israeli military officers and politicians for war crimes. Weinstein recalled how:

We and other Jewish families knocked again and again on the door of the embassy, and we were always sent away.... Was this a policy that was dictated from Israel, was it a policy that was decided upon at the embassy ... I did not find even a single word about this in the report.⁵⁹

The anti-Semitism of the Junta set it apart from other examples of Israeli cooperation with repressive regimes.⁶⁰ The Israeli state had a choice between selling military equipment to the Junta or waging a campaign against the torture and murder of Argentina's Jews. The Israeli Government chose the former.

Whereas the campaign over Soviet Jewry was accompanied by a massive Cold War propaganda campaign, the persecution of Jews in Argentina, who were seen as 'leftists,' a term of abuse in Israel, ⁶¹ was ignored.

When Jacobo Timerman asked Israel Gur Arie, the then Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, why there was a massive public campaign over Soviet Jewry whilst in the case of Argentina there was no campaign, he answered:

Very simple: the Soviet Union was in the enemy camp and Argentina was a strategic ally.

Timerman 'wondered if that was why Argentina could torture prisoners because they were Jews.' He noted that

on at least one occasion the former Undersecretary of State for Human Rights in the Jimmy Carter administration, Patricia Derian, discussed arms sales to Argentina with the Israeli government and received a response that Israel does not discuss issues of security and that arms sales fall into that camp... Derian told them that the weapons in question were used to kill Jewish prisoners.⁶²

However that too made no impression because, as Ben Gurion had laid down, when there is a choice between the Jews and the Jewish State, the latter wins out.

Daia and Amia – The Judenrat of Argentinian Jewry

About a quarter of a million Jews lived in Argentina.⁶³ It was the largest Jewish community in South America.⁶⁴ *Amia*, the main communal body, was estimated to represent only 40,000 and even this 'includes everyone in the Tablada, the biggest Jewish cemetery in the city.' *Amia* was dominated by the Zionist parties (Labour Alignment/Mapam). In elections called after the restoration of democracy, of the 28,000 eligible only 7,000 voted in its elections.⁶⁵

Zionists were a rare species in a community where Yiddish was still widely spoken. 'There are never more than 7,000 voters in the Argentine Zionist Organisation elections.'⁶⁶ Dr. Lazaro Rubinson, President of the Argentine Zionist Organisation, complained that the younger generation was unwilling to consider Zionism and Aliyah.⁶⁷

Resnizky accused Timerman of defamation for claiming that *Daia* had not denounced anti-Semitism.⁶⁸ Yet as the regime neared its end and protests became more open, *Daia* still boycotted a protest by 7,000 people organised by the Argentine Jewish Movement for Human Rights in Buenos Aires, which was held to protest a wave of anti-Semitic incidents. Among those taking part was Adolfo Pérez Esquirel, Argentina's 1980 Nobel Peace Prize winner. *Daia's* excuse was that the event was dangerous in view of the lack of security.⁶⁹

Renee Sofia Epelbaum,⁷⁰ mother of three desaparecidos and one of the leaders of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, accused *Daia* of silence and extreme caution towards cases of arrests and disappearances of Jews.⁷¹ In sharp contrast, the paper *Nueva Presenda* expressed its support for the cause of the

Mothers and the Jewish desaparecidos. *Daia* even tried to improve the image of the Junta abroad, 'particularly in the USA'. Shockingly 'prominent sections of the Jewish community' even pressurised Israeli representatives 'not to interfere in Argentina's internal affairs'.⁷²

After the fall of the Junta, *Amia* held its 90th anniversary celebration:

A group of women whose children disappeared during the Argentine military regimes crackdown on Left-wing opponents shouted 'Nazi-Nazi' at those attending the Congress here of *Amia* ...

The protestors claimed that Israel, *Amia* and *Daia*, the political representative body of Argentine Jewry - had done nothing to help the 'desaparecidos' (disappeared ones)...

The guest of honour was Mr Itzhak Navon, formerly President of Israel. The mothers attempted to prevent his entrance to the Conference as well as that of the Israeli Ambassador to Argentina.⁷³

Geoffrey Paul, the Editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, was perplexed. Responding to Timerman's accusations, Paul was told that 'representations were made at least once a month to the Argentine leaders'.⁷⁴ But it wasn't private representations but a public campaign that was needed. The leaders of the 'Jewish State' were silent. What mattered was that a 'small but healthy movement of young and older Jews to Israel has developed'.⁷⁵ In Zionist eyes it was intermarriage and assimilation which remained the 'greatest threat to Jewish survival in Latin America.'⁷⁶

Paul dismissed the accusation that 'Timerman only discovered his Jewishness in prison' and found Israel's support for the Junta puzzling. What was the explanation for the AJC exonerating the Junta? Yet the *JC* too had failed to speak out. Paul's comments were those of a guilty conscience. In a visit to Argentina in 1979, just before Timerman was expelled, Paul wrote:

Most of those Argentine Jews with whom I talked preferred that I avoid the topic of Jacobo Timerman. In fact they would rather that I did not talk at all about anti-Semitism in Argentina, about the 500 or so young Jews who were among the 'disappeared'.⁷⁷

After the Junta fell, the *JC* published an editorial referring to a self-serving publication, the 'White Book', that *Daia* had published, justifying its behaviour:

'...its principle throughout was 'the defence of the integrity and the dignity of the Jews and the continuing fight against anti-Semitism... *Daia* refers with pride to how, during a period of violence and repression in Argentina, Zionist activity continued (including Congress elections), the schools carried on normally, ... Argentinian Jewry was represented at international Jewish gatherings - in short, they succeeded in their determination to maintain and protect a 'full Jewish life'.⁷⁸

Even the *JC* had to admit that the White Book 'was less than satisfactory'. While the Mothers of the Jewish Disappeared pleaded for publicity to bring

the atrocities before the public's attention the Jewish leadership prioritised a 'full Jewish life' consisting of Zionist routines.⁷⁹

