Hannu Rautkallio

THE JEWS IN FINLAND

SPARED FROM THE HOLOCAUST



EC-Books

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Introduction

The Finnish Jews were the only Jews in a country that fought on the side of Nazi Germany during the Second World War to be completely spared from the Holocaust. The manner in which this drama unfolded was unique. The Finnish Jews were, at the same time, both spared from the Holocaust and participants in Hitler's war against the Soviet Union. Throughout the war they were potential targets for deportation, since the systematic destruction of Jews was the central objective of Hitler's eastern campaign. The credit for their not meeting this fate goes to the Finns. In this contradiction between being spared from the Holocaust and fighting in the military of a country allied with Hitler's Germany, the Jewish community in Finland, at that time numbering some two thousand, had to be certain that there would be no chance whatsoever of National Socialist racial policy being extended to Finland. At the same time they had to be sure that both the Finnish government and the supreme military command would protect their inviolability.

More clearly than other Finnish citizens, the Jews of Finland – on the basis of the information available to them – understood the historical connections of the Third Reich's racial policies. They *knew* from history how anti-Semitism was fueled by the slightest irritant. And now all Europe was in turmoil. The Jewish community of Finland had been overtaken by a situation in which there was no alternative to acceptance of the Germans as comrades-in-arms. All of the Finnish Jews were prepared to fight their "unknown war" because they could count on being safe as Finnish citizens and Finnish soldiers, even with Germans present. Personal safety, however, did not suffice to ease the minds of all Jews in Finland.

Most of them, in any case, preferred to seek justification for fighting on the same side as Hitler's troops after hostilities had ended. It was simplest to "normalize" the co-belligerency by relating it to Finland's avowed aim of fighting a "separate war". The truth remains that the measures taken by Finland's co-belligerent in joint operations were exceptional during the war. In no other country where German troops were operating did Hitler tolerate the exercise of options in Jewish policy.

The Finns' relationship to the so-called lost war [Finland remained an independent state after 1944] as an "independent ally" of Nazi Germany is schizophrenic in several ways. Finland survived the war even though for more than three years it had been the ally of one of the bloodiest dictatorships in modern history. Later it fought a brief war against its former comrade-in-arms. Finland also spent close to four years fighting another dictator, if the Winter War is included, and it concluded a truce with the victor on September, 1944. One of the great ironies of history is that Finland's choices between the two dictators had positive consequences for the country; its independence was preserved. Finland, having lost the 1939-1940 Winter War, had joined the next conflict on the "wrong side". The possible "positive consequences" that some other policy might have produced during the period between the end of the Winter War and the decision to participate in the 1941 German attack on the USSR, called the Continuation War in Finnish historiography, can only be the object of speculation, because they never arose.

The one-party ideology of Finland's mighty comrade-in-arms is usually overlooked as the starting point for the country's relations with Germany. Accordingly, in Finnish historiography very little attention has been focused up to now on the objectives of racial policy that were so central a part of Nazi Germany's eastern campaign. They would supposedly not have extended to Finland, the inviolability of which Hitler's administration would have ensured itself. Although the Holocaust was not even implemented

in Finland, it was through the Holocaust that collaboration with Nazi Germany led to contact with the key decision makers in the Third Reich, the police and security apparatus directed by *Heinrich Himmler*. Representatives of the Third Reich Security Main Office (*RSHA*) had infiltrated the German Foreign Ministry, as early as 1941. From 1942 the Nazi Party Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*) and the State Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*) had, for all practical purposes, assumed the responsibility for keeping tabs on German embassies in various countries, Finland included.

The German Secret State Police (*Geheime Staatspolizei, Gestapo*) cooperated closely with the Finnish State Police (*Valpo*). However, the Gestapo had no official representation in Finland, as it had, for example, through the war years in neutral Sweden. The so-called Jewish question comes up for Finland in the collaboration with the Gestapo, the appalling results of which the Finnish State Police agents had the opportunity to follow within eyeshot in the Baltic countries.

Finnish and foreign scholars have conducted noteworthy historical research devoted to many specific questions concerning Finnish-German wartime relationships. These include political, economic and military relations, relations between churches, cultural relations, articles published in the Third Reich press about Finland, not to mention traditional studies and memoirs within the fields of military and diplomatic history. The Holocaust has never been one of the established themes in the scholarly discourse devoted to the Second World War. My book *Finland and the Holocaust. The Rescue of Finland's Jews*, published in 1985, remains the only one written in English dealing with the subject.[1]

Arno Anthoni served as the head of the Finnish State police between 1941 and 1944. The incriminating evidence against him

[1] Hannu Rautkallio, *Finland and the Holocaust. The Rescue of Finland's Jews*. New York: Holocaust Library, 1986.

collected after the war opens a very interesting perspective on the relations between the Finnish State Police and the different sectors of the RSHA apparatus, also including the notorious SS- killing machine, *Einsatzgruppe A*, which operated to the south-east of Finland. The same material also produces surprising observations and problems relevant to the criticism of sources that will be gone through in detail in subsequent sections. Anthoni's case, as well as the controversial case of eight Jewish refugees being deported that is connected with it, should have already offered the appropriate prerequisites for evaluating Finland's war-time relationship with Nazi Germany. The material from his trial was already available. It could be used to evaluate the most intimate area in the relations between the two countries,collaboration with Himmler's killing machinery.

In Finland the so-called Jewish question has only recently been connected with the exchange of prisoners of war. This had been known previously and studied in depth, but until now it had raised few impassioned remarks. The exchange of prisoners of war with Germany, one that resulted in Finland receiving and releasing Soviet nationals of Finno-Ugric background, was hardly the best area to measure the closeness of the collaboration between the allies. Insofar as some of the Soviet soldiers handed over by Finland to Germany were also racially Jews, this should lead to serious consideration of collaboration in the implementation of racial policy. *Einsatzkommando 1a* of *Einsatzgruppe A*, which was operating in Estonia, south of the Gulf of Finland, could easily have been activated or at least made to show visible interest in the Jews who happened to be in Finland.

Finland's relationship with Germany as concerns military policy was not based on a written agreement and does not seem to have aroused any counterclaims from Hitler. The *Führer* would have had more than three years to correct any illusions that the Finns might have entertained about their separate war if the matter had seemed problematical in any way. Finland's military and

economic dependence on Germany was nevertheless a fact that lasted for as long as the alliance did.

In that way Finland was clearly Germany's ally in its own separate war against the Soviet Union. In Finland's case the situation was paradoxical if we compare it with that of two German allies, Bulgaria and Romania. They were also dependent on Germany, but they also made a positive contribution to Germany's military economy. In contrast to them, Finland was receiving economic aid "with no strings attached" throughout the war. Hitler could have demanded that Finland also pass strict anti-Jewish legislation as compensation. Bulgaria and Romania had done this without any prodding from Germany. Hitler had no reason to be concerned about the loyalty in warfare of his northern ally. Between 1941 and 1944 he visited Finland only once, this to ensure himself that the Finns remained on Germany's side. The Finnish president, Risto Ryti, did not make even a single visit to Berlin during the war.

If we were to accept without controversy a viewpoint of Finland's "close cooperation" with Nazi Germany, it would have to include all the central areas of cooperation as well as their implementers, above all the complex police and surveillance apparatus of the RSHA that was also supposed to assume responsibility for solving the Jewish question in Finland. From the standpoint of the manner in which Hitler waged war, it was an incomprehensible exception that Finland was the only country allied with Germany in the Second World War in which the Holocaust did not occur. How could this have been possible?

The Roots of Finland's Jews

(this chapter is based on my previously published book, *Finland and the Holocoust, 1987*)

The roots of Jewish population of Finland are to be found, with only a few exceptions, in Russia. The arrival of the Jewish families in Finland dates back in almost every case to the same period in the 1860s and 1870s. The fortunes of the Jews who settled in Finland involve both tragedy and opportunity. The horrors of the Russian pogroms were left behind, but the Jewish aliens were by no means welcomed with open arms by the people in their new surroundings. Even so, what happened to them in Finland constitutes an exceptional chapter in the annals of Russian Jewry.

When Czar Alexander III began his reign 1855, freer winds swept briefly across Russia, also promising the country's Jewish population of more than three million relief from oppression. As almost his first act, the Czar abolished the cantonment system of army enlistment introduced by decree by his father, Nicholas I. By the decree, Jewish boys had been taken from their parents as early as the age of thirteen, brought up in military barracks, and stationed in different parts of the empire to serve in uniform for many long years.

In 1809 Finland had been wrested from the Swedish Crown and annexed by Russia as an autonomous Grand Duchy in a personal union with the Russian Czar. "Cantonized" Jews were in the Russian military units stationed in Finnish territory. By mid-century, there were several hundred Jewish families doing their long military service.

The abolition of the cantonment system had an immediate effect on the status of the Jewish soldiers serving in Finland. On March 29, 1858, Alexander II issued an imperial edict whereby Russian soldiers and sailors who had served for a long time in Finland could, if they so desired, take up permanent residence

with their families in the Grand Duchy of Finland. On certain conditions, they were given even eligible for Finnish citizenship – a privilege enjoyed by residents of the Grand Duchy ruled by the Russian monarch.

Arranging the legal status of the Jews settling in Finland proved problematical primarily for the reason that general imperial legislation did not apply to the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland. When the Czar had annexed Finland, the Finnish nation's centuries-old ties to the Swedish Crown had been abruptly cut. However, Czar Alexander I gave a pledge to honor Finland's traditional rights, which were even enlarged upon in that legislation. Since this legislation was of a constitutional nature, it would need ratification by Finland's own Diet of Four Estates before becoming law. Thus the liberal laws enacted during Swedish rule remained in effect in Finland, among them the Jewish Ordinance given on May 27, 1782, which the Finnish Senate (the governing body) deemed constitutional.

Taking up of residence in Finland by Jews was made possible by the Imperial edict *de facto*, but it did not mean *de jure* sanction in any manner. The issue eventually developed into a juridical one when sentiment in certain quarters was directed toward weakening the status of the Jews of Finland as a kind of *Magna Charta* granting them precious rights and privileges, and there are undoubtedly valid grounds for their taking such a view of the Czar's proclamation.

The Jews who had settled in Finland remained nevertheless subjects of the Czar of All the Russians. However, the imperial administrative measures and the oppressive treatment of the Jews elsewhere in Russia did not extend across the Finnish border for the simple reason that, with the exception of a few Jewish families that had migrated from Sweden and central Europe, there had been no resident Jewish population in Finland. The historical attitudes toward Jews, furthermore, were altogether different in Finland from what they were in Russia, where in the closing

years of the nineteenth century the Jewish population numbered several million. The liberal stand toward Jews inherited from the era of Swedish rule was completely at odds with the prevailing sentiment and practice in the imperial domain of Russia.

The oppressive measures against the Jews culminated in Russia in 1892 with the passage of the so-called May Laws. In February of the same year, the committee appointed by the Finnish Senate submitted its report on the residence of Jews in Finland. The Finnish Government wanted finally to rectify the position of Jews with respect to their residing in the country and engaging in business affairs. Drafting a bill defining their religious and other rights was also on the agenda. The persecution of the Jews in Russia was in glaring contrast to the actions taken to improve their lot in Finland.

The Finnish man-in-the-street had hardly any contact with the Jews, except when buying something from one of their stalls. Such petty dealings generated no bad blood, though Finnish tradesmen sometimes tried to make out that this was happening. The rural population was almost totally ignorant of the Jews because the latter resided in the major cities. The official head count made in 1890 put the number of Jews residing in the country as a whole at 1,017. In one decade, the number had risen by a few hundred. There were 642 Jews in Helsinki, 261 in Viipuri (now Vyborg, Russia), and 114 in Turku. These figures were not, however, altogether precise, for Russian subjects of the Jewish faith were continuously arriving in Finland legally, duly provided with passports. The application of regulations governing residence and working permits differed considerably in their case from the procedures followed in dealing with the settled Jewish population.

The actions taken by the Jews on their own initiative deserve to be linked to the national struggle of the Finns in the years 1905-1906, when the old political alignments and groupings in Finland fell apart and new ones formed. The social upheaval in Russia had repercussions in Finland, where a general strike was

called in the fall of 1905. The small Jewish community in Finland responded by making a bid for more rights. Appeals were made to major civic groups mobilizing their forces to defend their own rights. On the last day of 1905, a mass meeting of nearly 3,000 citizens was held in Helsinki – organized by local Jews. Similar demonstrations took place all over the country, with tens of thousands of people participating. But these events would not have been possible had not the general unrest in the country finally prompted the Czar to cancel his Russification measures of 1899 with his so-called November Manifesto.

During the several decades of their residence in Finland, the Jews had formed a rather homogeneous community. Some educated Jews had, to be sure, moved to Finland from Russia at a later date, maintaining no close contact with the descendants of the "cantonists". They had earned their living mainly as tradesmen or by engaging in other kinds of business. In contrast to the millions of Jews in Russia, who because of their miserable straits had embraced Marxist Socialism as their hope of liberation during the upheaval of 1905, the majority of the Finnish Jews showed little inclination to take an active part in any political movement. The political activism among the Jews referred to earlier had involved only a small number of individuals.

The truth is that the road would have been open to Jewish emancipation in Finland as early as 1909 if the final decision had been up to the Finnish authorities. The legislative drafting committee appointed by the Senate had, to wit, recommended on January 26 of that year that any "disciple" of Moses might apply for Finnish citizenship provided he is "of good reputation and is able to support himself and his family". The other requisites were that either he should have been "born in Finland and lived here until adulthood or resided in the country with a proper permit continuously for ten years". In its recommendation, the committee had thus called for a decisive rectification of the Jews' legal status.

By a vote of 112 to 43 the new unicameral Finnish House of Representatives, or Parliament, passed the bill drafted by the Constitutional Committee to enable Jews to apply for citizenship. Parliamentary passage of a bill did not, however, necessarily signify its enactment. That required the Czar's approval too, which at that juncture was not possible to obtain.

Finland resolved its Jewish Question at a juncture where the entire future of the nation was in the balance as a result of the break with Russia. Finland's national independence was put to a fateful historical test just when the law emancipating the Jews took effect on January 12, 1918. The year 1918 thus began for Finnish Jews in a glorious manner with their achieving freedom under the law, but for the Finnish nation as a whole it began as a brutally traumatic experience – civil war broke out.

The Jewish population had grown steadily since 1880, when it had numbered some 800. In 1912, the number was over 1,200; and by the end of the following decade, it had risen to about 1,900. The relative growth of the Jewish population in Finland was quite rapid, especially in the second decade of the century.

During the following decades Jewish assimilation into Finnish society progressed. There were many signs of this assimilation, among the most conspicuous of them was the success achieved by Jewish businessmen, accompanied by a perceptible rise of their social status. Zionism was, of course, somewhat at odds with this trend. Additionally, the identification of the Jewish majority with the national objectives of the young republic – in the spheres of economic life, education, cultural pursuits, and national defense – had reached a new stage. The contradictions between assimilation and Zionism continued to trouble the minds of Finnish Jews until the end of the 1930s, when the Winter War broke out, with the Red Army attacking the borders of Finland.

When Finland was attacked by its giant eastern neighbor, the loss of life among Helsinki's Jews in the Soviet-Finnish Winter War was proportionately among the greatest to be suffered by

any of the congregations in Finland. In a memorial publication issued by the Jewish congregation of Helsinki after the Winter War, the Finnish Jews expressed their devotion to Finland and the Finnish cause. No doubt could then remain that the sacrifices made in the Winter War by Finland's Jews had been made in a good cause, one that they had all embraced:

> ...The Jews of Finland have step by step been liberated from an oppressed, isolated estate and have in the end acquired the rights of Finnish citizenship. To this denouement has led the Finnish people's sense of justice together with the Jews' own strivings for emancipation. All this has brought it about that the Jews of Finland have gradually assimilated into the social system without, however, losing their identity. And when the war between Finland and the Soviet Union broke out, the Jews of our land were one with the Finnish nation in their thoughts, words, and deeds.

At this point, then, "Jewish Question" in Finland vanished from sight – although, in truth, no problems such as those involving the Jews in Eastern or Central Europe had been experienced in Finland for a long time. This turning point became significant when Nazi racial doctrines became known in Finland and the country was drawn into the wake of the Nazi war machine.

The Problem of the Rescue of Finland's Jews

Finland is an exceptional case with respect to the Holocaust, for which reason it is little known in international research and is thus connected in most contexts only to the more general implementation of the Holocaust. Additionally, rescue from the Holocaust is already a sufficiently established theme in historical research that the complete rescue of the Jews in this cobelligerent of Nazi Germany is not mentioned at all. Holocaust historians

have not attempted to make a problem out of such an exception. Being rescued from the Holocaust is usually connected with "German-occupied Europe". Much has been written about the Jews of Bulgaria and Hungary, both of which were German satellites. Eighty-five per cent of the Jews of Italy, Germany's former ally, survived, but Romania implemented its own pogrom in the areas of Bessarabia that it occupied even before Germans arrived. Bulgarian police troops carried out the deportation of more than 12,000 Jews from the occupied areas of Thrace and Macedonia into the hands of the Germans. No German troops were actively involved in this operation.[2] There are many examples of Gentiles having rescued individual Jews, but they are, at best, only "rescue attempts".[3] Rescues of Jews by other Jews are the most special cases of all, nor are they commemorated in the *Yad Vashem* memorial plaques because Jews have an obligation to rescue fellow Jews.[4]

How should the rescue of all Jews, despite the presence of the Germans, be assessed? Hitler's cobelligerent Finland did not make even a gesture to compensate Germany for the rescue of its Jews, nor does any information presently available indicate that Germany would have demanded anything in return. The Canadian Holocaust scholar Michael R. Marrus has made very general reference to Finland's case without trying to explain why the Jews of Finland were rescued. He says that "as Germany's ally, Finland was unwilling to hand over its Jews". Since the number of Finnish Jews was so small, the Germans "decided to wait". Marrus thus assumes that there actually were demands that Finland hand over its Jews because otherwise there could be no un-

[2] Michael Bar-Zohar, *Beyond Hitler's Grasp. The Heroic Rescue of Bulgaria's Jews*. Holbrook, Mass.: Adams Media Corporation, 1998, p. 89.

[3] Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*. Harrisonburg, Va.: Yale University Press, 2001, p. 213 ff.

[4] Nechema Tec,"Reflections on Rescue", in *The Holocaust and History. The Known,The Unknown, The Disputed, and The Reexamined*. Edited by Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck. Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1998, p. 660.

willingness. This would, of course, explain why it was only in Finland that the Jews were rescued from the Holocaust.[5]

Randolph L. Braham has excluded the case of Finland from his assessment, regarding this only a minor exception. This admission, however, upsets the standard explanation that the destruction of the Jews was supposed to apply to all Jews within the German sphere of influence. Braham mentions imprecisely that the Jewish community in Finland survived "almost intact"; with his incorrect expression he also connects Finland with the Holocaust.[6] Sir Martin Gilbert, the well-known British biographer of Churchill and Holocaust historian, draws a conclusion in the same spirit, but with nothing to substantiate it, in the widely read *Atlas of the Holocaust*, that eleven Finnish Jews were killed at concentration camps between September 1, 1941 and May 8, 1945.[7]

The small number of Finnish Jews should not in itself prevent there being interest in their rescue. There were major differences in the treatment of Jews in the countries allied with, satellites of, or occupied by Germany. The 723,000 Jews of Hungary only encountered the Holocaust during the Summer of 1944, after Germany had occupied the country on March 19 of the same year. Romania and Bulgaria had, independently of Germany, already implemented harsh anti-Jewish measures on their own initiative before the beginning of the war. In Italy transports of Jews to extermination camps were begun only after Germany had occupied a large part of the country in 1943 subsequent to Mussolini being toppled. Even in French-administered Vichy France there were Jews when the war ended.

Norway had a Jewish population that was approximately the same size as Finland's, and the Germans deported about half of

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[5] Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*. Hanover, NH.: University Press of New England, 1987, p. 57.

[6] Randolph L. Braham, *Studies on the Holocaust .Selected writings*. Vol. 2.New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, p. 89.

[7] Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of the Holocaust*. London: Routledge, 2002, p. 317.

them to the extermination camps. Some of them were also rescued after the war. In contrast, almost all the Jews of occupied Denmark survived when free access to Sweden opened up right before the eyes of the German occupiers. The Jews of the Baltic countries could not even have imagined receiving such treatment from the Germans as those of Denmark and Vichy France did. Even the very few Danish Jews who were handed over did not wind up in German extermination camps, but rather in camps for political prisoners, with most of them surviving. Of the recent Holocaust reference works, the *Columbia Guide to the Holocaust*, published by Columbia University, is the most accurate in its presentation of Finland's relation to the Holocaust. Finland is described there as "an ally of Germany, but, together with Denmark, as a country whose officials "refused to cooperate in any way in implementing the Holocaust" and "strictly opposed demands that the country's Jews be handed over".[8]

In my book *Ne kahdeksan ja Suomen omatunto* ('The Eight and Finland's Conscience'), published in 1985, I pointed out that Finland's remaining outside of the implementation of Nazi Germany's racial policy was the consequence of the clearly expressed position of the Finnish government and officials that they did not want to even consider deportations based on racial policy. At that time this assessment also applied to the Finnish State Police. It remains to be seen whether it will now, more than twenty years later, be necessary to abandon that assessment. In that connection I also pointed out that even though Finland had been totally dependent on Germany militarily and economically, this did not compromise Finnish unanimity:

> The Jews of Finland have been a part of the Finnish people. Their loyal participation in the war was a demonstration of this.[9]

[8] Donald Niewyck and Francis Nicosia, *The Columbia Guide to the Holocaust*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2000, p. 351.

[9] Hannu Rautkallio, *Ne kahdeksan ja Suomen omatunto*. ('The Eight and Finland's Conscience'), Espoo: Weilin+Göös, 1985, Epilogue.

Allocating the Guilt

In the Scandinavian countries awareness of the mass destruction of the Jews has increased in accordance with the main trends of the international public discussion, but quite late, actually only with the beginning of the new millennium. The guilt for the Holocaust felt in the four Scandinavian countries has not been uniform at all. In each of them guilt and rescue have confronted each other differently and been seen differently in the national historical memory. The definition of the rescue from the Holocaust has also been controversial because, it has referred to very different issues and values according to the interpreter.

Each of the four Scandinavian countries had different types of connections with Nazi-Germany, and the Jewish question affected them, although with very different consequences. The rescue of the Jews of Denmark and Finland was successful despite the presence of Germany, but about half of the Jews in occupied Norway were transported to concentration camps. The Holocaust did not apply at all to the Jews of Sweden, but the Swedes rescued the Jews of other countries outside the borders of their country as well as right at the centers of Nazi Germany's sphere of power. Due to its having rescued Jews of other countries, with the Jews of its own country remaining untouched, the question of "guilt" for the Holocaust is unresolved in Sweden. Would it have been possible to rescue even more Jews from the hands of the Nazis than were actually rescued?

The international media reacts very sensitively even to minor news items concerning participation in the destruction of Jews during the Second World War. Finland has also recently become an object of the international attention directed at the Holocaust. The Jerusalem-based "Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs" re-

ported in March, 2007 about "Finland's tarnished Holocaust record". According to their paper, "at least seventy Soviet Jewish prisoners were extradited to Gestapo".[10] Consequently, this led to an impression that those prisoners of war were extradited because of the fact that they were Jews. Most of the prisoners of war identified as Jewish were safe in Finland until the end of the war. I wrote about the "Jewish prison camps" in my book as early as 1989.[11] The interest in Finland did not arise elsewhere because foreign Jews were granted asylum in Finland or because all the Finnish Jews were rescued from the Holocaust. To the contrary, the historical evaluation of the Holocaust has emphasized the fates of those who were killed, and there has been a desire to find signs of this in Finland as well.

In Sweden there was little talk of the destruction of the Jews or of the Holocaust during the decades after the war. The matter was not of any direct relevance to the Swedes, who had been bystanders to the European tragedy. Since the late 1970s the Swedes have been watching the phenomena of the Holocaust that were presented by television and the movies, but they touched the Swedes themselves in a very detached manner. On the initiative of Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, a prestigious Holocaust conference was arranged in Stockholm in January, 2000, at which heads of state, politicians, representatives of international organizations and researchers from different countries participated. This "Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust" (SIFH), reconvened on January 1, 2004. In the declarations produced by the conferences, the participants obligated themselves to defend the victims of all types of genocide and to condemn such crimes, but the historical starting point and demand was for a world-wide commemoration of the Holocaust. The government of Sweden was visibly active here on many fronts, not only by

[10] *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*. "Finland's Tarnished Holocaust Record". An Interview with Serah Beizer. http://www.jcpa.org.

[11] Hannu Rautkallio, *Suomen juutalaisten aseveljeys* ('The Comradeship-of-arms of the Finnish Jews'). Helsinki: Tammi, 1989, p.162-165.

reminding the Swedes of the Holocaust, but also with its international initiative.

At the initiative of Prime Minister Persson, an international team for the commemoration of the Holocaust and the development of research devoted to it was established as early as 1998. At the beginning of 2004 fourteen member countries were involved. The same year the government of Sweden began an unparalleled information campaign when the book *Om detta må ni berättä...*, translated into English as *Tell it to your children...*, which giving a detailed account of the Holocaust, was distributed in the Swedish schools in an edition of one million. The book was subsequently translated into English, Spanish, Arabic, Serbian, Finnish, and other languages. The book contained shocking pictures of the suffering Jews and of piles of corpses. Finland's National Board of Education decided that the book was too disturbing for children to read as such. The Finnish version had an extra chapter devoted to Finland and was distributed to teachers.[12]

On a rainy day in November, 2000, the Finnish Prime Minister, Paavo Lipponen, apologized on behalf of the Finnish government and all Finns for the handing over of eight Central European Jews to the Germans in November, 1942. The Prime Minister directed his apology to the World Jewish community. Lipponen unveiled a monument to the eight deportees in *Kaivopuisto*, a park in an elegant area of central Helsinki where many foreign embassies are located. The chairman of the Jewish Congregation of Helsinki, Gideon Bolotovski, said "that this monument will be Finland's own Holocaust monument, and it will compel people to remember and it summons to vigilance".[13]

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[12] Stéphanie Bruckheld- Paul A.Levine, *Om detta må ni berätta...* ('Tell it to your Children'). Stockholm: Statskansliet, 1999. The original Swedish and all six translated versions can be accessed and downloaded at http://www.levandehistoria.se/node/130.

[13] "Lipponen pyysi anteeksi juutalaiselta yhteisöltä" ('Lipponen Apologized to the Jewish Community'), *Helsingin Sanomat*, November 6, 2000.

Einsatzgruppe A and the Finns

What was known in Finland about the mass destructions of Jews that the *Einsatzkommandos* had rapidly implemented immediately as a result of the attack on the Soviet Union? What was known in Finland about Hitler's military objectives with respect of these? If people knew, did this information have any effect on the Finnish military and political leadership? Even before the war it was known that concentration camps had been built for the Jews throughout Hitler's Reich, but what was then taking place on the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland was something quite different. There is good reason for concluding that the Finns could not completely close their eyes and ears as concerned this aspect of the manner in which their brothers-in-arms were behaving even if it did not directly affect Finland's own Jewish population. Information came from many sources and that concerning the Jews of the Baltic countries was also the most accessible from a geographical perspective.

The German northern SS-Task Forces (special mobile formations charged with carrying liquidations), *Einsatzgruppe A*, which had moved almost up to the Finnish border, was naturally kept under surveillance by the Finns. This actually held true for all the German military units along the northern part of the front. The operational area of *Einsatzgruppe A* extended up the Arctic Ocean if the Jewish question would have justified this.

Einsatzkommando 1a (an individual detachment of the *Einsatzgruppe*) operated in Estonia, but what was known in Finland about its actual functions? The Finnish research tradition has even come to use the term "the Gestapo of Estonia", nor did the Finnish officials who also had regular dealings with the SS officers of *Einsatzkommando 1a* ever bring up the fact in any

connection that they were aware of the profile of this mobile execution squad. Information of this type does not come up in wartime Finnish documents, even if veiled references are made to the killing of Jews.

Statements given after the war, particularly those made at the 1948 trial of Finnish State Police (*Valpo*) head Arno Anthoni, leave questions open. There was no lack of attempts to locate accomplices in the crimes against humanity committed by the former brother-in-arms in Finland as well. Or had the mighty brother-in-arms been so clever at concealing the tracks of its machinery of murder that Finland was the only one of its former allies to be spared knowing anything about them?

SS-Brigadeführer Franz Stahlecker was the commander of *Einsatzgruppe A* during the initial stages of the attack against the Soviet Union, and *SS-Sturmbannführer* Martin Sandberger, who worked from Tallinn, was the commander of *Einsatzkommando 1a*. In the summer of 1941, when it was established, *Einsatzgruppe A* numbered 990 men. Stahlecker and Sandberger had been in contact with the Finnish authorities since the fall of 1941. The representatives of the Finnish State Police and *Einsatzgruppe A* met each other in Helsinki or Tallinn. Stahlecker's center of operations was right at the front line at Krasnogvardeisk in the vicinity of Leningrad, a place to which the Finns never went.

The supreme commander of the Finnish army, Marshal Carl G. E. Mannerheim, had rejected Hitler's demand that he participate in the attack against Leningrad. Neither had Mannerheim permitted operation against the Soviet Union's lifeline, the Murmansk railroad line, along which Lend-Lease deliveries continued undisturbed. The Finnish army remained in place in the parts of Eastern Karelia that they had conquered, and trench warfare continued up until June 1944, at which time the Red Army began an extensive offensive against Finland, nevertheless failing to break through the front line.

What, then, was the nature of the relationship between the

Finnish State Police and *Einsatzkommando 1a*, the headquarters of which was in Estonia, and what was known of its operations? State Police head Arno Anthoni characterized his connection with Sandberger as "a firm contact" and "cooperation with the Gestapo in Estonia". He justified it as being "of the kind that is regarded as necessary between neighboring states from the perspective of police matters..., because managing successful counterespionage necessitates having contacts with the organs responsible for the surveillance of foreign countries and, primarily, of all neighboring countries, counterespionage, and of foreign countries as its prerequisite".[14]

Anthoni thus characterized the "liquidation group" commanded by Sandberger as an organ conducting "counterespionage", Was the "firm contact" maintained by Anthoni possibly also connected with Jews, because such a connection played a particularly central role in the operation of the SS police unit commanded by Sandberger. Was this the "Gestapo in Estonia" just mentioned? The label Gestapo had established itself in the language used by the State Police, and it already seemed to cover the entire RSHA system. Postwar trials produced little in the way of a more specific breakdown, even though certain information gathered by the State Police about the operations of the *Einsatzkommando* commanded by Sandberger would have justified a different conclusion.

The information concerning Estonia gathered by the State Police in 1941 and 1944, which had been available since the fall of 1944 when Finland extricated itself from the war, gives certain indications of Finnish unawareness when they were dealing with the Germans in Estonia. Additionally, Anthoni seems to have agreed about outstanding issues directly with Gestapo headquarters in Berlin. The most important of these issues concerned deportations of political prisoners of war, but they also

[14] Interrogation protocol of Arno Anthoni, May 6, 1947. Research Center for Prisoners of War. Ilm.pvk.1388. II. p. 178.Kansallisarkisto (the Finnish National Archives); referred to henceforth as KA.

included certain matters pertaining to Jewish refugees that will be discussed in detail subsequently.