Zionism had not changed since the Nazi era. Paul described how a senior American diplomat denounced to him 'this spineless Jewish community...' But it wasn't the community but its Zionist leadership that was spineless. What Argentina demonstrated was that an anti-Semitic regime will be a creature of US imperialism. In other words, a regime with which Israel is only too willing to do business with, notwithstanding its Jews.⁸⁰

Zohar recounted the struggle between Danny Rekanati of the JA, who tried to help Jews escape and Israeli ambassador, Ram Nirgad who argued that people defined by the Junta as subversive should not be rescued.⁸¹ Nirgad complained about Rekanati's activities.⁸²

Nirgad's successor, Dov Schmorak, recalled how the Junta's interior minister, General Albano Harguindeguy congratulated him on how well he had done 'not to allow the main leaders of the Jewish community in Argentina to intervene on his [Timerman's] behalf' Israeli representatives had discouraged his family from any public international campaign on the grounds that this would hinder his release. This later extended to blackmailing Timerman not to go ahead with a series of six articles in *Ma'ariv* detailing his experiences, on the grounds it would imperil other Jews in Argentina. Reluctantly Timerman agreed.⁸³

Menachem Begin had previously stated that 'Israel has to help every persecuted Jew.... They can associate with Matzpen in Israel for all I care.' Yet once in power, Begin reneged on this.⁸⁴ Israel's official policy was to persuade the Junta that it had committed an error in arresting Timerman whilst avoiding rousing international public opinion against the regime. Above all it avoided attributing anti-Semitic proclivities to the leaders of the Junta.⁸⁵

When Timerman's son Hector became Argentina's Foreign Minister, Israel raised the 1994 bombing of the Amia centre and the alleged connection with Iran. Timerman told Israel's ambassador:

Israel has no right to ask for explanations. ...Israel does not speak for the Jewish people... Jews who live in Argentina are Argentinian citizens. The attack was against Argentina, and Israel's desire to be involved in the matter only gives ammunition to anti-Semites who accuse Jews of dual loyalty.⁸⁶

In May 2013 Videla died in prison having been convicted of the murder of 31 prisoners and the kidnapping of children: 'To this day... local Jewish leaders are embarrassed by the role played by Jewish organizations or by their

avoidance of action during the years of dictatorship.' Journalist and historian Daniel Muchnik told *Ha'aretz* how 'Throughout this awful period of oppression, most Jews... had a problem. This was the relations of Israel with the dictatorship.' The Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires 'kept a stance of non-intervention in internal affairs'.⁸⁷

The Bombing of Buenos Aires Jewish Community Centre

In 1980 when bombs exploded in Argentine synagogues and Jewish schools and threats of violence were made against Jews generally⁸⁸ Israel said nothing but when a bomb exploded at the AMIA Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires on 18 July 1994, it lost no time in blaming Iran and Hezbollah. Evidence that has since emerged points to a deliberate attempt by the United States and Israel to deflect attention *away* from the real culprits, Israel's anti-Semitic friends in the Argentinian state.

In an August 1994 cable to the State Department, US Ambassador James Cheek boasted of a 'steady campaign' the embassy had waged that 'kept the Iranians in the dock where they belong.' In 2007 Cheek admitted that 'To my knowledge, there was never any real evidence' of Iranian involvement. Bill Brencick, chief of the political section in the US embassy from 1994 to 1997, acknowledged in a 2007 interview that suggestions of Iranian responsibility were based solely on a 'wall of assumptions' and that there was 'no hard evidence'.⁸⁹

In 2014 a former police spy, Jose Alberto Perez, who had infiltrated the Jewish community in Buenos Aires on behalf of Argentina's Federal Police, revealed to two investigative journalists, Miriam Lewin and Horacio Lutzk, that he had been ordered to turn over blueprints to the AMIA building to his Federal Police case officer "Laura".

Perez became consumed by guilt about having enabled the bombing. He had become part of the Jewish community, marrying a Jewish woman. Perez was convinced that the building plans were used by the real culprits behind the bombing. His revelations prompted a series of articles in the Argentine press.

Perez also revealed that those who had employed him as a spy were motivated by the same anti-Semitic beliefs that had led the military dictatorship to single out Jews during the "dirty war". His case officer, "Laura",

had ordered him to find out as much he could from the Jewish community about the “Andinia Plan.”

Another key factor was the role of the state intelligence agency, SIDE, in influencing the prosecutor, Judge Juan Galeano. Not only was a special unit within SIDE tasked with overseeing Galeano’s investigation, another SIDE unit operated directly inside Galeano’s office.²⁰

As Sergio Moreno and Laura Termine reported in *La Prensa* (28.11.94.) the SIDE unit handling the AMIA investigation was notorious for its hatred of Jews. The group consisted of veterans of the dirty war known as the ‘Cabildo’ group, inspired by the magazine of the same name.²¹

Argentinian Prosecutor Alberto Nisman, who in January 2015 committed suicide, and Judge Galeano, attempted to frame and bribe a variety of individuals. Galeano personally offered a bribe of \$400,000 to Carlos Alberto Telleldin, the Shia owner of a second hand car firm who had been imprisoned on other charges, to persuade him to blame two Buenos Aires provincial policemen. This was recorded on video and shown on Argentinian TV.

There has been no resolution of this case because the Argentinian secret state still wields enormous power. Nisman attempted to frame President Cristina Kirchner for conspiring with Iran to sabotage the official Argentinian investigation into Iran. But the driving force behind these attempts to blame Iran for the bombing was the United States and Israel. Both Israel and the US preferred to divert attention from the real culprits, who were the same forces who had tortured and murdered Argentinian Jews

That Israel, even after the collapse of the Junta with which it was such close friends, could attempt to deflect blame away from Argentinian neo-Nazis onto Iran and Hezbollah, demonstrates that the ‘Jewish’ State’s military and foreign policy interests will always trump the needs of diaspora Jewish communities.

Is Israel a Jewish Refuge?