What, then, is the overall picture of these contacts and what did the Finns know about the actual operations of *Einsatzkommando 1a*? The information collected after the war against Anthoni was said to "clearly demonstrate since at least October 1941" that he was already "completely aware of the persecutory operations directed in Estonia against people of Jewish nationality as well as against others with a negative attitude toward Nazism".[15] But it does not provide an answer to the question of whether information about the fate of the Jews had reached Helsinki already before the Germans had entered to Estonia. Specifically, the problem remains that Estonia, as the only one of the three small Baltic countries, had already been reported to be almost "free of Jews", *judenfrei*, in the fall of 1941 after the Red Army troops had left the country. Estonian policemen informed the Finns of what had happened to the Jews who had remained. In the fall of 1941 the stage for the liquidation of Jews was not Estonia, but rather areas to the east and southeast of it.

Gaining access to the contacts between the wartime State Police and the German SS officials remains a matter of educated conclusions in many ways. Most likely the men of the State Police destroyed documents in panic just before the conclusion of the truce in September, 1944, but no official order to take such actions was issued from above. Dr. Paavo Kastari, who was head of the State Police at that time, was "free" of the burden of contacts to Germany because he had only assumed his position in the spring of 1944. He broke off the close relations that he had previously had to the German police authorities. His contacts with the Jewish community in Finland were excellent, something that cannot be said for his predecessor, Arno Anthoni.[16]

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[15] Ali Rautakorpi's memorandum, February 10, 1948. Ministry of Justice. HC 10-11.KA.

[16] Interview with Paavo Kastari, June 7, 1989.

Questions must be raised concerning the material supplied by the postwar communist-directed State Police for Arno Anthoni's trial. Was this material deliberately culled, or was it complete? The excerpt from the State Police "extremely confidential letter diary" that is currently available only covers 1942. The date of the copy of the excerpt is given as January 28, 1948, although the accompanying letter is dated January 21, 1948. The excerpt from the letter diary reveals much about the contacts that the State Police had with German structures, although it leaves many questions open.[17]

The excerpt from the State Police letter diary for 1942 gives reason to conclude that the number of letters sent was in the thousands. How many of them dealt with issues such as past cooperation with the Gestapo? Material such as letters from the Gestapo addressed to the State Police, telephoned messages, or the two bureaucracies in anything other than name was not available. The problematic situation with sources also holds true for Gestapo documents pertaining Finland.

On the basis of the available sources, the Jewish question does not appear to have been raised in any visible manner in the mutual contacts between the State Police and the Gestapo. The SS officials responsible for the Jewish policy pursued by the RSHA appear to have left, as will be seen in the following, the Finnish Jews outside of their sphere of operations, these being already intense in the immediate vicinity of the Finnish borders in the Soviet Union, the Baltic countries, and Norway. State Police documents demonstrate how *Einsatzkommando 1a* operating in Tallinn was, in addition to the soldiers, partially responsible for the prisoners of war and civilians handed over by Finland to Estonia. The German security police (*Sicherheitspolizei*) and crim-

[17] Copied excerpt, January 28,1948. Extremely secret. State Police Main Division. *Er. Sal. Kirjepäiväkirja aikana 1.1.1942-31.12.1942* ('Ext. Secr. Letter Diary for the Period January 1,1943 - December 31,1943'). Research Center for Prisoners of War. Ilm.pvk. 1388. II. KA. The Document *in extenso*, Hannu Rautkallio,1989, op.cit. pp. 83-86.

inal police (*Kripo*) also participated in assuming responsibility for deportees when they arrived. Ultimately, it was the Gestapo that bore responsibility for the deportation measures involving civilians. As will be seen in the following, these measures had been decided upon by the Finnish State Police and the Gestapo head in Berlin no later than April, 1942.

What was Known in Finland?

What was really known on the north shore of the Gulf Finland about the mass murder of Jews? During the 1930s much was written in Finland about the persecution of the Jews in Germany. Since the beginning the war against the Soviet Union, information about the atrocities being committed against Jews had made its way to Finland, particularly from Estonia. The travel report made by State Police representative Olavi Viherluoto about an official visit that he had made to Tallinn in October 1941 has been preserved and constitutes an important piece of contemporary testimony. The importance of this document is emphasized because it is the first known detailed account by a Finnish police official of the operations carried out by *Einsatzkomando 1a* of *Einsatzgruppe A*. The Finns did not associate the concept of "mobile killing machine" with that German language name because that name was unknown.[18]

Viherluoto relates that he had visited a "Tallinn detachment". He also mentions the *Sicherheitspolizei*, but does not mention the

[18] Travel report "Valtiollisen poliisin päälliköltä saamastani määräyksestä Tallinnaan 1. ja 2. päivien aikana lokakuussa 1941 tekemästäni virkamatkasta" ('About my official trip to Tallinn on the 1st and 2nd days of October, 1941 on the order that I received from the head of the State Police'). Date Oct. 21, 1941. Olavi Viherluoto. Copy of a summary. Date Jan. 20, 1948. Acting head E.O. Tuominen, acting office head Helge Rontu to the prosecution counsel of the Turku Court of Appeal. Copy of a copy. X.V.A.2. Er.sal. VPKD. No. 69/71 – 1941. KA.

Gestapo in his report, this appearing to be a general designation for RSHA officials that only became established after the war. On the other hand, Viherluoto, like the other State Police officials who had visited German-occupied Estonia, had dealings with the Gruppe Cellarius. This was the counterintelligence unit (*Abwehr*) of the High Command of the German armed forces that operated in Finland and the Baltic countries. It was under the direction of Alexander Cellarius, a frigate captain.[19]

In his report Viherluoto considers the *Sicherheitspolizei* and the "detachment" to be the same entity. He says that Martin Sandberger functions as the "commander of the Tallinn detachment". Nevertheless, the results of his efforts were modest:

> The headquarters of the *Sicherheitspolizei* is located in Tallinn at 16 Tõnismägi in a rather large five-story building. According to my observations, it consists of about ten senior and twenty-five junior *SS-Führer*. The strength of the entity was not revealed to me despite several requests.

According to Viherluoto, *SS-Sturmbannführer* Schindowski, *SS-Hauptsturmbannführer* Eggers, and *SS-Hauptscharführer* Schmid told that the name of the "detachment" was *Befehlhaber der deutschen Sicherheitspolizei*. Viherluoto continued:

> The Tallinn detachment is some kind of center from which men are sent to several areas conquered by the Germans, right up to the Leningrad front line.

Despite the meager account of information that he received, Viherluoto's assessment of the nature of the operations of the "detachment" had been right on the mark, even though he did not know what assignments the SS-men were sent to the "conquered areas" to carry out.

Since Viherluoto succeeded in arriving at an assessment of

[19] For details, see Hannu Rautkallio, *Holokaustilta pelastetut* (Rescued from the Holocaust). Juva: WSOY, 2004, pp. 197-216.

the operational profile of the "detachment" as correct as this, what was he actually able to determine about the killing of the Jews on the basis of his information? His German hosts maintained silence about the issue. In contrast, the men of the Estonian criminal police were frank and they revealed their own role in the killing of Jews who were still in Estonia. After the German invasion, all of the members of the Estonian "criminal police" were Estonians. They were men who had assisted *Einsatzkommando 1a*, having been recruited immediately after the onset of German occupation. The commander of the criminal police was a 31-year old former banker by the name of Lepi. According to the Germans, Lepi had "distinguished himself" in the occupation of the country. An official of the former Estonian police, Evald Mikson (Viherluoto also writes the name as Mickson) functioned as the head of the "Recruitment and intelligence division".

In what had these Estonians "distinguished themselves"? Even though Estonia was "almost free of Jews" when the Germans had taken over the country, some Jews were still there. The men of the Estonian criminal police participated enthusiastically in the killing of the remaining Jews. This was the reason for the mention by the Germans of these Estonians having "distinguished themselves". The Estonian policemen provided generous information about the pogroms that they had implemented:

> They [the Estonians] explained that there were hardly any more Jews in Estonia. Just a number of younger Jewish women and children have been shut up in a concentration camp located at Arkna. All the male Jews have been shot. After the capture of Tartu, 2,600 Jews and Communists were shot. In Tartu, a large number of very small Jewish children also died of hunger. A couple of days before my return to Finland, Mikson told me that the next day several dozens of elderly Jewish women would be brought to the central prison in Tallinn; another official present said that they would be given 'sweet food'. Both men explained that such aged Jews were no longer of any use in the world. To me, they did not spell out the meaning of the 'sweet food', but my guess is that these Jews were

shot a couple days later. Mikson related that the same morning I had visited the central prison they had taken 80 Jews in trucks into the woods, ordered them to kneel down at the edge of a pit, and shot them from behind.

Viherluoto ended his travel report as follows:

The Germans and the Estonians told that the Jews in the Baltic countries had committed acts of destruction worse than those committed by the worst communists and Russians, in addition to which they were among the most enthusiastic members of demolition battalions. This was the reason for the persecution of Jews. The youngest Russian emigrants were said to collaborate closely with the communists and to have assisted the Russians when the conquest of Estonia began. For this reason, emigrant Russians are dealt with extremely severely.

Viherluoto's account demonstrates how the actual activity of *Einsatzkommando 1a* could not be ascertained due to its being kept secret. The Estonian police gave a more trustworthy depiction of the situation. They also certainly knew what the men of the "detachment" had done to those Jews who were still alive after the retreat of the Red Army. The Estonian police officers participated in the killings themselves.

The Jewish Comrades-in-Arms[20]

The comradeship-in-arms of Finland's Jews with Hitler's Germany was for many of them a remote issue. It remained highly "theoretical", for the majority had little or no direct contact with the *Wehrmacht* soldiers. How, then, could one speak of a com-

[20] This and the two following chapters are abridged versions of a book that will subsequently be published in English. During the 1980s I interviewed all of the Jewish war veterans who were still alive. Their names are presented in Rautkallio, 1989, *Suomen juutalaisten aseveljeys* ('The Brotherhood-in-arms of the Finnish Jews').

radeship-in-arms, when the very thought of such a relationship could only fill the Jewish mind with abhorrence? Yet, there were those Finnish Jews who accepted it as an inevitable outcome of geopolitical circumstance and not necessarily unnatural. Paradoxically enough, with Finland and Germany as co-belligerents, some Jews in Finnish uniform even found themselves being treated as true comrades by German soldiers – and reciprocating on a common human level. Paradoxically, German soldiers were forced to salute the Finnish Jewish officers.

A composite picture of the Jewish soldier in the Finnish army is hard to draw, for a group of 300-odd men was made up of many different types of individuals, even though there were similarities in their attitudes and experiences. Not all the Jewish servicemen made an effort even to perform their duty with distinction. Among them were pacifists at heart, and some felt positive repulsion at the idea of being the "brothers-in-arms" of Germans. Attitudes reflecting such feelings were not expressed very openly. In the views articulated subsequently, a species of wisdom emerged that had not yet ripened, perhaps, in the minds and souls of the Jewish servicemen, while hostilities were still in progress.

The Jewish soldiers were by no means a homogeneous group. Animosities among them tended to become exacerbated under the conditions of war. Some adapted themselves more easily than others to military realities, others withdrew into personal shells, making adaption all the more difficult. Some turned out to be effective soldiers, but there were others who had no desire to earn any medal. Every Jewish soldier was obliged to decide for himself how – if only in theory – to come to terms with the inescapable situation of comradeship-in-arms with Hitler's soldiers. None could escape his Jewishness, and most had no wish to do so. In general, they were aware of the Third Reich's actions against Jews elsewhere, for reports of them had also reached Finland. But the really crucial issues involving Jews did not emerge until much later.

The attitude of Finland's Jewish soldiers toward the Germans fighting a common enemy varied greatly, and examples from diametrically opposite poles can be cited. In most cases, relations were considered "natural" and did not require many words to describe them. Relations with other Finnish soldiers are remembered as "very good" and with the Germans as "businesslike", and the attitude of the Germans in most cases toward the Jews did not change after their Jewishness became known to them. The most extreme reaction was one of "astonishment" upon a German's learning that Jews were fighting beside him. No instances have come to light of incidents involving Jewish and German soldiers that had any really serious consequences.

A few "groups" composed of Finnish Jews call for closer examination. The number of Jewish medical officers in proportion to the total number of Jews in uniform was remarkably high, and they came into contact with Germans as their patients. In many cases, the contact was close, considering that wounded German soldiers, even SS men, were also treated by Jewish doctors. It was one of the ironies of the war that the lives of many of Hitler's soldiers literally lay in the hands of Jewish medical officers. These Jews undoubtedly had to struggle with their consciences when stretchers were brought before them bearing *Waffen-SS* men who openly showed their hostility to them. Mutual dependence, however, took the edge off prejudices, and the Jewish medical officers made no distinction between *Wehrmacht* and SS soldiers.

More than forty years after, Reserve Captain Josef Lefko reminisced:

> We were granted an incomprehensive blessing by our being able to fight for our freedom and human dignity while our unarmed brethren of the same faith were being destroyed in neighboring Scandinavian countries and elsewhere in Europe.

Neither Lefko nor his Jewish comrades in Finnish uniform, however, knew anything close to the whole truth at the time.

A Synagogue on the Front Lines

A notable number of Helsinki Jews served as in the Winter War, in the JR 24 regiment, composed of Swedish-speaking men from the national capital and adjacent areas. It is possible in this connection to speak of a "Jewish company" in a quite special sense. The members of this unit, mostly Winter War veterans, built a field synagogue close to the front line on captured Soviet territory. It was certainly the only Jewish synagogue in a sector where German troops were operating. At the time, General Engelbrecht's 136th German Division was preparing to move north from the Syvärі (Svir) sector.

One of the leaders in the synagogue project was Corporal Isak Smolar. A permit was obtained from the division command to erect the building. Jarl Gallen, then a major and later a professor of history at the University of Helsinki, remembers how the project started, but he was prevented from following progress by his duties on the regimental staff. Gallen, who belonged to the Roman Catholic Finnish minority, naturally gave the Jews wholehearted backing in their religious activities. At Christmas 1942, a Catholic priest came to his dugout at the front to conduct a mass. The Catholic soldiers belonging to the regiment had assembled there, and their number was hardly larger than that of the Jews. There was much in common in the religious services held by the two groups. A third Finnish religious minority, members of the (Greek) Orthodox Church, fared the worst. Karelian Orthodox believers were pressured at the time to convert to Lutherianism. Gallen learned about this directly from an Orthodox military chaplain who was relieved of his duties around the time the Jews obtained their permit to build a synagogue but later rose to the highest office in his Church as Archbishop Paavali.

The Jewish soldiers did not have an army chaplain (rabbi), so they had to conduct their devotional services without one. It is not hard to see how the Jewish soldiers, as a very small religious group, failed to arouse anything like the interest provoked by the Karelians of the Orthodox faith. Finnish teachers and officers of the military information corps had taken upon themselves the task of converting Orthodox believers to the Lutheran faith. The Jewish holy days had been confirmed by General Headquarters orders, which meant that the Jewish soldiers were granted leave on such days. In practice, however, the procedure was by no means a simple routine. In certain units unfamiliar with the orders from General Headquarters, formal requests for leave on holy days had to be made.

Isak Smolar has described the establishment and functioning of the field synagogue as follows:

> After the divisional command had confirmed the permission for establishing a synagogue, I obtained six men to help me in the construction. A large tent of the kind generally used by officers was put at our disposal. We obtained a stove and windows for the place. We met there every Saturday. An official order went to all the soldiers of Moses' faith calling attention to their eligibility to participate by being granted leave from service for the time. Present were many men who were seldom seen at the Helsinki synagogue. We sat there and read the Torah, and we conducted a full divine service. The next Saturday we met again. This must surely have left a permanent memory in the mind of everyone in attendance...
>
> I must readily admit that our regiment's Lutheran pastor was on our side, and he helped us in various ways to arrange our devotional exercises. Even some Finnish officers attended our religious services – out of curiosity, but showing every respect... Our devotional exercises never caused any negative reactions. Of course, the Germans knew about them. German troops were deployed on the Syväri (Svir) front close to the field synagogue, but there were no incidents.

As related by Smolar:

> After all, we had dealings with them every day, some of us even more than other Finns because, on account of our knowledge of Yiddish, we could manage in German pretty well. My feeling was that some Germans even "approved" of our religious exercises – actually honoring them – among Germans were many gentlemen of breeding.