The mainstream Zionist narrative is that the Holocaust was ‘an unshakable justification’ for the establishment of a Jewish state.²² Yet as Argentina proves, the only guarantee against a revival of anti-Semitism is opposition to fascism and racism. Zionism simply reproduces European anti-Semitism as anti-Palestinian racism.

What happened in Argentina proves that in the event of a resurgence of anti-Semitism, Israel will be part of the problem not the solution. Anti-Semitism is the domain of the Right not the Left. Israel is a state whose politics are attractive to the far-Right, including neo-Nazis.²³

If we follow the logic of Zionism, all victims of racism should flee their persecutors and set up their own racially based states.²⁴ If this were adopted universally then it would mean the triumph of racism. The Zionist answer to racism is to replicate it not fight it.

Zionism was not unique. Amongst all oppressed peoples a section of the petite-bourgeoisie comes to accept the terms of reference and the ideological framing of their oppressors. In the United States this was true of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association which collaborated with the KKK. The same was true of Elija Mohammed's Nation of Islam, which used hired thugs to murder Malcolm X. C.L.R. James, the famous Black writer and historian, wrote that 'all the things that Hitler was to do so well later, Marcus Garvey was doing in 1920 and 1921.'²⁵ Garvey applauded the KKK's belief in segregation and spoke favourably of the organisation that 'lynched race pride into the Negroes.'²⁶ Little wonder that Garvey's movement was termed Black Zionism.²⁷

But whereas Garvey's movement never managed to form an alliance with a colonial power, Zionism did. It was this that ensured that the Zionist movement conquered the Jewish establishment in the diaspora. Whereas the damage that Garvey did to Black communities in the United States was minimal, the damage that the Zionist movement has been able to do to Jews in the diaspora is almost infinite.

- ¹ Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell without a number*, 1980, p. 78.
- ² *The Jewish State*, p. 29.
- ³ Baron De Hirsch Centenary, December 10, 1931, JTA, <https://tinyurl.com/y4m6op3l>
Territorialists sought any territory for Jews to colonise, not just Palestine.
- ⁴ H.S. Ferns, 'Britain's Informal Empire in Argentina, 1806-1914', *Past & Present*, OUP, November 1953. 'During the years 1880-1914, Argentina became more important for Britain as a source of foodstuffs and raw materials and as a place of investment than Egypt, China and possibly even India.' p. 60
- ⁵ Lernoux, *National Catholic Reporter*, 25 December 1981.
- ⁶ Paul H. Lewis, 'Was Perón a Fascist? An Inquiry into the Nature of Fascism,' *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 42:1 (Feb., 1980), pp. 242-56.
- ⁷ Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell without a number*
- ⁸ Edy Kaufman, *Jewish Victims Of Repression In Argentina*, pp. 480-88, noted that 'Jews were singled out in both the quantity and quality of punishment'. Kaufman cited between 340 and 1500 Jews as having been killed but his estimates of the total killed is far less than is now accepted. Kaufman estimated that in early 1978, the proportion of Jews among the 'disappeared' was 8.9% though this figure now appears conservative. He cited Judith Laikin Elkin's 'We Knew But We Didn't Want to Know', *Jewish Frontier* (February 1985), that the number of Jewish disappeared was as high as 15% of the total (p. 488).
- ⁹ Raanan Rein & Efraim Davidi, *Sport, Politics and Exile*, p. 676
<https://tinyurl.com/yx82lykp>
- ¹⁰ Raanan Rein & Efraim Davidi, *Exile of the World: Israeli Perceptions of Jacobo Timerman*, p. 6.
- ¹¹ SIPRI, Yearbook, 1979 (London: Taylor and Francis), 204-5.
<https://tinyurl.com/tgr8kwq> *Israel and Latin America: The Military Connection*, Bishara Bahbah, St. Martin's Press, 1986.
- ¹² *The Jerusalem Post*, 29 April 1982; *Al-Fajr Palestinian Weekly*, 4-10 June 1982.
- ¹³ Latin American Weekly Report 17 February 1984, cited by Bishara Bahbah, 'Israel's Military Relationship with Ecuador and Argentina,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 15:2, 1986: 94.
- ¹⁴ Yitzhak Mualem, Between a Jewish and an Israeli Foreign Policy: Israel-Argentina Relations: 1976-1983, <https://tinyurl.com/y54mtv5s> citing Senkman, *The Rescue of Jews in Argentina during the Military Regime, 1976-1983*, p. 112; Barromi, *Were the Jews of Argentina Abandoned?* p. 69.
- ¹⁵ Interview conducted by Avital Appel and Yifat Bachrach with former Ambassador to Argentina Dov Shmorak on 3 March 2003 (ICJ 216/49).
- ¹⁶ Bishara Bahbah, *Arms Exports and Israeli Government Policy*, <https://tinyurl.com/tgr8kwq>
- ¹⁷ Aharon Kleiman, 'A Double-Edged Sword', p. 80. *The Jerusalem Post*, 27.1.84., cited in *Israeli Foreign Affairs*, April 1985. Marcel Zohar, p. 31.
- ¹⁸ Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell without a number*, p. 130.
- ¹⁹ Rein & Davidi, *Exile of the World: Israeli Perceptions of Jacobo Timerman*, p. 11.
- ²⁰ JC. 27.3.1981. 'Viola Gives Pledge of Anti Hate Action.'
- ²¹ Hugh O'Shaughnessy, *The Observer*, 30.1.1980.