It goes without saying that the religious practices of the Jews were given no "official" stamp of approval at any level of German authority, whether in the *Wehrmacht* or the SS. But the matter did not seem to attract any special attention, even though the existence of the field synagogue was not unknown. Was the information passed on to Berlin? If so, there is no evidence that, for example, the German military or diplomatic representatives stationed in Finland might have undertaken any action to have the synagogue closed down. It remained a domestic Finnish affair, though an "offence" to Finland's mighty co-belligerent, which left no uncertainty about its Jewish policies. Smolar and his comrades crossed the "racial barrier" which Hitler had set up for the soldiers under his command everywhere else except Finland.

"The Jewish Iron Crosses"

Alone among the Jewish doctors, Leo Skurnik had also received training as a reserve officer. He belonged to one of the oldest cantonist Jewish families in the country. He came from a middle-class Swedish-speaking home in Helsinki, and his assimilation into the local community was at an advanced stage by the time some others had moved to Finland in the early years of the twentieth century. The Winter War of 1939-40 took him to the firing lines on the Karelian Isthmus, almost within artillery range

of Leningrad. The outbreak of the Continuation War resulted in his being dispatched with the 53rd infantry to the frontier zone in the Kiestinki sector in north-east Finland. There the regiment engaged the Soviet forces in exceptionally strenuous and bloody fighting. Skurnik first took the duties of a battalion medical officer and later was appointed regimental physician. It became his responsibility to organize the medical service under conditions "the like of which were unknown in the history of the last wars", as the battles in the Kiestinki sector were described. The casualties were heavy, so heavy, that the medical services were confronted with an almost hopeless task.

A German SS-division fought alongside the 53rd Finnish infantry regiment at Kiestinki, and Skurnik also found himself treating wounded SS men. The Finnish casualties in the fighting amounted to no less than a quarter of the original strength of the battalion, and the German losses were even greater. During the encirclement stage (August 11 to September 4, 1941), the casualty count was 58 officers, 204 noncoms and 1,172 men, totaling 1,434. The initial strength of the regiment had been 2,800, of whom only 800 survived, many of them badly wounded. The biggest difficulty was transporting the wounded out of the ring of encirclement to the hospital (No. 12) built behind the Kiestinki sector. Dr. Skurnik had to arrange the transportation of the Finnish and German wounded soldiers to a first-aid station over a distance of some nine kilometers across bogland. The medical service was reduced to an almost catastrophic state. The men who had been badly wounded succumbed before they could be properly treated, and the transportation of the others proved arduous to the extreme.

The evacuation organized by Skurnik is said to have saved the lives of more than six hundred men. Skurnik himself has avoided taking credit for this, minimizing the role he played in the operation. His actions, however, testify differently, showing a sense of responsibility and a readiness to sacrifice beyond the call of duty.

It was not enough for him as a doctor to patch up their wounds. He even ventured into no-man's land to rescue wounded Germans when no other (medical officers or orderlies) dared. There simply exists no norm to fit the measure of a Jewish medic willing to risk neck to carry German SS-men under enemy fire to safety.

The Germans too had their attention drawn to this Jewish doctor – and they wanted to reward him. Skurnik was the second Finnish officer of Jewish faith to whom the Germans decided to award the Iron Cross. The question arises: did they actually realize that these officers were Jews? Skurnik refused to accept the medal. But he deliberately let matters come to the head in such a way as to stir up a veritable embroilment. He had waited about three weeks until the decision was to made to award him an Iron Cross, Second Class.

After that, he relayed to the Germans through his commanding officer, Lieutenant-General Hjalmar Siilasvuo, his refusal to accept the decoration on the grounds of his being a Jew. Skurnik's rebuff, which was couched in exceptionally strong terms, caused the Germans to express open annoyance. Skurnik reportedly went to Siilasvuo and said: "I wipe my ass with the Iron Cross. Tell that to the Germans". After that, the Germans reportedly demanded satisfaction and Skurnik's delivery into their hands. Siilasvuo's reported response was: "Must I hand over my best doctor?"

Captain Salomon Klass had to decide whether to accept the Iron Cross, Second Class, offered to him by the Germans. It was at this point that he had to draw the line in his relations with Finland's comrade-in-arms. He had not yet openly brought up the fact that he was a Jew. Like some other Jewish officers, Klass also asked his commanding officer, Colonel Walden, to remove his name from the list of men to receive German medals, which was done. Klass did not wish to have this matter spoil his good working relationship with the Germans. Klass's unit, JR 11, was operating in the Uhtua area, the southern part of the Kiestinki sector. As the commander of a company in the first battalion,

Klass has contact with German and Austrian soldiers nearly every day. He mentions having been treated to diverse delicacies from the *Wehrmacht* supplies. Following fierce fighting in Uhtua, Colonel Pilgrim, commander of a German division, paid a surprise call with his staff on Klass in his tent to compliment him on a good performance, although he was then just a lieutenant. Klass had been placed in command of the whole battalion, which, of course, was quite exceptional.

Klass relates:

> Colonel Pilgrim thanked us for the work we had done. I invited him to sit down and we had coffee. We talked of this and that until he suddenly asked if I'd come from the Baltic provinces. My German reminded him of the way it was spoken there. I answered that I was born in Finland, had learned my German in school and also that my parents had moved to Finland from the Lett-Gallen region, that is, from Latvia. Now having gained momentum, I could not keep from mentioning that I was Jewish and that the language I spoke at home was Yiddish, which resembles German. The colonel rose to feet, took me by hand and said: " I have nothing personal against you as a Jew" [Saying] "Heil Hitler", he straightened out his arm and walked out of the tent. His subordinates followed suit, raising hands stiffly and disappearing through the opening. Oesch and Timonen [second lieutenants and squad leaders in Klass's company] were of the opinion that it was not necessary to take such risks.

No kind of open conflict ensued from such encounters. The Germans scrupulously avoided bringing up the Jewish question in Finland. Many Jewish servicemen tell a consistent story of how Wehrmacht officers treated them in a perfectly matter-of-fact way. In Klass's case, it was Klass himself who brought out the fact that he was a Jew, not the Germans. And even after they knew about his Jewish background, he continued to have dealings with them in conjunction with operations in the Kiestinki sector, and he was promoted to the rank of captain.

The Jewish Prisoners of War

At the end of 2003 the issue the "Jewish question" in Finland during the Second World War surprisingly rose to international attention. The reason for this was a sensational journalistic book written by Elina Sana insinuating that Finland had deliberately deported Jewish prisoners of war to Germany.[21] Consequent to the interviews granted by the author, the international media, without bothering to check the basis for the insinuations, spread misleading information according to which Finland had deported thousands of people, including Finnish Jews. Such was the claim made in a BBC World Report program, for example. The program did not report that the "deportees" were Soviet prisoners of war, Soviet and Estonian communists, or even Soviet citizens. The idea arose abroad that the thousands of people involved in the exchange of prisoners of war had been Finns, Jews, and other civilians who had been delivered straight into the arms of the Gestapo. As late as December 2006 a German historian claimed in the respected *Der Spiegel* news magazine that Finland had handed over "more than three thousand people, Jews and non-Jews" to Germany.[22]

Actually, the deportation of prisoners of war, including those who were Jews, to Germany had already been treated in several previous studies.[23] The Soviet prisoners of war as such had never been aroused any attention outside Finland previously be-

[21] Elina Sana, *Luovutetut. Suomen ihmisluovutukset* Gestapo*lle* ('The Deportees. The Handing over of People to the Gestapo by Finland'). Juva: WSOY, 2003.

[22] *Der Spiegel*, 41/2006, pp. 52-57.

[23] Jukka Lindstedt provides a comprehensive presentation of the sources. Jukka Lindstedt, "Juutalaisten sotavankien luovutukset" ('Extraditions of the Jewish Prisoners of War'). *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* (The Finnish Historical Quarterly), *2/2004*.

fore they were connected sensationally with the deportation of "Jewish prisoners of war". In the marketing campaign for Sana's book far more Jews are stated to have been deported than "has previously been claimed". One must correspondingly ask which Jewish prisoners of war were deported and whether this was a matter of their being deported specifically because they were Jews? Why were not all Jewish prisoners of war deported? Why did the deportations stop? Did Germany specifically demand the deportation of Jewish prisoners of war?

In the following I will assess the issue in the light of information yielded by the most recent research. Firstly, the Finnish legal historian Jukka Lindstedt has made a thorough investigation of the basis for and legal consequences of the deportation of Jewish prisoners of war. A research project, originally led by Jukka Lindstedt, was set up by the Office of the Council of State in 2004 to study the deportations, and it concluded its work in the spring of 2008. The preliminary results of this project will be reviewed in the following as it concerns Jewish prisoners of war. In a book that I published in 1989, *Suomen juutalaisten aseveljeys* ('Comrades-in-arms of the Finnish Jews'), I wrote about the exceptionally good treatment accorded to the Finnish Jews, something that differed from the treatment accorded other Soviet prisoners of war.

During the Continuation War, that is to say, between 1941 and 1944, Finland held more than 64,000 prisoners of war. According to calculations compiled later, about 18,700 of them died during captivity. This figure has to regarded critically, but it gives the general trend. The number of those who died was significantly large. The number of prisoners of war identified as Jews was nevertheless smaller than that of Soviet prisoners of war in general. The food situation in Finland during the first months of 1942 was catastrophic. For example, during the war more than 700 patients at the Nikkilä hospital near Helsinki starved to death.

The Jewish prisoners of war were initially placed primarily in

the Prisoner-of-War Camp for Officers no.1 and in Camp for Political Prisoners of War no. 3, the latter having been established on October 14, 1941. According to intelligence from Military headquarters, the people interned there included primarily:

- political commissars
- political directors (*politruks*)
- leading figures in the communist party
- first assistant of mechanical tractor stations (= political directors)
- officers, junior officers, and fanatical communists, instigators, and agitators
- suspicious directors of collective farms
- suspicious teachers
- other fanatical communists, instigators, and agitators[24]

The Germans were interested in these groups of prisoners. According to the headquarters of the Finnish defense forces, deportation to the Germans began on the initiative of the German military authorities. No written notes have ever been found of negotiations pertaining to deportations of prisoners of war having been carried on with the Germans. It was probable that the issue of exchanging prisoners of war had arisen in conjunction with the initial contact between the two countries. In November, 1941, Finnish military headquarters had issued an order to the commanders of the troops on the home front that:

> in accordance with an agreement that has been concluded, the Germans will be sending prisoners of war of Finno-Ugric heritage to Finland in exchange for prisoners here. In principle the exchange will be on a man-to-man basis. According to the report drawn up after the war, the Germans wanted at least the first groups to consist of such prisoners of war that could provide them with supplementary information about the Russian NKVD and people belonging to the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and minority peoples in the areas that they conquered later.

[24] Lindstedt, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

The intention of the Germans was to gather together the political agents captured on all of the various Finnish front lines in order to investigate them in a uniform manner, thus obtaining a complete picture of the operational methods of the NKVD (GPU). As compensation for the political prisoners of war, Finland was to receive prisoners of war of Finno-Ugric ethnicity.[25]

There were thus two kinds of deportations: those based on the *exchange of prisoners*, and those concerning the desire of the Germans to gain intelligence access to *political prisoners of war*. As of now, varying numbers have been offered for the numbers of deportees. According to the information produced by a research project carried out by the Finnish National Archives (*Deportation Project*)[26], the Finns deported 2,270 Soviet prisoners to the Germans as permanent compensation for the prisoners of war of Finno-Ugric ethnicity deported to Finland by the Germans. Their military ranks ranged from major to private, and their professions from professor to shepherd. The deportees represented fifty-four different nationalities. Not all of them were sent to Germany, instead, some remained in Finland and worked for the Germans. The majority of the deportations and exchanges took place between 1941 and 1943. In 1944 only individual prisoners of war were handed over to the Germans. Correspondingly, the Germans handed over 2,214 prisoners of war to the Finns.[27]

Precise information has long been available concerning the deportations of *political prisoners of war*. Most of them were at Prisoner Camps no. 1 and no. 3. Jukka Lindstedt has calculated that between October 29, 1942 and May 10, 1944, a total of 524 political prisoners of war were handed over in groups of different sizes. They were handed over to representatives of the German security police in northern Finland, specifically in Rovaniemi and Salla.

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[25] Lindstedt, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

[26] "Research on prisoners-of-war deaths and people handed over in Finland, 1939-1945"; referred to henceforth as the *Deportation Project*.

[27] Information kindly provided by Ida Suolahti of the Deportation Project.

Lists of the prisoners and receipts for the deportations exist.[28]

What, then, is known about the Jewish prisoners of war about whom there has been so much discussion recently? On the basis of precise reports based on the card registers of prisoners, Lindstedt demonstrated as early as the spring of 2004 that previously presented speculative figures of the number of deported Jewish prisoners of war were incorrect. *Lindstedt* concluded that the number of deported Jewish prisoners of war was forty-seven, listing their names in his study.[29] The Deportation Project concluded with the naming of fifty-one Jews.[30]

Finnish historians have emphasized the fact that by no means all the Jews identified as such were deported, nor was there even ever a demand to deport them. They were originally in the group of Russian prisoners of war, which is evidence against the racism-based interpretation. The primary justification for the deportations was thus not racial origin. On the other hand, the command concerning placement in camp no. 3 made reference to "suspicious" Jews. It may have influenced the fact that Jews were regarded more easily than otherwise as suspicious.[31] Evidence against it is provided by the fact that at the end of 1942 Jewish prisoners of war began to be gathered into their own group at prisoner of war camp no. 2.

Of the forty-seven deported Jews, thirty-three had the rank of officer, one was a junior officer, and thirteen were privates. The deportations of political prisoners of war were ended in September, 1941, aside from some minor exceptions (on November 26, 1943 three political prisoners of war, and on May 10, 1944 one, were deported). The deported Jewish prisoners of war were included in these groupings of political prisoners of war. By the fall of 1942 the Finns had evidently succeeded in handling over to the Germans all of the political prisoners of war that the Ger-

[28] Lindstedt, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

[29] Lindstedt, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

[30] Information provided by Ida Suolahti.

[31] Lindstedt, op. cit.p.152.

mans wanted.[32] Most of the Jewish prisoners of war were not handed over. According to calculations carried out at the time by the Helsinki Jewish Congregation, they numbered close to 300.[33] Initially they had been placed among other "Great Russians". They were not regarded in the ethnic breakdown as constituting their own group.

In October 1942 a significant turn of events took place concerning the prisoners of war that had been identified as Jews. Their conditions at the prisoner-of-war camps improved considerably. A command was issued to have them relocated, "primarily" to Prisoner-of-War Camp no. 2, and from there to work camps at Montola and Loukolampi. The officers, politruks, and special prisoners remained at Prisoner-of-War Camp no. 3. The commandant of Prisoner-of-War Camp no. 2 was issued an order to place the Jewish prisoners of war in barracks as a separate group. They worked as their own group on farms and at work sites. The camp prepared itself to receive an additional 150 Jewish prisoners of war after October 4, 1942.[34]

What was the basis for this change in the treatment of Jewish prisoners of war? One primary motive was evidently their "protection". It was a preventive measure for the eventuality of German demands that they be deported. In the other hand, Finland's Jewish soldiers did not experience any threat from the Germans, as has been demonstrated in the foregoing. The idea of a protective motive is supported by the fact that not a single Jews, whether foreign civilian or Jewish prisoner of war, was deported after 1942. The Jewish congregations in Finland had also expressed their request that the Jewish prisoners of war be transferred to

[32] Jukka Kujansuu, *Jatkosodan politrukki- ja upseerisotavangit* 'The Politruk and Officer Prisoners of War in the Continuation War'). University of Jyväskylä, 1999, pp. 65-66.

[33] J. Weinstein, "*Minneskrift till 50-årsdagen av Judiska Församlingen i Helsingfors*" ('Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation'), August 20, 1956.