- 22 Stanley Heller, p. 76.
- 23 *The Guardian*, 24.3.99. 'Jews targeted in Argentina's dirty war,' <https://tinyurl.com/set6o72>
- 24 Rein & Davidi, *Exile of the World: Israeli Perceptions of Jacobo Timerman*, pp. 6-7.
- 25 Shamir was Speaker of the Knesset from 1977-1980. 'Israelis demand state open up past ties to Argentine junta,' +972 Magazine, 22.3.16. <https://tinyurl.com/w49zgtz>
- 26 Rein & Davidi, *Exile of the World: Israeli Perceptions of Jacobo Timerman*, p. 7.
- 27 Marcel Zohar, *Let My People Go To Hell*, cited in 'Israel Denied Shelter To Leftwing Argentine Jews During Junta Rule,' *Hadashot*, 28.9.90. See letter from Tony Greenstein, *The Guardian* 19.2.02, 'Argentina - Proof that Israel is no Refuge from Anti-Semitism,' 29.11.09. <https://tinyurl.com/br93g4t> Tony Greenstein, 'The Scandal of the Jewish Disappeared,' *Tribune*, 6.4.00.
- 28 Mario Sznajder and Luis Roniger, p. 362, citing Testimonies by Geula Cohen, Dror Zeigerman and Menachem AH Cohen; Appel and Bachrach, *The Politics of the Israeli Governments*, p. 28 and note 85.
- 29 'Knesset demands extradition of Argentinean Junta officers,' *Ha'aretz*, 29.7.03, <https://tinyurl.com/y37gxjzp>
- 30 'Yes, I Accuse,' *Ha'aretz*, 31 August 1989, [Hebrew] cited in Yitzhak Mualem, *Between a Jewish and an Israeli Foreign Policy*, fn. 39; MK Yair Tzaban in *Divrei Ha-Knesset*, 29.6.83., pp. 2810-12 [Hebrew].
- 31 Israeli Foreign Affairs, May 1985, 7.
- 32 Mualem, 'Between a Jewish and an Israeli Foreign Policy,' *Jewish Political Studies Review* 16:1-2 (Spring 2004), citing Kleiman, *A Double-Edged Sword*, p. 170.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Paul Spicker, *Thinking collectively: Social policy, collective action and the common good*, <https://tinyurl.com/y2m9pemb>
- 35 Esther Howard, "'Israel: The Sorcerer's Apprentice,' *MERIP Reports*, 13 February 1983, (1983: 24]. 'Begin aided Argentina during Falklands War to avenge the
- 36 *JC* 29.4.11. citing *Operation Israel*, Hernan Dobry.
- 37 Bishara p. 92, *The Washington Post*, 7 and 16 December 1982; *JTA*, 26 August 1982. For more information on the subject see *The Times* (London), 10.12.82; *Jerusalem Post*, 14.12.82. Schumaker, 'Argentina Buying New Arms,' *NYT*, 6.6.82. <https://tinyurl.com/y2zywkla>
- 38 John Brown, *Ha'aretz* 3.5.17, 'Israel Refuses to Extradite Alleged War Criminal Wanted in Argentina' <https://tinyurl.com/rg43gyb>
- 39 Jacobo Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell without a number*, pp. 60-1
- 40 Ibid., p. 112.
- 41 Ibid., p. 66.
- 42 Ibid., p. 136.
- 43 *JC* 25.5.84, 'A White Book' Leader.
- 44 Héctor Timerman, "Israel, la dictadura y los consejos de Avivi," *Página12*, 30.7.01. <https://tinyurl.com/yjyzpuav> Rein & Davidi, *Exile of the World* (2010), p. 16. 4.1.14.
- 45 *JC*. 14.8.81 'Timerman Stirs Jewish Discord'.
- 46 Rein & Davidi, *Exile of the World*, pp. 18-19.

- 47 JC 31. 7. 81.
- 48 Jean Kirkpatrick, 'Dictatorships and Double Standards' *Commentary*, November 1979, <https://tinyurl.com/saudulq>
- 49 See Decter ('The Uses of Jacobo Timerman', *Contentions*, August, 1981); Seth Lipsky ('A Conversation with Publisher Jacobo Timerman', and *NYT* columnist William Safire.
- 50 Timerman, *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell without a number*, p. 78.
- 51 Rein & Davidi, 'Exile of the World', p. 17.
- 52 *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 19-20.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 54 Association of Relatives of the Disappeared Jews, <https://tinyurl.com/y2k62vap>
- 55 Tony Greenstein, 'The Scandal of Argentine's Jewish Disappeared Ones,' *Tribune*, 6.2.00
- 56 Aryeh Dayan, 'A disappearing act,' *Ha'aretz* 3.1.03. <https://tinyurl.com/bdp2eazj>
- 57 Marcel Zohar, *Let My People Go to Hell - Blue and White Betrayal*, p. 31 (Tel Aviv: Zitrin, 1990) [Hebrew].
- 58 Mario Sznajder and Luis Roniger, p. 363, fn. 35. By way of contrast, local Rabbis Mayer and Graetz, who did their best to help detained Jews, didn't have diplomatic immunity endangering themselves and their families. When the Junta stepped down, Mayer received the highest Argentine decoration, the Order of General San Martin.
- 59 Aryeh Dayan, 'A disappearing act,' *Ha'aretz* 3.1.03 <https://tinyurl.com/bdp2eazj>
- 60 Aaron Klieman, *Israel's Global Reach: Arms Sales As Diplomacy*, p. 12, New York, 1985.
- 61 Alona Ferber, 'Can the Israeli left reinvent itself?' *The New Statesman*, 2.3.00. <https://tinyurl.com/yx6tz55u> They were seen as the same 'leftists' who opposed the war in Lebanon and the Occupation.
- 62 OPINION, Israel, the dictatorship and Avivi's advice, Hector Timerman, <https://tinyurl.com/xjyzpuav>
- 63 JC 9.10.81. Smilg suggested that there were 300,000 Jews in Argentina. The Virtual Jewish World's figures are lower, 180,000 <https://tinyurl.com/322jS6zn>
- 64 Edy Kaufman, *Jewish Victims of Repression in Argentina Under Military Rule (1976-1983)*, p. 488, cites Hebrew University demographer, S. Delia Pergola's 'Population Trends of Latin American Jews', March 1984, [Table 3](#), which suggested that in 1980 Argentina had 245,000 Jews, 0.88% of the population.
- 65 Jose Smilg, 'Apathy in Amia Vote,' 1. 6. 1984, *JC*.
- 66 'Letter from Buenos Aires, Young People Reject the Past,' *JC* 9.10.81.
- 67 Argentine Zionists Castigated, *JTA*, 15.8.75. <https://tinyurl.com/yS2we26c>
- 68 Timerman attacked, *JC* 8.1.82.
- 69 *JC* 28.10.1983. J. Smilg, 'Argentine Protest.'
- 70 See Rene de Epelbaum, 77, 'Argentine Protester,' 9.2.98, <https://tinyurl.com/y46m4sqr>
- 71 'Behind the Headlines a Nightmare Continues in Argentina,' *JTA*, 22.5.86., <https://tinyurl.com/vewx6nj8>
- 72 Mario Sznajder and Luis Roniger, p. 356, 'From Argentina to Israel: Escape, Evacuation and Exile,' *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 37:2 (May, 2005), Cambridge University Press.
- 73 'Bitter Protest by Grieving Mothers,' *The JC*, 23 March 1984.
- 74 *JC* 5.6.81, Editor Accuses Jewish Leaders.