[34] Lindstedt, op. cit., p. 158.

their own camp, as also happened. The congregation helped the prisoners of war materially to the best of their ability by supplying them with food and clothing.

The Helsinki Jewish Congregation was also in contact with the Stockholm Jewish Congregation in order to supply the prisoners of war. The prisoners of war were also allowed to correspond with people in Sweden, which is exceptional in such conditions. The religious needs of the Jewish prisoners of war were also given attention. The initiative in this matter was taken by Professor Yrjö J. E. Alanen, a Lutheran army chaplain assigned to handle religious concentrations. Such a person assigned to take care of such a responsibility might have been expected to provoke strenuous protests, but nothing of this kind occurred.[35]

The Jewish prisoners of war interned at Order Camp no. 2 remembered their experience with some nostalgia:

> The prisoners behaved in a more intelligent manner. There were no cases of cynicism or brutality, which were typical of the hungry animal-like prisoners I met in preceding camps. My life [in the Jewish camp] was like a heaven... After many years my national consciousness began to return... Solomon [Shur, a fellow prisoner of war] was eager to tell us about Palestine and he did so in a most inspiring way.[36]

Following Himmler's Line in Finland

In Finland, Nazi Germany's intelligence services covered their tracks so well that even today complete misconceptions predominate concerning the operation of the apparatus of violence run by

[35] Rautkallio 1994, pp. 89-90.

[36] Serah Beiser, "The treatment of Soviet Prisoners of War in Finland, 1941-1944", *Jews in Eastern Europe*. Editors, Yisrael Ellit Cohen and Michael Beiser. The Hebrew University of Israel. Spring 1995, p. 22.

the SS under Himmler's direction.[37] After Hitler, the most important man in Nazi Germany was *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler. He visited Finland twice during the brotherhood-in-arms between the two countries, the first time in March, 1942 and the second time at the turn of July and August the same year. Thus, Himmler was the Nazi leader who first succeeded in visiting Finland. Hitler was not to visit until June 4, 1942, his only visit to Finland, on the occasion of Marshal Mannerheim's seventy-fifth birthday. The visit has subsequently been characterized as a surprise, but it did not appear to have any of the political ulterior motives connected with the joint military effort that manifested themselves two years later in conjunction with the visit to Finland of the German Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop. Himmler's visits to Finland were demonstrations of courtesy, although they also included personal inspections of the *Waffen-SS* troops in the north. Hitler and Himmler were desired guests in Finland. No official invitation was ever extended to Himmler by the Finnish government, but he was received like a state visitor, with the highest state and military honors.

Outwardly Himmler's visit to Finland did not, of course, rise to the level of Hitler's visit, and this is just what the *Reichsführer-SS* wanted, as he expressed it in March 1942. He wanted to visit Finland *incognito*. This did not quite succeed. From the standpoint of the topic being discussed here, it is most interesting to determine the consequences of Himmler's visit. The least important issue does not concern possible demands concerning the Jews in Finland, demands that become really significant in the light of what became known later. Himmler's visit to Finland in March came after the *Wannsee* Conference. There, key officials in Nazi administration had virtually given the "stamp of approval" to their policy aimed at the systematic extermination of the Jews of Europe. The fact that the head of the Finnish State Police, Arno Anthoni, made his first and only official visit to Germany

[37] These questions are dealt with in detail in Rautkallio (forthcoming).

only a few weeks after Himmler's trip to Finland adds additional interest as concerns the timing. There is certainly justification for considering how the "Jewish question in Finland", with all of its specific features, including the presence of Jewish refugees in Finland, would have ranked as a matter of interest to the *Reichsführer-SS* Himmler did, after all, spend as much as three weeks in Finland during a six-month period.

Himmler's visits were very typically examples of the independent manner in which the *Reichsführer-SS* – with the authority given by Hitler – arranged his foreign policy activities, totally bypassing the Foreign Minister, von Ribbentrop. Himmler's first visit to Finland[38] focused solely on inspecting military sites and German troops who were deployed in northern Finland, this being demonstrated by the German and Finnish documents that presented the trip. Himmler's special airplane left Tallinn at 11 a.m. destined for Rovaniemi, where it was to land at 3.30. p.m. On the previous day Himmler had been in the General Government, occupied Poland, where the extermination camps, Treblinka, Belzec, and Lublin (Majdanek) had already begun to function.

The Finnish State Police played no role whatsoever in Himmler's first trip because the supervision department of the General Headquarters also bore responsibility for the security arrangements. During his visit to Finland, Himmler was not accompanied by representatives of the Gestapo. When he traveled, his entourage usually included the head of his office, *SS-General* Karl Wolff, adjutants, security guards from the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), as well as his physiotherapist, Felix Kersten, the "Finnish medical counselor" ("*finnischer Medizinalrat*"), as he is referred to in RSHA documents.[39] Little has been written by historians concerning Himmler's first visit to Finland since nothing of any

[38] Himmler's travel diary. T-581. Roll 40A. (National Archives) NA. The information Richard Breitman kindly told.

[39] Rautkallio (forthcoming) provides a detailed account of Kersten's role in the treatment of the "Finnish Jewish question" as well as of his secret activities in Sweden to further Himmler's objectives.

particular interest seems to have arisen in conjunction with it. Himmler's trip to Finland at the turn of July and August, 1942, has been subsequently dramatized because he took up the Jewish question during his discussions with the Finnish Prime Minister, J. W. Rangell.

The mutual personal competition between von Ribbentrop and Wolff had a denouement when Himmler returned from Finland. The officials of the German Foreign Ministry were surprised to receive a report about Himmler's visit to Finland from the *Deutsche Nachrichtenbüro* (the German News Agency) on August 10, 1942 in the German newspapers, even though the visit was really supposed to be, as had earlier been reported to the Ministry, *incognito*. According to the report:

> *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler inspected the troops of the Waffen-SS divisions that are in Finland this past week. When in Helsinki, the *Reichsführer-SS* paid a visit to the President of Finland, Risto Ryti. During the evening the *Reichsführer-SS, Obergruppenführer* and *Waffen-SS* General Karl Wolff as well as the other gentlemen in his entourage were guests of Prime Minister Rangell and the Finnish government. On the next day the *Reichsführer-SS* accepted the invitation of the Marshal of Finland, Baron von Mannerheim, to visit him at his headquarters. The Marshal honored the *Reichsführer-SS* by presenting him the Grand Cross of the Cross of Liberty with a Red Ribbon. This is a special demonstration of a sense of solidarity between the Finnish army and a division of the Waffen-SS that are fighting together on the Finnish front as well as of the common struggle that the Finnish volunteers fighting in the ranks of the SS Viking Division are carrying out.

Himmler appeared in Finland in his military role, this being fully justified by the numerous *Waffen-SS* divisions that he led. This particular role was naturally quite amenable to Himmler's Finnish hosts who quieted any doubts in their minds about the other duties carried out by their high guest. At the time, according to Mannerheim, Himmler gave "statements that seemed slightly

exaggerated" concerning new armored weapons that could be used by one man. Nevertheless, the Finns had to revise their initial underestimation because, according to Mannerheim, these "armored fists" and "armored horrors" obtained from Germany proved themselves to be "quite popular" in the crucial defensive battles. At the time, the idea of Himmler that had crystallized among the Finnish leadership elite was, superficially at least, undoubtedly positive, nor did Himmler himself want to sully his reputation in Finland. The Finns were not ignorant of the tragedy that was befalling the Jews of Europe, and detailed information about the results of Himmler's machinery of death as concerned the eastern campaign was available, as was demonstrated previously. Nor were the Finns naïve with respect to Himmler. Having awarded Himmler their republic's highest medal, the Finns believed that the German would make his own contribution to guaranteeing that Finland would have all of the support that it needed to continue its war effort.

Himmler and the Jews in Finland

The Jewish question makes Himmler's "relation to Finland" extremely puzzling. It would have been natural if the Chief of German Police forces had included in his meeting someone such as the head of the Finnish State Police. Arno Anthoni had recently visited Berlin meeting there with Himmler's closest subordinates. Evidently, Himmler had no reason to meet with Anthoni, neither did he do so. It would have fit into his timetable quite easily since, in addition to the days Himmler spent vacationing in the countryside, he also visited Helsinki. The surveillance conducted by the State Police indicates that Himmler really did shop and stroll the streets of Helsinki *incognito*, even on the day of his departure. The role that the Finnish State Police played in Himmler's

visit to Finland was only visible in the assistance that it rendered him. Ari Kauhanen, Erkki Kuosmanen and Usko Talvioja, all of the State Police, were the Finnish officers who were assigned to Himmler and who wrote the detailed report about the visit.

Aside from Kersten's stories[40], the only confirmable remarks made by Himmler concerning Finnish Jews have been documented from Finnish sources. The State Police officers who accompanied Himmler during his trip to Finland during the summer of 1942 wrote in their report that evidently some member of Himmler's party was heard to remark that "the *Reichsführer* wanted to discuss the Finnish Jewish Question with Prime Minister Rangell. The *Reichsführer* regarded it as shameful that Finland had earlier been forced to accept Jewish refugees from Austria. He promised to arrange things so that the refugees in question would be sent back". The person who said that was probably Felix Kersten, the only person in Himmler's party who knew Finnish. Rangell has confirmed his discussion of the so-called "Finnish Jewish problem" with his statement in two different connections, but the content is different. The State Police officers said that they had heard it from a remark made by an outsider. It was not about the discussion itself, but rather about an intention, since "Himmler wanted to discuss the Finnish Jewish question". Strictly speaking, it was not even a question of that; the issue was actually the "Jewish refugees from Austria".

When interrogated at the Katajanokka prison on October 3, 1947, Rangell, imprisoned for his so-called war guilt, threw light on the discussion:

[40] Felix Kersten published versions of his memoirs (which he characterized as "diaries") in different languages and at different times, but only after the war, changing the emphasis given to different episodes according to his needs. *Kersten's Memorandum*, Rijksinstitut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie. Amsterdam, June 12, 1945; Felix Kersten, *Samtal med Himmler* ('Conversations with Himmler'). Stockholm 1947 (same year in Finnish); Felix Kersten, *Totenkopf und Treu*. Hamburg 1952; Felix Kersten, *Memoirs 1940-1945*. New York: Macmillan 1957.

> During *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler's visit to Finland, there was some talk about the Finnish Jews in some connection, in which case the undersigned said that there is no Jewish question in Finland. Himmler had not proposed or requested in any way that the Jewish refugees in Finland be sent to Germany, instead, discussion of the issue ended immediately with the aforementioned remark made by the undersigned.

Rangell described his conversation with the *Reichsführer* in a different context as having had the same content:

> Himmler asked about the situation of the Finnish Jews. I told him that in Finland there are some two thousand Jews, decent families and individuals whose sons fight in our army just as other Finns do and are as respected citizens as anyone else. I ended my statement with the words: '*Wir haben keine Judenfrage*' [We have no Jewish Question], and I said it explicitly enough for discussion of this issue to end with it. On no other occasion was the Jewish question discussed with Himmler.

The resoluteness of Rangell's statement did not seem to affect Himmler's mood in the least, this being confirmed on the basis of the information contained in the surveillance reports made by the State Police officers, who followed the *Reichsführer-SS* in every steps during the weeks he spent in Finland.

How could Finland avoid it?

The authorities of Nazi Germany were well aware of the fact that, in their own opinion, neither the Finnish authorities not the Finnish people had any ""Jewish question" to resolve. The Germans did, of course, find such an issue everywhere else in Europe. Of all the European countries belonging to the Nazi sphere of power, why was Finland the only one to avoid having the "Jewish question" brought up? Franz Rademacher, the head of the Jewish Of-

fice (*Judenreferat*) of Division III (*Abteilung Deutschland*) of the German Foreign Ministry, had drawn a parallel between the Jews of Finland and Norway as being identical and potential objects of destruction in one of his memoranda. Rademacher's name appears in numerous documents ordering the destruction of Jews. *Robert Wistrich* characterized Rademacher as "as a messenger boy for [Eichmann's] liquidation arrangements..." Rademacher also developed the well-known plan for the forced deportation of Jews of Europe to Madagascar, off the eastern cost of Africa, an idea that caught the interested of Eichmann, who was Chief of the Jewish Office of the Gestapo, in the RSHA, and implemented the Final Solution.[41]

Franz Rademacher had sent the representative of the German Foreign Ministry in Oslo, the capital of occupied Norway, a report about the Norwegian Jews as early as on July 1940, in which he draw a parallel with the Finnish Jews; they were populations of almost same size. In Rademacher's report the Norwegian Jews had already been precisely identified with respect to their places of residence.[42] Nevertheless, transporting them to the death camps was not to begin until more than two years later. As had been the case with the Finnish Jews, calculations for the Norwegian Jews were thus made in Berlin at a time, when nobody had any idea about Finland's involvement in the future war against the Soviet Union. Finland had just recovered from the Winter War with heavy human and territorial losses. By 1940 Hitler and Stalin had partitioned Poland and divided up the Baltic countries between them, and Hitler's troops had invaded Denmark and Norway. At that time Finland's future in the dictators'

[41] Robert Wistrich, *Hitler's Apolcalypse. Jews and Nazi Legacy*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985, pp. 106-107; Robert Wistrich, "Franz Rademacaher", in *Who's Who in Nazi Germany*. New York: Bonanza Books, 1984, p. 238.

[42] Franz Rademacher, July 24, 1940 to Oslo, "An den Vertreter des Auswärtigen Amtes bei dem Reichskomissar für die besetzten norwegischen Gebiete". GFM 34. 4331 (The National Archives) TNA.

plans was unknown.

What kinds of plans did the Nazi government have for the Finnish Jews after Finland was allied with Nazi Germany in summer of 1941? Finland's status was naturally completely different from the perspective of occupied Norway, but the fate of the Danish Jews, of which there were considerably more, was significantly different from that of the Norwegian Jews. Finding a standard solution for the different fates of the Jews of the Scandinavian countries is difficult. Finland was the only ally of Nazi Germany that had no anti-Jewish laws at all. The German Ministry of Interior had made an analysis of the legislation (*Judengesetzgebung in anderen europäischen Ländern*) pertaining to Jews during the Spring of 1941 when implementing *Barbarossa*, the plan to start the war against the USSR, of all of the "future" allies and countries participating in the eastern campaign.

In Hungary the amendment to the law restricting the activities of Jews (*2. Judengesetz*) had come into force in May 1939. Jewish laws were enacted in Italy on November 11, 1938, in Bulgaria on January 21, 1941, in Yugoslavia on October 5, 1940, in Slovakia on April 18, 1941, in the non-occupied part of France (the Vichy regime) on October 18, 1940, in Croatia on April, 1941, and in Serbia on May 32, 1941. Romania was the German ally in which the Jews fared worst, because no laws pertaining to them were enacted at all. The Romanian Jews lacked all legal protection and were thus outlaws. They had been legally stripped of their civil rights as early as December 1937.[43]

Of all of Germany's allies, Finland really remained as a sole and lonely fortress if its situation is assessed according to the policy toward Jews followed in the countries concerned. Occu-

[43] The German Ministry of the Interior (Hans Frank) 12.4.1941 to the German Foreign Ministry; Franz Rademacher August 23, 1941 to Hans Frank (Ministeramt des Reichsministers); Deutsche Gesandtschaft, Bukarest, July 31, 1941 to the German Foreign Ministry (for information, Hans Frank, who governed later the civil administration in General Government (annexed Poland). GFM 34. 4327. TNA.

pied Denmark was Germany's model protectorate. Copenhagen announced categorically to Berlin: "Denmark has no anti-Jewish laws whatsoever", but neither did such laws exist in German-occupied Norway, nor were such laws in force in the occupied Netherlands, Belgium, or pre-war France.[44]

In comparison to the aforementioned occupied countries, Finland's situation was completely different, since the country was comparable to other countries allied with Germany that had, as a consequence of this status, begun to enforce legal restrictions on Jews, with disastrous consequences. In the fall of 1942 the German Ambassador in Helsinki, Wipert von Blücher, had reported in no uncertain terms that Finland had no anti-Jewish laws of any kind (*Judengesetze bestehen in Finnland noch wie vor nicht*).[45] At the beginning of the following year, von Blücher was clearly concerned about the turn that Finnish-German relations had taken as a result of the deportation of "the eight" Jewish refugees, the racial policy aspects of which will be assessed later. The German ambassador remarked that the "deportation of only a few Jews" had brought about strong reactions in Finland, particularly in public opinion. The Ambassador revealed that the deportation had come to him as a complete surprise. von Blücher considered this to be a "difficult state of German-Finnish relations", since the "position of the pro-German minister of interior, Horelli [Toivo], ha[d] been shaken", and that this would lead to a dangerous development ("*können zusätzliche Stimmungsbelastungen gefährliche Wirkung haben*").[46]

Ambassador von Blücher had told a skeptical Berlin:

> There are only 2,000 Jews in Finland. This is the reason that there is no Jewish problem of any kind, nor anti-Jewish agitation. With the exception of four small reformist parties with a total membership

[44] "Der Bevollmächtige des Deutschen Reiches", Copenhagen, October 10, 1941 to Berlin. GFM 34. 4327. TNA.

[45] von Blücher, September 29, 1942 from Helsinki. GFM 34. 4328. TNA.

[46] von Blücher, January 1, 1943 from Helsinki. GFM 34. 4328. TNA.

of only 20,000, no political organizations exist with the struggle against Jewishness as part of their agenda.[47]

Ambassador von Blücher's clear message notwithstanding, the RSHA and the German Foreign Ministry had by no means dropped the question of Finnish Jews from their calculations. Before the "final solution", the German bureaucracies focused their attention on Finnish Jews in many different ways. The Reich Association of the Jews in Germany (*Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*), which operated under the control of the RSHA, had made an inquiry about Finnish Jews in a detailed questionnaire in 1941. The questions concerned the number of Jews, how many of them were Jews by faith (*Glaubensjuden*) and by race (*Rassenjuden*), their age, distribution, professions, and organizations. It is uncertain whether the answers were ever provided. Other inquiries came from Jewish organizations controlled by the Security Service. They focused on Jews who had moved to Finland from Germany and Austria.[48]

Finnish Jews as a Deportation Target

Martin Luther, head "Germany" Department (*Abteilung Deutschland, D III*) of the Foreign Ministry, was the central figure in his ministry as concerns the resolution of the Jewish question. He had, unlike his Foreign Minister, participated in the *Wannsee* Conference on January 20, 1942, and he worked in close cooperation with the RSHA to effect the final destruction of European Jewry. The Jews of Finland had been not forgotten in Berlin by

[47] von Blücher, Januaary 9,1944 from Helsinki. GFM 34. 4328. TNA.

[48] Reichsvereiningung der Juden in Deutschland, March 2, 1941 to Helsinki Jewish Congregation; Wanderungsabteilung der Israelitischen Kulturgemeinde (Wien), June 5, 1941 to Helsinki Jewish Congregation. Helsinki Jewish Congregation Archives.

any means, even though Finland enjoyed exemptions with regard to their anti-Jewish policies. As late as February 1943 Luther headed a cable that he sent to Helsinki "Struggle against Jewry in Finland" (*Kampf gegen Judentum in Finnland*)". He provided ambassador von Blücher with the following advice:

> I request that you neglect no opportunity whatsoever to bring to the attention of the national government and people of influence that the struggle against Bolshevism is in every respect also a struggle against Jewry. In the same manner as the struggle against Bolshevism is a question of vital importance for Finland, for Europe, depriving Jewry of its unscrupulous political and economic power is the absolute prerequisite for securing the freedom and future of the continent.[49]

At that time Martin Luther's outburst was directed at the position of the Jews of neutral and allied countries who were in areas occupied by Germany but had not yet been subjected to restrictions of any kind. As concerns the Jews in countries within Germany's sphere of power, the Jews of Finland also temporarily enjoyed exemptions because of their citizenship. Under-secretary Luther had specially informed Helsinki in January 1943 that the hourglass was filling; for "reasons of military security" the security of Finnish Jews could no longer be guaranteed in territory that had been occupied by Germany.

The patience of the Nazi government had been tested for one and a half years, because the RSHA leadership had spoken of interning the foreign Jews present in Germany and the territories that it had occupied as early as August 1941. This is made clear in one of Martin Luther's memoranda according to which he had received a confidential telephone call from Adolf Eichmann that referred to the guidelines that had been received from RSHA head Reinhard Heydrich. According to them, the position of the

[49] Martin Luther (Abteilung Deutschland), February 4, 1943 to Helsinki. AA. E 412867 (Bundesarchiv) BA.

Jews had to be clarified in "mutual understanding with friendly-minded European governments". Luther remarked that a "peaceful" attitude should prevail with respect to possible protests from the Swedish and Swiss governments".[50]

During the spring of 1943 the Finnish Jews who were still staying in areas taken over by Germany were regarded as having the same status as the Jews from Germany's allies, Hungary and Italy. The German Foreign Ministry had noted that that the governments of Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovakia "are not interested in the fates of their citizens of Jewish race".[51] At the beginning of 1943 it was specifically the "Jewish experts" in the German Foreign Ministry who had taken the initiative for radical but unrealistic measures. When the signs of final destruction were already visible, the Swedish and Italian embassies in Berlin were the first to inquire about the fate of their citizens of Jewish birth who were in territory under German power. The German Foreign Ministry was, however, unable to provide more precise information about where the Jews of these countries were staying.

The procedure used by the Nazi officials to solve the "Jewish question" in different countries was by no means consistent. For example, when the government of neutral Spain delayed its decision to arrange for the repatriation of more than five hundred of its Jewish citizens who were in the Greek city of Thessaloniki, the local SD interned 367 Spanish Jews and sent them to Bergen-Belsen along with seventy-four Jews who had been arrested earlier. The German and Spanish authorities reached an agreement about their release on February 6, 1944.[52] Another document from the German Foreign Ministry (D III), dated February

[50] Martin Luther's "Aufzeichnung", March 5, 1943. K 210290-91. A copy including in the trial of Adolf Eichmann. Yad Vashem Archives, Jerusalem.

[51] "Aufzeichnung betreffend Massnahmen gegenüber Juden fremder Staatsangörighkeit", March 6, 1943. AA. K208300-01. GFM 34. 4139. TNA.

[52] Leni Yahil, The Holocaust. *The Fate of European Jewry 1932-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. pp. 417-418.

5, 1943, reveals surprisingly that a considerably larger group of Turkish Jews than had previously been known, about 2,500, was deported from France. Turkey was a neutral country for which reason the special orders issued by the Nazi authorities were applicable to its citizens of Jewish origin. However, Turkish officials did not permit those Turkish Jews who were in occupied France to return, even though the German officials would evidently have been willing to permit this in accordance with the practice they had adopted that time. [53]

At the same time as Nazi officials were arranging the deportation of Jews of "foreign nationality", Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Reinhard Heydrich's successor as head of the RSHA, issued a written order on March 2, 1943 for Jews holding the citizenship of fifteen different countries, as well as Jews who were stateless, to be deported eastward to the extermination camps. The countries were Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Norway.[54] There were still some Finnish Jews in occupied France, Belgium, and the Netherlands who did not want to return to their homeland. Under Secretary Martin Luther had transmitted his instructions to ambassador von Blücher on January 22, 1943. Von Blücher was to inform the Finnish government in polite terms that Finnish Jews sojourning on German territory (*Juden finnischer Staatszuhörigkeit*) were to be subjected to the same procedures of internment and expulsion that were being applied to Jews from other countries. Luther called attention to the fact that the small number of Finnish Jews would not in any way prevent the measures. The deadline stipulated for the Finnish government, just as for other governments in the manner related above, was March 31, 1943. From the standpoint of Finland, the German Foreign Ministry was already on the go before the general directive is-

[53] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

[54] An Order of Ernst Kaltenbrunner (Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD), March 2, 1943. AA. 371900. BA.

sued by Adolf Eichmann in his circular of March 27, 1943.

Eberhardt von Thadden followed a policy that differed from that of his superior, Martin Luther. In April, 1943, he followed Franz Rademacher as the head of the German Foreign Ministry's Jewish Office, *Judenreferat* of the *Abteilung Deutschland* Department. The Finnish Embassy in Berlin had responded to the verbal note issued by the German Foreign Ministry on February 2, 1943, reporting that it did not know of any Finnish citizen of Jewish race who was sojourning in these areas who had received Finnish citizenship through marriage with an "Aryan Finn". von Thadden asked Adolf Eichmann, the head of the RSHA Jewish office, to stop all measures aimed at "locating" Finnish Jews in the areas under German control, regarding them as unnecessary.[55]

The Finnish embassy in Berlin had erred in its observations. They were already rectified within a few weeks. There really were Finnish Jews in the areas occupied by Germany, even in late 1943.[56]

What was Agreed in Berlin?

The chief of the Finnish State Police, Arno Kalervo Anthoni, (born August 1,1900) only made his first official journey to Germany more than a year after he had been appointed to his position on February 1,1941, this assignment with the State Police being extended until February 29,1944. Considering Anthoni's Gestapo connections, it is surprising that he only visited Germany once during his career. One could have supposed him to have established well functioning and personal relationship with the Gestapo. His closest subordinate, Bruno Aaltonen, had been corresponding with Heinrich Müller, the head of the Gestapo, for

[55] Eberhardt von Thadden, March 1,943 to Adolf Eichmann. GFM 43. 4328. TNA.

[56] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

years since 1937 in addition to being a friend at the family level. This relationship led to the secret correspondence between the men, without Anthoni knowing it. The events that were to take place during Anthoni's visit Berlin lead directly back to Bruno Aaltonen. He was dismissed from his position as deputy police chief on March 12,1942.[57] Anthoni's trip to Germany, in turn, began a month later on April 9, 1942.

In later assessments Anthoni's visit to Berlin in April, 1942, has been linked to the so-called Finnish Jewish question. Claims have been made that Anthoni supposedly had "agreed" with Gestapo head Heinrich Müller about handing over the eight specific Jewish refugees to the Gestapo. Wild rumors erupted then, and they have persisted for decades. According to the headline of an article published in a left-wing newspaper on December 1947[58], a ship had been acquired by Anthoni "for the deportation of the Jews in Finland". Anthoni's trial made his visit to Berlin public knowledge. From it followed the myth of a "list of Jews" that Anthoni had supposedly handed over to his colleague Heinrich Himmler in Berlin. Over the decades it has attained the status of a "fact". Anthoni's existensive sphere of authority in aliens' affairs led to these suspicions when the deportation of "the eight" became known.

As to the persecution of the Jews, Anthoni certainly did not leave for Berlin without having prepared himself. He had, for example, obtained a detailed report about the official trip to Estonia made by Olavi Viherluoto, a State Police official, between October 1 and 12, 1941. The Finnish police officer had been told about killing of Jews, but his source of information had been representatives of the Estonian police, particularly Evald Mikson (Mickson). The weight of Viherluoto's account as evidence is undisputable. It demonstrates that within the Finnish State Police people really *knew* about the fate of the Jews of Estonia during

[57] The Aaltonen-Müller affair is discussed in Rautkallio (forthcoming).

[58] *Sosialisti* ('The Socialist'), December 18,1947.

the Nazi occupation. The same was also stated by the head prosecutor at Anthoni's trial, prosecution counsel, Ali Rautakorpi: "Anthoni was thus fully aware of the measures of persecution that had been directed at people of Jewish nationality since October, 1941...". It is noteworthy that the German policemen did not want to disclose the entire truth to representatives of the Finnish State Police.

Arno Anthoni visited Tallinn for the first time in November 1941. He said that he made a total of four trips to Tallinn as well as to Riga. He told that on three of his trips he had met "Estonian Gestapo men, whose guest he was". On the fourth trip he was the guest of frigate captain Alexander Cellarius, a notorious representative of *Abwehr* in the Baltics and Finland[59]. No document indicates anyone to have had discussions with Anthoni about the Jews.[60] On the hand, when he was in Tallinn, Anthoni agreed with Martin Sandberger, head of of the RSHA "Mission Commando 1 A 1a (*Einsatzkommando 1a* of *Einsatzgruppe 1 A*) on the procedures to be applied when Estonian refugees, communists, prisoners of war, and foreign civilians were deported from Finland. The report on the trip made by State Police Officials to Estonia in September 1942 also refers to this agreement:

> In accordance with the previous agreement concluded between the head of the [Finnish] State Police and the German Security Police in Estonia, the State Police was legally entitled to deport twenty-six Russians and Estonians who were illegally sojourning in Finland.[61]

These people were sent to Tallinn on the transport ship *SS Hohenhörn* on August 28, 1942.

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[59] The activities of "Büro Cellarius" in Finland are treated in depth in Rautkallio (forthcoming).

[60] Protocol of Arno Anthoni's interrogation, October 28, 1947. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. SA.

[61] O. Viherluoto's and Veikko Antikainen's "Travel Report", September 3, 1942. Copy of the abbreviated abstract. Ilm.pvk. no. 1656.-4.IX.1942. T 1670. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. p. 131. SA.

In Berlin Anthoni was received politely and correctly; however, the person who had invited him, the RSHA head, Reinhard Heydrich, was in Prague, so, in his absence, hospitality was extended to Anthoni and his subordinate Erik Muurman by the Gestapo head, Heinrich Müller, chief of the criminal investigation department, Arthur Nebe, and the administrative director of the RSHA, Bruno Streckenbach, accompanied by functionaries of lesser rank. On the basis of the travel report, which Erik Muurman prepared and that Anthoni subsequently signed, he appears to have been particularly satisfied with his visit:

> I cannot fail to mention the comrade-in-arms-like, trusting, friendly, and hospitable treatment that was accorded us by our German hosts, as well as the readiness with which they guided us as we acquainted ourselves with government agencies and their operations.

Anthoni was shown the Oranienburg "model concentration camp", of which the *Valpo* report continues:

> The tidiness characterizing the detainees' sleeping, dining, free time and working quarters, and library rooms as well as elsewhere was astounding. One of the things about the arrangement is that 12, 000 prisoners are guarded by only twenty-four guards – and the discipline seemed excellent. The concentration camp has separate medical departments, such as tuberculosis, surgical, and odontological divisions. At the concentration camp considerable attention is focused on educational treatment, for which reason it has been necessary to use the most severe form of punishment, twenty-five whiplashes, applied in public, at one time, relatively rarely.[62]

Heinrich Müller informed Anthoni that "Germany's State Police is ready to receive all such foreigners that Finland regards as being advisable to deport from its territory due to their being politically suspect, untrustworthy in other respects, and prone

[62] "Travel Report". Er.sal.V.P.K. No. 18/44-1942. Received, April 22, 1942. Copy of "necessary parts" (mark made by the past war time, so-called "Red State Police", 1946). T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188., pp. 51-54.KA.

to criminality".[63] When interrogated, Anthoni specified the deal that he had made with Müller, which he characterized as an "oral agreement". Anthoni admitted that he had proposed it to the Germans himself, because by resorting to such "police measures... the authorities wanted to rid themselves of criminal or other elements of bad character and the agreement was thus exclusively consistent with Finnish interests. The initiative for deportations remained with the Finnish party.

Anthoni interpreted the authorization that he had received from the Government as granting him the right " to initiate all measures required for deportation", and he thus "also had the right to negotiate about the issue with the [German] officials mentioned". Anthoni pointed out that "none of the people deported from Finland had been anyone that the Germans had requested to have handed over to them". Anthoni had rejected demands for the deportation of "all Estonian refugees", nor was the demand renewed.[64]

Who were the People Targeted for Deportation?

Anthoni's above mentioned statement is inaccurate if the reference to a copy of a summary of a State Police "Top Secret Letter Diary" of January 20, 1942 is correct. It says that "the head of the German Security Police is being sent a list of those foreigners who will be sent to Estonia in the spring".[65] However, nothing confirms Müller and Anthoni having actually discussed such a list in Berlin three months later. To the contrary, the procedure

[63] Ibid.