- [75](#) JC 9.10.81.
- [76](#) JC, 9.10.81. Jose Smilg, 'Letter from Buenos Aires' – Young People Reject the Past.
- [77](#) JC 31.7.81.
- [78](#) 'A White Book', Leader in JC 25.5.84.
- [79](#) Ibid.
- [80](#) Tony Greenstein, *Zionism and Anti-Semitism, Return 1*, March 1989. A good example today is the friendly relations between Israel and the far-Right Hungarian government of Viktor Orban.
- [81](#) Zohar, pp. 19-24
- [82](#) Barromi, "Were the Jews of Argentina Abandoned?" pp. 58-9; Senkman, *The Rescue of Jews in Argentina during the Military Regime, 1976-1983*, pp. 101-4.
- [83](#) Rein & Davidi, *Exile of the World: Israeli Perceptions of Jacobo Timerman*, pp. 15-16.
- [84](#) Sznajder and Roniger, p. 356, citing, Aryeh Dayan, 'Thanks to Menachem Begin,' *Kol Ha'ir*, 9 Sept. 1987, p. 34 [In Hebrew]. Matzpen was a small, socialist anti-Zionist group in Israel.
- [85](#) Rein & Davidi, "*Exile of the World*" (2010), pp. 9–11.
- [86](#) Gabe Fisher, 'Israeli ambassador upbraided in Argentina,' *ToI* 6.2.13. <https://tinyurl.com/y3rhcsje>
- [87](#) *Ha'aretz* 22.5.13. 'Videla and the Jews of Argentina: The Closing of a Painful Circle,' <https://tinyurl.com/sr5nzub>
- [88](#) Ibid.
- [89](#) Gareth Porter, 'How a police spy's stunning testimony threatens the official USIsraeli AMIA bombing narrative,' *The Grayzone*, 26.7.20, <https://tinyurl.com/yckkaha3>
- [90](#) Sergio Kiernan, 'Waiting for justice: two years after the AMIA bombing,' *AJC*, 1996, <https://tinyurl.com/y8u5mesp>
- [91](#) Gareth Porter, *LA Progressive*, 'AMIA Bombing: New Evidence Points to Federal Police,' 29.7.20. <https://tinyurl.com/bdehdn2u>
- [92](#) Yechiam Weitz, *Jewish Refugees and Zionist Policy during the Holocaust*, p. 351.
- [93](#) Richard Spencer challenged Rabbi Matt Rosenberg, asking him whether the 'radical inclusion' he advocated in America applied to Israel. 'Alt Right Leader Ties White Supremacy to Zionism — Leaves Rabbi Speechless,' *Forward*, 7.12.2016. <https://tinyurl.com/kexlmg>
- [94](#) A good example of this was at the 1983 Tory Party Conference when a motion on the 'voluntary' repatriation of Black people was moved by the far-Right Monday Club MP Harvey Proctor. Yehuda Avner, the Israeli Ambassador, when addressing a CFI meeting, spoke of how Israel had renewed its independence 'by our own self-repatriation'. The audience 'greeted his remarks enthusiastically'. JC 21.10.83.
- [95](#) Paul Gilroy, *Black Fascism*, p. 70, *Transition* Issue 81/82, <https://tinyurl.com/y3ph8ckj>
- [96](#) Ibid., p. 74.
- [97](#) Benyamin Neuberger, *Black Zionism – The Return to Africa*, <https://tinyurl.com/yxqxlxn2>

Conclusion

'When anti-Semitism is everywhere, it is nowhere. And when every anti-Zionist is an anti-Semite, we no longer know how to recognize the real thing.' (Brian Klug) [1](#)

Even Zionism's most devoted supporters would be hard-pressed to say that the Zionist movement made the rescue of Jews from the Nazis a priority.

What is shocking is how the Zionist movement consciously ignored the Holocaust whilst it was occurring, even to the point of denying or questioning whether it was happening. Throughout the war achieving Jewish statehood was their overriding priority. In May 1942, as the Holocaust was beginning in earnest the Zionist movement held the Biltmore Conference whose sole concern was the achievement of Jewish statehood.

At no time did the Zionist movement even contemplate holding a conference concerned with saving those Jews who could be saved. Indeed they were even hostile to the West's own feeble efforts at Evian and later Bermuda. What is even more shocking is that some Zionist leaders saw the death of millions of Jews as their entrance ticket to a place at the post-war negotiating table.

The Zionist reaction to the Nazis rise to power was no different from their traditional attitude to anti-Semitism, which was to use it for their own advantage. At no time did the Zionist movement attempt what millions of Jews were trying to achieve with the Boycott of Nazi Germany, the overthrow of the Nazi regime whilst it was weak. The Zionist Congress in Prague, after the rise to power of the Nazis, couldn't even bring itself to condemn the Hitler regime, still less call for its overthrow. Everywhere and at all times, the Zionists sought to maximise their own advantage at the expense of the Jews.

Even as devoted a servant of the Zionist movement as Elie Wiesel could write that the Zionist movement prioritised building another settlement to the saving of Jews in Europe. Even that dutiful daughter of Zionism, Dina Porat, admits that it is 'hard to answer' the question as to why the Zionist leadership was so indifferent to the plight of Jews in Europe that they didn't even discuss the reports of mass murder that were emerging.

This desire to exploit not combat anti-Semitism explains the letter from the ZVfD to Hitler on 21 June 1933 promising him their support and understanding. This letter was unsolicited and voluntary. It represented the mentality of German Zionism. When they wrote that 'On the foundation of the new state, which has established the principle of race... fruitful activity for

the fatherland is possible' they weren't simply saying this to please Hitler. They sincerely believed it.

When the overwhelming majority of world Jewry, including ordinary Zionists, spontaneously boycotted Nazi Germany, the Zionist movement first opposed and then sabotaged that campaign. State building took precedence over everything. There was no section of the Zionist movement which contemplated, still less attempted, the overthrow of Hitler. Resistance to fascism and anti-Semitism was simply not part of the Zionist DNA. When Zionists did fight the Nazis, as in the case of the Warsaw Ghetto, they did it in spite of not because they were Zionists. Their parties in Palestine beseeched them to leave because the 'real fight' was in Palestine against the Arabs.

Ha'avara was only agreed to by the Nazis because it was a means of undermining and destroying a Boycott that threatened the very survival of the Hitler regime. The Zionists were fully aware of this. It was Edwin Black, a Zionist historian, who noted that with Ha'avara, the Zionist movement had made an investment in the survival of the Nazi regime. This is the unpalatable truth for which Ken Livingstone was forced out of the Labour Party.

Zionism only saw advantages in a Nazi government determined to ensure that Jews were treated as a separate nationality. Both the Nazis and the Zionists agreed that German Jews did not belong in Germany. Unlike their followers the Zionist leaders were gleeful at the 'golden opportunity' which the rise to power of the Nazis had provided them with.

The suggestion that Ha'avara was concluded in order to enable the emigration of the maximum number of Jews from Germany is risible. If there was an iota of truth in this then one has to ask why their adherence to a policy of selectivity? Why did they threaten to cut the number of Palestine certificates allocated to German Jews if they did not improve the 'human material' that they were sending?

If Ha'avara was a product of a desire to rescue the maximum number of German Jews then it made no sense that nearly 5,000 American Jews and 20,000 from countries where Jews were under no threat, were given certificates to enter Palestine between 1933 and 1939.

The unpalatable truth is that the Zionist movement campaigned actively to thwart the many rescue schemes that people were putting forward in places like Santo Domingo because they feared that if other destinations could provide a safe haven for Europe's Jews, what point or purpose was there in a

Jewish state? Alaska may well have been too cold, as Stephen Wise put it, but it was preferable to the heat of the crematoria of Auschwitz.

The whole rationale of Zionism was that it and it alone had the answer to the problem of anti-Semitism, which was to escape from it. Fighting anti-Semitism was alien to the very concept of Zionism.

Saving Jews anywhere but Palestine contradicted the very *raison d'être* of Zionism. Zionism, as Ben Gurion repeatedly emphasised, was not a refugee movement. Zionism was not established in order to provide a refuge of last resort for Jews. Indeed the 'left' of the Zionist movement was opposed to admitting any refugees because they were a pioneering movement.

Zionism was at its heart a Jewish supremacist, settler-colonial project intended to perpetuate the Jewish people/race. That is why, even today, abortion and intermarriage are compared to the losses in the Holocaust. To Zionism the survival of individual Jews means nothing. This explains Ben-Gurion's infamous speech when he said that he would rather save half of Germany's Jewish children in Palestine than all of them in England.

If the Soviet Union had not become a refuge for an estimated 1.5 million Jews, the number of Jews who would have perished would have exceeded 7 million. The Zionist movement's contribution to saving Jewish lives during the Holocaust was, as Elie Wiesel observed, negligible.

The Zionist leadership of American Jews, led by Stephen Wise, did its best to ensure that Jews were **not** rescued from the Holocaust. When dissident Zionists Shmuel Merlin and Peter Bergson campaigned for the establishment of the War Refugee Board, Wise and Goldmann actively campaigned against them and used their contacts in Congress to try and sabotage their efforts. Wise was *de facto* an accomplice to the Nazis' war crimes and should be considered a far greater war criminal than the Mufti of Jerusalem whom the Zionists single out unfailingly.

The American Zionists were supportive of the efforts by US Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long to prevent the entry of Jewish refugees. When the WRB was formed in January 1944, it was in the teeth of Zionist opposition. Yet even from January 1944 onwards it was able to save at least 200,000 Jews. If Stephen Wise and America's Zionist leadership had been successful, then the Jews of Budapest would have been one more grisly statistic. Indeed in his Report to the Jewish Agency after the war, Kasztner indicated that he had already agreed with Eichmann for another train out of

Hungary for another 1,500 Jews if Budapest's Jews had also been deported to Auschwitz.

What was true of the American Zionists was equally true of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and its President, Selig Brodetsky. Whereas the bourgeois anti-Zionists in charge of the Board prior to 1940 tried to secure the admission of Jewish refugees and in 1938/39 were successful with the Kindertransport of nearly 10,000 Jewish children, Brodetsky not only refused to do anything but he actively sabotaged the rescue efforts of Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld and the Chief Rabbi Dr Hertz who did want to exploit every opportunity to save Europe's Jews.

To Brodetsky and his accomplices, Abraham Brotman and Lavy Bakstansky, what was important was not the thousands of Jews being gassed and burnt at Auschwitz daily but the affront to their pride and prestige because of these unlicensed efforts at rescue. People should bear this in mind today when the Board talks about the 'anti-Semitism' of the Left.