[64] Interrogation protocols for Arno Anthoni, May 31 and June 5, 1945. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188., pp. 162-164, 167.KA.

[65] "*Erittäin salainen kirjepäiväkirja*" ('Extremely secret letter diary of the main division of the State Police for the period from January 1, 1943 until December 31, 1943'). T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. KA.

orally agreed upon then applied to possible future deportations of foreigners from Finland to Germany. In this report submitted in January, there is a question of precisely who is meant when reference is made to "the head of the German Security Police"? Is it Heinrich Müller himself, or Martin Sandbeger, whom the Finnish post war State Police after 1944 often inaccurately called "the Gestapo chief". The latter alternative demonstrates itself to be the more probable one. Specifically, in the travel report about their trip to Estonia dated September 3, 1942 submitted by Olavi Viherluoto, Veikko Antikainen, and Erik Jaarma it said:

> In accordance with the previous agreement made between the head of the [Finnish] State Police and the commander of the German Security Police operating in Estonia, the State Police had the legal right to deport from Finland twenty-six Russians and Estonians illegally residing in the country.[66]

Arno Anthoni was ordered arrested on October 19, 1944 by the Allied Control Commission (the Soviet Union) along with certain other people accused of having committed "war crimes". These sixty-one men making up the so-called Zhdanov list (List no. 1) had served in the Finnish-occupied Eastern Karelian Military Administration District in various capacities ranging from general to private. After almost three years of being in custody awaiting trial, they were released without charges. In contrast to this, the "war guilt trial" against Finland's wartime leadership that was begun at the beginning of 1946 resulted in prison terms of various lengths. Contrary to what transpired in the other countries that had been Germany's allies, the Finnish military leadership was not sentenced. In Finland the so-called Jewish question was never raised by the victorious powers at any time when charges were brought concerning war crimes and war guilt. The plaintiffs

[66] "Travel report on the official journey that we made to Estonia on the basis of assignment no. 86", O.Viherluoto, Veikko Antikainen, Erik Jaarma. Ilm. pvk.no. 1657-4.IX.1942. T 16070. Ilm.pvk.no. 3188. p. 131. KA.

in the trial that was initiated against Anthony on November 18, 1947 were the relatives of Elias Kopelowsky, one of the "group of eight", not the Finnish state or the Allied Control Commission. By that time Anthony had been, like the "men of List no. 1" [Finnish soldiers arrested by the Allied (Soviet Union) Control Commission], in custody awaiting trial since April, 1945.

During his interrogation Anthoni remarked on the defective working procedure, something that could be seen in the deficiencies in the "main lists of deportees" compiled the post-war State Police. He also asked for copies of the "decisions concerning the deportations of the people that he had handed over to the Gestapo" because "those documents would be in the possession of the State Police". Documents of this kind were indeed received by the Research Center for Prisoners of War from the State Police, although they can now be found in the holdings of the Finnish National Archives. The professionalism of the people recruited by the Finnish Communist Party from within its ranks is of dubious quality, this being already evident in the style and register of Finnish used in the documents that they wrote. The working procedures of the communist-directed State Police were clearly guided by political objectives, this can be seen in the choice of evidence to be used for prosecution as well as in the manner in which the evidence was prepared for the trial.

The position of Ali Rautakorpi, the prosecution counsel (prosecutor) of the Turku Court of Appeal, was difficult when, in an official capacity he found himself having to justify the self-evident deficiencies, right down to their concealment, in the evidence constituting the basis for the prosecution. Rautakorpi denied, but was eventually forced to admit, that "the State Police had actually refused to hand over all the evidence pertaining to deportations to the Research Center, but this was not the result of any desire to conceal evidence". However, Rautakorpi had to admit that the Research Center, which was collecting the evidence for the prosecution, was totally dependent on the selective information that

the State Police considered itself to be able to hand over it: "One must indeed admit that the material for the investigation has been obtained only gradually and in small lots". Rautakorpi frequently complained about his difficult duty, he fell ill during the trial, had not slept for many nights, but nevertheless wanted to see it to its conclusion himself, "because it is so important".[67]

Rautakorpi justifies this peculiar practice by noting that the State Police could not move "a complete section of the archives" considering that the information contained in the documents concerned was classified. The claim that material had been destroyed is also difficult to verify, because Rautakorpi was never allowed to see the original documents on the basis of which the Red Valpo compiled its own reports. Particularly the errors that appear in *Valpo*'s so-called main lists were conspicuous, and Rautakorpi had to concede this:

> the name of the same person is written in many different ways, each one distinct from the other, the time when some event occurred is recorded differently in different places, and the factual information is contradictory in some places... arriving at certainty about any issue is, even after thorough investigation, impossible.

When Anthoni had, among other things, criticized the deficiencies in the so-called "main lists" concerning two deportees, Rautakorpi speculated that the source of the errors was the "original documents", which, however, he had never seen. Rautakorpi attempted to be loyal "to the instigators of the investigation... that they have, the difficulties notwithstanding, succeeded, even if gradually, in revealing Anthoni's criminal procedure".

However, Rautakorpi wound up having to eat his words because the edited so-called main lists from the old State Police card files as well as the other documents produced as evidence, did not fulfill all of the criteria for reliability. In a memorandum

[67] Helge Rontu's (State Police) announcement, March 25, 1948. Hmp. 4374. EK-Valpo.II. KA.

that he drew up on February 20, 1948, Rautakorpi commented desperately about this fundamental problem of compiling "main lists". This was, after all, also an issue of the prosecutor's reputation and authority.[68]

It was completely impossible for Rautakorpi to determine which documents the wartime State Police had destroyed, and which documents the communist-directed State Police had selected for the trial. The State Police quite clearly resorted to a selection procedure when it handed documents over to Prosecutor Rautakorpi. This was finally confirmed in the 2000s when the documents produced by the wartime State Police were made available at the Finnish National Archives.

The issue of Anthoni's responsibility for the decisions to deport people from Finland only became controversial after the war, when, many decades later, some people began to seek the possible justification for the wartime deportations in racial policy, however, only as concerns "the eight". The deportations of aliens other than these did not come up as a specific issue at Anthoni's trial when his sphere of authority was being assessed. For example, the deportations of Estonians, Soviets, or people of other nationalities and the Soviet prisoners of war were not treated as specific problems on legal grounds by the Turku Court of Appeal. Nor did the post-war State Police begin a witch-hunt against its predecessor because of the deportations of communists, even if this would have been justified, given the postwar political emotions.

[68] Ali Rautakorpi's"Note", February 10, 1948. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. SA. For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

Friedrich Panzinger's Testimony

SS-Oberführer Friedrich Panzinger, who had participated in the meetings with Arno Anthoni in Berlin in April, 1942, provided a deposition from Soviet captivity on February 7, 1947 for the trial of Arno Anthoni.[69] Panzinger had served as the department head of division A ("Enemies") of RSHA office IV (the Gestapo). According to *Raoul Hilberg*, Panzinger's special area of responsibility was "Jewish prisoners of war".[70] For the post-war Finnish State Police (dominated by the communists) Panzinger's controversial deposition came as though it had been specially ordered, quite probably with some input from the Soviet-dominated Allied Control Commission, even though the Soviets demonstrated no particular interest in Anthoni's trial. Right from the beginning, it remained in the shadow of the War Guilt Trial. There is not even a mention of Anthoni in Andrei Zhdanov's archives, which I have gone through in the RGASPI- Archives in Moscow.[71]

Panzinger claims in his deposition that when Anthoni arrived in Berlin, he had with him "a list of the Jews living in Finland". Anthoni would have given the list "to the Gestapo for the organizational measures necessary to transfer the Jews from the territory of Finland and place them in German concentration camps". Additionally, "the Gestapo demanded that Finnish citizens of Jewish nationality be handed over to the custody of the German

[69] Friedrich Panzinger's testimony, February 7, 1947. Translated into Finnish from Russian.

[70] Hilberg, op. cit., p. 220. Hilberg uses the expression "Central Administration for Killing Prisoners of War" to describe Panzinger's functions.

[71] See Lasse Lehtinen and Hannu Rautkallio. *Kansakunnan sijaiskärsijät: sotasyyllisyys uudelleen arvioituna* ('Sacpegoats of the Nation: War Guilt Re-evaluated'). Juva: WSOY: 2005 and Hannu Rautkallio, ed. *Sotasyyllisyyden asiakirjat* ('The Documents of War Guilt'). Hämeenlinna: EC-kirjat: 2006.

supervisory organ (in Russian, the punishment organs).

Panzinger's claims were astounding because the State Police had also found no firm evidence of such a "list" of Jews". Panzinger said that he had participated "in those negotiations that Müller and Anthoni had together and which concerned the possibility of stationing a German police operative (=attaché) in Finland". This does seem to have been the most important question that the Gestapo leader had in his agenda. Panzinger also confirms that Anthoni rejected this proposal. According to Panzinger, the negotiations ended with the decision being made "to increase the close cooperation, something that is intensely desired and necessary to develop".

In his testimony Panzinger claimed that the "list of Jews" that Anthoni handed over had indeed gone on to him because Adolf Eichmann, who had been responsible for initiatives concerning Jewish affairs, did not meet Anthoni at all, and most certainly not during the negotiation, when "the fate of the Jews living in Finland" was the issue being discussed in Müller's office". Anthoni denied having met Eichmann, "but rather contact was principally with Müller, except that "mutual understanding was reached *in all questions* (italics HR) with an oral agreement". Panzinger characterized Anthoni as a man

> who completely adopted the German policy of police surveillance, and took it upon himself to initiate all measures that would result in the coordination of the operations of the future of the Finnish State Police with of the Gestapo.[72]

Panzinger's imaginative claims were not confirmed at Anthoni's trial or subsequently, but because of them the legend of a "list of the Jews in Finland" arose and persisted. The noted Finnish historian Yrjö Blomstedt stated as early as 1980 "that not a single source demonstrates undisputably that the Finnish authori-

[72] Protocol of Arno Anthoni's interrogation, October 28, 1947. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. KA.

ties acted on the basis of demands presented by Nazi Germany", in the manner described by Panzinger.[73] According to Anthoni, Erik Muurman, who participated in *all* the discussions in Germany (he acted as the interpreter), the interrogation protocol contains the statement that "the undersigned does not remember there being any talk of deporting Jews. The information about some Jews having been deported to the German authorities thus came as a surprise to the undersigned".[74] Panzinger itself ultimately confirms the flimsiness of his claims; in his deposition he specifically says:

> I know that after Anthoni's visit to Berlin *all* (italics HR) the Jews included in the list given to the Gestapo were handed over by the Finnish State Police surveillance organs of the German State Police who, in turn, placed these Jews in concentration camps located on German territory.[75]

When Panzinger spoke of "deporting all the Jews" he was most certainly not referring to "the eight" (who were in reality the only Jewish deportees), and even *if* he had been, the claim ("all Jews") was impossible, because nineteen people who were not Jews were deported along with them. Furthermore, the names of the five deported Jewish refugees (and the three family members accompanying them) were not even mentioned in any known State Police document during the trip that Anthoni made to Germany in April 1942. The deportation of November 1942 took place after phases of a type that nobody could have predicted in April of the same year. In fact, quite different people than "the eight" were originally consigned for deportation. The long and the short of it is that no wartime State Police "Jew lists" existed. Helge Rontu of the post-war State Police was one of the persons

[73] Yrjö Blomstedt, "Juutalaispakolaisten luovuttaminen 1942" ('The 1942 Deportation of Jewish Refugees'), *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 3/1980.

[74] Protocol of Erik Muurman's interrogation, March 10, 1947. T 16070.Ilm. pvk. no. 3188.KA.

[75] Ibid.

who had to admit this fact to the Research Center for Prisoners of War:

> ...no consolidated list compiled at the time of the people deported to the German authorities on various occasions exists any more....[76]

The supposition referred to above is unjustified, and least of all could it concern a list compiled of the Finnish Jews, because neither they nor the 340 Jewish refugees who had been rescued were handed over to the German authorities. On the other hand, Panzinger talks of the deportation of "all the Jews who are in Finland". He claimed that "he knew" somewhat certainly on the basis of "Anthoni's list" that "all the Finnish Jews" (all the Jews who were included in the list given to the Gestapo) were supposed to have been deported to Germany. The claim naturally lacks any basis in reality, because "all the Finnish Jews" were, to the contrary, spared from the Holocaust.

Panzinger evidently "invented" his story to please his interrogators, and his knowledge of the fates of the Finnish Jewry was also a chimera. The rest of Panzinger's "deposition" also demonstrates itself to be fiction. Might it be that after languishing two years in Soviet captivity, Panzinger thought that trials in Finland were of the same falsehood-based nature as the spectacles put on by Stalin's and Hitler's dictatorships? Panzinger might well have been forced to make up other tales during his captivity about matters other than Anthoni in accordance with Stalinist "principles of justice".

The Finnish State Police documents that are available contain no records of contacts specifically with the German criminal investigation police (*Kripo*), these were taken care of in coop-

[76] Helge Rontu, September 19, 1947 to the Research Center for Prisoners of War Camps. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188, p. 116. The letter was accompanied by a list of nine aliens deported from the country, most of them had already been mentioned in previous connections: Georg Busch, Marian Skawara, Boreslaw Dabrowski, Marija-Emma Martin, Elias Kopelowsky, Wladislaw Trubichyn, Max Chatel, Jean Colomb.

eration with the Gestapo in Berlin and with the "Mission Commando" [*Einsatzkommando 1a*] in Tallinn. Martin Sandberger's position in these contacts with Anthoni was most central already because of the number of meetings. In Sandberger's interrogations he stated quite clearly that "the status of Finland's native-born Jews" was never an issue discussed with Anthoni. In Finland after the war virtually everything possible was done to refute this.[77]

The Legend of a "List of the Jews in Finland"

The trip taken by the fictional "list" of the "Finnish Jews", a document that has not been found in German or Finnish archives, was long: from Heinrich Müller's desktop into the briefcase of his superior, Heinrich Himmler. This was a legend that has also been spread uncritically in many publications and even studies.

The chief of the Finnish State Police, Arno Anthoni, had naturally denied any mention of a list of Jews because nothing of the kind had ever been drawn up at his organization: "The State Police did not even have a list of all the Jews in Finland". Anthoni did, however, admit that ""during the discussions in Berlin the Germans had made inquiries about the Jews in Finland". Anthoni had answered that "in Finland there is no Jewish question as such, because fewer than 200 Jewish refugees [in reality about 350] are in the country, some of whom had been admitted to Sweden", that the "Jews in the country" were of no detriment to Finland. The Germans had made no demands whatsoever that the Jews in Finland should be sent to them, but "the sending of the Jews in question had remained Finland's own matter in its entirety". Accordingly, the inquiries made by the Germans had thus primarily concerned Jewish refugees. The RSHA naturally

[77] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

also had an interest in Finnish Jews. *SS-Reichsführer* Himmler himself had inquired about them during his visit to Finland, this being a fact known from other evidence.

Compiling a "list" of the Jews of Finland from public information would have been extremely simple, because all the Finnish Jews were registered with the three Jewish congregations (Helsinki, Turku, and Viipuri) or in the civil population register. These were public documents and accessible to everyone, including the Germans. The State Police thus had no need to compile such a list of the *Finnish Jews*. Why should Anthoni have included with his luggage a public document that was accessible to everyone? The Germans almost certainly were already in possession of lists of Finnish Jews because obtaining such lists was never any problem.