But for the collaboration of the Hungarian Zionist movement and Kasztner's suppression of the Auschwitz Protocols, then it is likely that the majority of Hungarian Jewry would have survived. Elie Wiesel's conclusion that the Zionist leadership never made the rescue of European Jews a priority and that Hungary was a tragedy that should never have happened, cannot be faulted.

The attempt of Zionist holocaust historians such as Bauer and Fatran to cloud and obscure the consequences of Kasztner's suppression of the AP demonstrates that the loyalty of the official Zionist holocaust historians is to Zionism not the historical truth. Bauer's suggestion that Hungarian Jewry were aware of their fate and knew that extermination lay at the end of the train journey to Auschwitz was a lie. A patently transparent attempt to exonerate the movement that he has devoted his lifetime to.

YV has constructed a false memory of the Holocaust. It has distorted and tried to falsify the evidence. Its failure to integrate the escape of Vrba and Wetzler into the history of the Holocaust, its inability even to display the AP at Yad Vashem, coupled with their rehabilitation of the Nazi collaborator Rudolf Kasztner, who is widely seen as having been a Gestapo agent, makes it clear that their primary purpose is to rewrite the history of the Holocaust so as to accord with the Zionist narrative, rather than to tell it. Theirs is not a dispassionate search for the truth.

Equally despicable is the attempt to portray the Palestinians as responsible for the Holocaust and their focus on the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, to the exclusion of Nazi war criminals. Husseini, unlike Rauff, was not involved in the Holocaust.

YV is not an independent research institute or museum but rather an Israeli state propaganda organisation whose first loyalty is to Zionism. From the visit in April 1976 of South Africa's Nazi sympathising Prime Minister John Vorster to the visit in July 2018 of Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, YV has demonstrated, in the words of Daniel Blatman, that it is a diplomatic laundromat for every fascist and anti-Semite who darkens its doors. The visits of Hitler supporters such as Philippines President Duterte and Brazil's President Bolsonaro to Yad Vashem defile the memory of those who died.

YV rejects the idea that the annihilation of European Jewry was a consequence of racism and fascism. For them and the Zionist movement anti-Semitism has nothing to do with the societies in which Jews live. Anti-Semitism is an eternal, never-changing phenomenon whose only cause is the Jews themselves and what they call Jewish 'homelessness'.

YV refuses to speak up against the racist practices and policies of the Israeli state towards Israel's Palestinian minority. That a guide should be sacked for mentioning YV's proximity to Deir Yassin, the Palestinian village whose inhabitants were massacred in April 1948, demonstrates that it lacks all political and moral integrity.

There isn't one piece of legislation, from the 1950 Absentee Property Law to the 2011 Admissions Committees Law or the 2018 Jewish Nation State Law, however racist or discriminatory, that YV has condemned or criticised. Not once has it criticised the demolition of Palestinian homes or the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in East Jerusalem, a stone's throw away.

YV has even failed to speak out against the annual ritual of Jerusalem Day when Jewish settler mobs invade East Jerusalem chanting '*Death to the Arabs*.' Anyone with even a cursory acquaintance with European anti-Semitism knows that the chant '*Death to the Jews*' was a favourite of the Jewish pogromists.

The parallels between Israel's Arab minority and Germany's Jews are strikingly obvious. The Nuremberg Laws effectively removed the status of German nationals from its Jews. The 2018 Jewish Nation State Law did the same to Israel's Palestinian citizens. Yet YV sees nothing and says nothing.

YV not only failed to speak out in support of asylum seekers facing deportation from Israel, for the 'crime' of not being Jewish but it resented the fact that the subject was even raised with it. No organisation claiming to represent the memory of the Jews who died in the Holocaust (all other victims of the Holocaust being ignored) could fail to draw the conclusion that it was the refusal of the United States, Britain and the rest of the world to open their doors to Jewish refugees which condemned hundreds of thousands to a slow and agonising death.

YV draws no conclusions and learns no lessons from the Holocaust other than Jewish nationalist ones. YV has never even considered that the Holocaust might be a warning as to where racism can lead.. YV subscribes to the notion that Israel, as a Jewish state, is entitled to pursue policies designed to keep the Palestinians in a state of perpetual subjugation.

If there had been no Zionist movement there would have been no opposition by organised Jewry to the lowering of immigration barriers in the US and Britain. If world Jewry had not been distracted and undermined by nationalist zealots intent on worshipping the golden calf of Jewish statehood, tens if not hundreds of thousands more Jews could have been saved. Roosevelt could have been forced to act outside the American immigration quotas if the Zionists had not captured the leadership of US Jewry. Half a million or more Jews could have been rescued.

If there hadn't been a fifth column within world Jewry intent on destroying the Boycott of Nazi Germany and sabotaging every attempt at rescue, it is possible that the Hitler regime would have collapsed, as many predicted, before the Holocaust was even contemplated.

The contrast with what is considered by Orthodox Jews to be their historic enemy, the Catholic Church, and the Zionist movement is instructive. Whilst Pinchas Lapide's estimate that the Church saved up to 860,000 Jews is an over-estimate, a figure of one-third to one-half of that is credible. There is no doubt, despite the silence of Pius XII, that the efforts of local churches, Christians and the Apostolic Nuncios was significant.

The exploitation of the Holocaust by the Zionist movement is designed to prevent us drawing any universal lessons. Every act of child murder by the Israeli state is carried out in the name of the children who died in Birkenau. This is the real obscenity of Zionism and its framing of Holocaust history.

Everything is subsumed to the need to defend Israeli apartheid. Instead of serving as a warning against the resurgence of racism and fascism, the Holocaust has become its justification. The message that Zionism draws from the Holocaust is that Jews can only survive at the expense of another people.

As the example of Argentina shows, when anti-Semitism rears its ugly head Israel will not be on the side of the Jews. Indeed it is likely to be arming the very regime that is murdering its Jews.

Israel may be a 'Jewish' state racially but it subscribes to none of the values that Jews have traditionally been associated with such as solidarity with the oppressed and welcoming the stranger. Israel is the antithesis of the values of the Jewish socialists and revolutionaries who fought first Czarism and then Nazism. Where once Jews were a byword for the fight for a socialist society, today Israel is dragging Jews to the political right. Israel's concerns are those of a state whose interests lie in an alliance with the most repressive, racist and right-wing regimes on the planet.

I have placed the role of Zionism during the Holocaust in the context of the Holocaust as a whole. Even if the Zionist movement had not existed then many if not most of Hitler's Jewish victims would have perished. It is though possible that the Hitler regime could have been stopped in its tracks in its infancy. The blame for the massive toll in the Holocaust rests primarily with Western leaders, Churchill and Roosevelt in particular, for barring Jewish refugees from their shores. These same leaders welcomed Hitler to power because of his anticommunism. The opposition of the Zionist movement to lowering the United States' immigration barriers gave comfort only to the anti-Semites who opposed the entry of Jewish refugees.

The vast majority of German Jews and many of those living in Nazi-occupied Europe could have been saved if the West had offered them asylum. It is the same press who campaigned against the admission of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany, such as the *Daily Express* and *Daily Mail*, who were to the forefront of the false and confected 'anti-Semitism' attacks on Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party. The campaign against 'anti-Semitism' in the Labour Party was a malicious fiction that unfortunately much of the social democratic left, obsessed with identity politics, bought into.

The record of the wartime coalition government in Britain was reprehensible. The hostility of Herbert Morrison, Labour's Home Secretary, to letting Jewish refugees enter Britain, led directly to the death of thousands of

Jews in Vichy France who might otherwise have survived. Anti-Semitism is and always has been the preserve of the Labour Party's right wing.

Not one word of criticism of Morrison was ever made by Britain's Zionist leaders or the Board of Deputies. Selig Brodetsky had no objection to keeping Jewish refugees out of Britain. The war-time record of the Board says everything one needs to know about this Quisling body.

The record of Zionist leaders such as Wise and Goldmann in opposing the ECSJE and calling for Peter Bergson to be deported, speaks volumes about the attitude of Zionism to genuine anti-Semitism. Ordinary Zionists however were mostly unaware of the treachery of their leadership.

This book and its author will no doubt be heavily criticised by Zionism's propagandists whilst ignoring the content. I am not the first and I will not be the last to be the victim of what Hannah Arendt described as the Zionist 'mimeographing machine'.

What is most shocking about the Israeli state that Zionism has given birth to is the delight most of its Jewish citizens take with Palestinian suffering. In a talk by

Raja Shehadeh in Brighton, I was moved by his description of the 'meanness' of Israelis who, during the Palestinian hunger strike in April 2017, set up a barbecue outside Ofer Prison in order to torment the prisoners.² Even during the IRA hunger strikes of the 1980s, no Loyalist engaged in such a calculated act of sadism. There were Israelis who set up sofas and a coffee machine on the hills above Gaza in order that they could watch the bombing of civilians at first hand.³

The cynicism with which Zionism has exploited the Holocaust as a propaganda weapon to be deployed against its enemies, is best evidenced by Israel's treatment of its holocaust survivors. If the Israeli state was genuinely concerned by the genocide of the Jews in Europe, then it would have taken steps long ago to ensure that the survivors didn't live in poverty, forced to choose between eating and heating. As one holocaust survivor said "When it's cold, I just freeze at home." ⁴

What makes this worse is the fact that the Israeli state and its banks have stolen the reparations that the German state meant for them. The situation was summed up in the headline 'Israel Is Waiting for Its Holocaust Survivors to Die'.⁵ What makes this even more indefensible is that according to the Stockholm International Peace Institute, Israel spends the world's second

highest amount per capita on arms, some \$2,769.20 million. It is greater even than the United States.⁶ Israel faces no military threats so there isn't even an iota of justification for its treatment of its holocaust survivors.

Yet at the same time Israel is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on expanding its settlements in the West Bank.⁷ Israel's priorities could not be clearer. When forced to choose between the holocaust survivors and land theft and military repression, the latter wins out every time. Beneath all the rhetoric, colonisation not care for holocaust survivors is Zionism's priority.

Of one thing we can be certain. If the behaviour of Europeans during the Nazi occupation had mirrored the indifference of Israelis to the Palestinians' suffering, then far fewer Jews would have survived the Holocaust. One question I have never been able to get a satisfactory answer to from Israel's supporters is whether, if Jews in Britain were treated like the Palestinians are in Israel, would that be anti-Semitic? It is because most Zionists know that Israel's actions are indefensible that they shout 'anti-Semite' at their critics. They have no other option.

The Zionist solution to anti-Semitism and the Nazis was no solution at all. As a product of late colonialism Zionism had arrived on the scene too late. On the most charitable interpretation, the Zionist project of building a Jewish state hindered not helped the survival of European Jews.

For those with a universalist perspective, the Holocaust was but one example of imperialism's genocidal character.⁸

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 - 2 <https://tinyurl.com/y3sh63xx>
 - 3 NYT, 14.7.14. <https://tinyurl.com/y5arcb3l>. 'Israelis Watch Bombs Drop on Gaza From Front-Row Seats.'
 - 4 Ynet Magazine, 20.12.21. Amid winter, Holocaust survivors forced to choose between food and heating. <https://tinyurl.com/nhdrhktx>
 - 5 Ha'aretz, 6.2.13. <https://tinyurl.com/4rp9nkpz>
 - 6 List of countries by military expenditure per capita, (2021) <https://tinyurl.com/mcvecb76>
 - 7 Ha'aretz, 17.12.19. Israel's Settlement Spending Rose, Even After Golan Heights Removed From the Equation Data shows highest first-quarter spending in a decade, which rights group says comes at expense of communities inside Israel. <https://tinyurl.com/3uz9nt3z>
 - 8 Such as the murder of 10 million Africans in the Belgian Congo for which there is just one book, Adam Hochschild's *King Leopold's Ghost*.

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