In 1954 the noted Finnish folklorist and the war-time press censor chief Kustaa Vilkuna (1902-1980) published an article in the *Uusi Kuvalehti* ['New Illustrated Magazine'], a serious weekly specializing in exposés, without, however, mentioning his sources, claiming that "skillful men" pulled of an unbelievably audacious and successful coup during Himmler's visit. They simply photographed the contents of the briefcase belonging to the world's best-guarded chief of secret police with all of its interesting papers... Among the papers in Himmler's black briefcase was a list of the Finnish Jews, almost two thousand names.[78]

Vilkuna was a respected academician, a close friend of the president of Finland, Urho Kekkonen, and his story has also found its way into foreign scholarly publications, even quite re-

[78] Kustaa Vilkuna, "Suomen juutalaiset ja Himmlerin salkku" ('The Finnish Jews and Himmler's briefcase'). *Uusi Kuvalehti* ('New Illustrated Magazine'). November 12, 1954. As early as 1947, Vilkuna had published an article about the Jewish refugees who had been deported five years previously, but then he wrote nothing at all about Himmler's visit to Finland. "Pakolaiset. Miksi useampia Suomen turvapaikkajuutalaisia ei luovutettu Saksaan" ('Refugees. Why more of the Jews who had been granted asylum in Finland were not deported to Germany'). *Suomen Kuvalehti* ('Finnish Illustrated magazine'), November 1, 1947.

cently[79]. This story has been used elsewhere in the world within circles studying the Holocaust to demonstrate specifically that the sparing of Finnish Jews from the Holocaust was neither a matter of course nor an exception to the Holocaust. The "list of Jews" found in Himmler's briefcase, even if nobody has ever seen it, suffices as proof that the Germans also intended to subject the Finns to the Holocaust and that it was specifically the chief of the Finnish State Police, Arno Anthoni, who had been furthering this objective. He was, according to a generally accepted opinion that has now also having met with approval by some historians of the Holocaust, the man who had handed over a "list of Finnish Jews" to the Gestapo during his visit to Berlin, and it was specifically that "list" that was later found in Himmler's "black briefcase".[80]

Vilkuna himself, however, appears to be using his "detective tale" to ironize when he dissociates himself from the whole affair, insinuating at the same time that he might even know something about it:

> But let it be said here immediately that I had nothing to do with this affair. It was carried out by soldiers who worked in complete silence, were alert in every direction, and had hearts that did not palpitate as easily as those civilians. And fortunately Himmler and his superiors are dead, so they will not be demanding a more detailed commentary about this measure from me, at least for the time being...[81]

It is unfortunate that Vilkuna never divulged his original sources. Did he have, in reality, anything else for his arguments, than his imagination? Vilkuna did not specify who the "soldiers" were in Himmler's hotel room photographing his briefcase. Were they perhaps from the intelligence section of the army General Headquarters? By using the specific word "soldiers" Vilkuna

[79] See for example, William B. Cohen and Jörgen Svensson, "Finland and the Holocaust", *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, V 9 N1, Spring 1995.

[80] E.g. Cohen & Svensson, op. cit., p. 92.

[81] Vilkuna, 1954, article cit.

excludes "civilians", that is to say, State Police representatives, from the operation. Neither does he give references revealing where the information concerning this operation originated. If it was carried out by men from the headquarters from intelligence that they possessed, no confirmation of it exists. Vilkuna's story has resulted in even more spirited descriptions by people reminiscing about events that they experienced, Kalle Lehmus's memoirs serving as a typical example. He served during the war with the rank of major in the army intelligence. With no justification whatsoever for his speculations, Lehmus connects Marshal Mannerheim and Prime Minister Rangell to the plot, and tells that one of the items allegedly found in Himmler's briefcase was the protocol of the January 20, 1942 Wannsee conference on coordinating and implementing the Final Solution to the Jewish Question in Europe, "information about which matter was conveyed immediately to Mannerheim and the Prime Minister..." [Sic!]. Mannerheim was allegedly even personally discussing deporting the Finnish Jews with Himmler, even though no evidence of such a discussion exists. Lehmus nevertheless quotes Mannerheim, as if he himself had been a participant in the discussion between Mannerheim and Himmler. I interviewed Lehmus in Spring of 1981, and asked about verification of the story. He answered, with some discomfort, that the story in his memoirs was based on rumors current at the time.[82]

The peculiar variants arising from Kustaa Vilkuna's story lead directly to the "list" concerning the deportation of "all" Finnish Jews mentioned in Friedrich Panzinger's deposition. This claim even came to be known in 1947 at the Court of Appeal of Turku, and it has been repeated as if were a confirmed fact, even though nobody had seen the alleged list then or after that. But the legend about is has survived.

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[82] Kalle Lehmus, *Tuntematon Mannerheim* ('The Unknown Mannerheim'). Espoo: Weilin+Göös, 1967, pp. 109-110. An interview with Lehmus, March 16, 1981, Helsinki

The year 1947 also saw the publication of Felix Kersten's memoirs. His book, which also appeared in a Finnish edition, fueled popular imagination in its own way. Kersten does not mention a "list of Jews", but he has developed a clever story about a "plan" with which Himmler's intentions concerning Finnish Jews were prevented, of course as a consequence of measures Kersten himself took. Himmler had supposedly threatened to cut off grain deliveries if the Finnish Jews were not handed over to Germany. Kersten tells that he left Himmler, who had fallen ill, at his hotel and secretly agreed on the delaying strategy with the pro-German Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rolf Witting, who died on October 11, 1944. According to Kersten:

> He and I drew up a plan of action. We decided to stall the matter. We would try to explain to Himmler that the questions had to remain on the table until the Finnish parliament assembled in November... an extraordinary convening of the parliament would be dangerous at the present moment, it would give occasion to major disagreements between the parties and was not to be recommended."[83]

However, the State Police surveillance report does not convey the impression that Himmler was ill. Quite to the contrast, Himmler and his party, to which Kersten also belonged, were constantly on the move. Besides, the parliament was still assembled on the day following the discussion between him and Witting; that point has no significance from the standpoint of the narrator. Kersten goes so far as even include President Risto Ryti in the story. The President was supposedly incensed at Himmler's "proposal that Finland's Jewish citizens be handed over to Germany". As the culmination to his plan, Kersten says that he offered Himmler the white lie that the Finnish government agrees to his proposal in principle". Himmler had immediately phoned the *Führer* himself, and the German leader was allegedly satisfied with this information.[84]

[83] Kersten, 1947, pp. 147-148.

[84] Ibid.

The Jewish Refugees in Finland

Before the outbreak of the Finnish Winter War of 1939-40, the proportion of Jewish refugees among all the refugees in Finland was quite small. Despite this, they were the object of special attention by the State Police, and their small number stood out beside the tens of thousands of refugees who were of ethnicities related to the Finns. A four-page State Police memorandum dated May 17, 1938 stated that about 40,000 people from the territory of former Russia had arrived in Finland:

> ...Recently the flow of refugees from the Soviet Union has almost stopped because the Soviet Union has continually upgraded its border with Finland, which makes crossing the border almost impossible. Between 1928 and 1936, a total of 816 people fled to Finland from the Soviet Union, of which 562 are of ethnicities related to the Finns and 254 are Russians.[85]

But five years later, by February 1, 1941, approximately 650 residence permits had been granted, and at that time, according to Arno Anthoni, the head of the State Police, 14,000 cases were still awaiting a decision.[86]

Anthoni's personal dossier contains an undated document according to which a total of 21,630 "sojourn permits" for foreigners were issued between 1941 and 1944. The most recent figures are 11,455 for 1941; 4,205 for 1942; 7,739 for 1943; 8,251 for 1944. Of these, 128 were refused. As can be seen from the following, the proportion of Jewish refugees receiving "sojourn

[85] "Poliittisten pakolaisten asema Suomessa" ('The status of political refugees in Finland'). *Ulkomaalaistilastot* (Statistics for aliens) May 17,1938. Information given by Antero Leitzinger.

[86] Interrogation protocol for Arno Anthoni, May 31, 1945. T 16070. Ilm. pvk. no. 3188. KA.

permits" was small, but it is nevertheless much higher than what had been known previously.[87] All in all, there were about 70,000 refugees in Finland at the beginning of 1942, of whom the Ingrians accounted for approximately 62,000.[88]

Only scattered and imprecise information exists about the Jewish refugees who were in Finland during the Continuation war from 1941 until 1944. The archives of then Directorate of Immigration contain the "Book no. 1 of those to be rounded up maintained by the State Police Division of the Ministry of Interior".[89] This document contains the names of numerous Jewish refugees who are not included in the lists maintained by the State Police or the Helsinki Jewish Congregation. These Jewish names provide a basis for finding the numbers of their residence permits in the National Archives.[90]

According to a document issued by the Directorate of Immigration, 136 "Jewish refugees" were in Finland when the Winter War began. Of them, 119 were from Germany or former Austria. About three years later there were 370 such persons in Finland, a figure that can be concluded on the basis of documents from different sources. Not even this number can be regarded as absolutely final. In any case it exceeds the figures present up until now by a factor of two. Information obtained from various sources confirms the fact that no uniform list of Jewish refugees was compiled on the basis of their national origin. The primary concern of the State Police seems to have been the nationality of the Jews who had arrived in Finland from Central Europe. The fact that they were Jews was a secondary issue. An entry also had

[87] "Myönnettyjä ololupia" ('Residence permits granted'), no date. Hmp. 4374. EK-Valpo.KA.

[88] Statement made for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs by the State Police, on March 22, 1945. Archive of the Finnish Directorate of Immigration. Information collected by Antero Leizinger.

[89] "State Police division of the Ministry of the Interior. Book of the deceased no. 1". Archive of the Finnish Directorate of Immigration.

[90] "Ulkomaalaiskortisto. B 1-31 ('Card index of aliens. B 1-31). Finnish Directorate of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. KA.

to be made in the card files of foreigners about stateless refugees, whether they were Jews or not. This question only interested the State Police because of the manner in which citizenship was defined. Some of the Jewish refugees who had arrived in Finland denied being Jews.[91]

According to undated State Police calculations, between 1941 and 1944 foreigner's residence permits were granted to 31,650 persons.[92] The number of Jewish refugees within his group was extremely small. The systematic listing of the Jewish refugees who had arrived in Finland was only begun when the deportation of "the eight" became known at the end of 1942. At that time the intention was to transfer the Jewish refugees sojourning in Finland to Sweden, but this failed for the reasons discussed in the following. This observation is also significant when considering the justifications underlying the deportations in generally, particularly from the standpoint of the so-called Finnish Jewish question. Before the fall of 1942, the Finnish State Police had not compiled any specific "lists of Jews". On the other hand, the Helsinki Jewish Congregation handed over a list of the Jews who were either trying to enter Finland or were already in the country to the State Police on its own initiative. On February 2, 1944, it provided the State police with an even more comprehensive list in which the police had marked "Jew" for some but by no means all of the Jewish refugees. The justification for the deportation of the eight Jews must be considered in the light of this procedure.

Helge Rontu, the acting office manager of the communist-led State Police after the war, found himself having to notice this contradiction when evidence was being gathered to be used against Arno Anthoni for his wartime cooperation with the Gestapo. The so-called lists of Jews compiled by the State Police only

[91] Information collected by Antero Leitzinger from the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Interior.

[92] Undated memorandum. "Myönnettyjä ololupia 1.1.-31.12.1944. väliseltä ajalta". ('Residence permits for the period January 1 - December 31, 1944). Hmp. 4374. EK-Valpo. II.KA.

after the war as well as their so-called abbreviations and copies must be evaluated extremely critically on the basis of the original documents produced by the same police structure *during the war*. It is within that context, of course, that the significance of being a Jew has to be considered as the justification for the deportation of those *eight people*, given that the other Jewish refugees sojourning in Finland were not subjected to this fate. Rumors about "transport ships" awaiting them only began to spread many years after the war when information about the dreadful events of the Holocaust gradually began to reach the Jews in Finland who had been saved from it.

On September 19, 1947 Helge Rontu notified the Research Center for the Prisoner of War Camps "that no consistent list of the people once handed over to the German officials exists *any more* (italics H.R.)...". Rontu himself refutes his supposition in the same document, since he says that "all of the other information occurring in the following list has been possible to gather from the documents concerning the individuals in question".[93]

All of the lists of foreigners that are now presented as having been compiled by the State Police, with the exception of the list of 150 foreigners compiled on December 4, 1942, were drawn up only after the war by its police structure when it was under communist leadership, and even that list requires critical remarks to be made about it. This list, containing 150 names, cannot by unequivocally considered to be a "list of Jews", because it also mentions six non-Jews. Two of them are listed as "Germans", although the information in possession of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation demonstrates them to be Jews.[94]

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[93] H. Rontu, September 19, 1947 to the Research Center for Prisoner of War Camps. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 31881. SA.

[94] Judiska Föramlingen i Helsingfors (Helsinki Jewish congregation), May 8, 1944 to the Swedish Embassy, "List of the Jewish refugees in Finland"; Helsinki Jewish congregation, April 20, 1944 to the State Police. EK-Valpo XII. J.5. KA.

Should the Jewish Refugees have been Sent to Sweden?

The majority of the Jewish refugees who arrived at Finland in 1938 were still in the country and under no threat in the spring of 1944. In all of the State Police lists now available for use, as well as in their copies and the copies of the copies, the names of Jewish refugees occur along side of the names of non-Jews. Negative notes ("information about activity" appear in connection with some of the personal information, and these notes justified the inclusion of their names in the State Police lists. Being a Jew itself could thus not have been a justification for inclusion on the list maintained by this police structure of people who were to be or had been deported. If that were to have been the case, the names of all Jewish refugees in Finland would have had to be included.

The *only* uniform and authentic wartime *list of Jews* compiled by the State Police was actually compiled in order *to save them.* This list is precisely the previously mentioned list of 150 foreigners, 144 of which are listed as "Jews". The list contains their names, personal data, profession and nationality. The list is actually a compilation of the Jews to be saved, because in reality that was the purpose served by its use. The "list of Jews" confirmed by Anthoni had been drawn up at the request of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, because the "Central European political refugees residing in Finland" – as the expression went – were intended to be sent to Sweden by the end of 1942. Minister of Internal Affairs, Toivo Horelli and Anthoni regarded "sending the refugees in question [Jews were not mentioned separately] to Sweden ... as extremely recommendable". An accompanying letter gave no justification at all for the inclusion of these specific

non-Jews in the list.[95]

The appearance of specifically Jewish refugees in different lists of other foreigners raises questions pertaining to critical evaluation of sources. Wartime lists of foreigners' names compiled by the State Police were evidently drawn up in great haste. At the entry for certain individuals the letter "J" appears, but for most of the Jewish refugees such a marking does not occur.[96] The problem with the transfer of the Jewish refugees to Sweden was the Swedish government, which followed a very restrictive immigration policy for Jews in 1942 and 1943. Plans had existed to send them to Sweden as early as the fall of 1942, but the attempt came nothing due to the unsympathetic attitude shown toward the Jewish refugees. The Social Democratic Party Secretary, Aleksi Aaltonen, and a Member of Parliament, Atos Wirtanen, had turned to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in November, 1942, with their proposal that "the refugees in question should be moved to Sweden, a move that, in their view, would be advantageous from the standpoint of both the refugees themselves and of Finnish interests". Atos Wirtanen admitted that the Swedish government "would not be particularly interested in accepting the group of refugees", but that other circles in Sweden, including the Swedish Red Cross, as well as almost certainly the ruling Swedish Social Democratic Party, could be convinced so that a favorable outcome would be achieved. The Refugee Welfare Board, established jointly by the Finnish Social Democratic party and the Central Federation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), had accepted about sixty political refugees from Germany, former Austria, and Czechoslovakia by the outbreak of the Winter War at the end of November, 1939. Other refugees counted as Social Democrats came to Finland from Latvia, Hungary, and elsewhere.

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[95] The Germans were Malvine Gumbel (born June 10, 1904) and Peter Gumpbel (born August 24, 1932, the Czechs were Miroslav Jindrich (born August 7, 1914), Emil Wilhelm Klauss (born July 19, 1900), Kurt Paul Lippert (born September 24, 1903) and Stephan Tacz (born July 11, 1908).

[96] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

As will be seen in the following, the deportation of the eight refugees at the end of 1942 had generated a considerable amount of negative public reaction. Then the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs had been informed that "from the standpoint of the Finnish government, the issue is not political, nor is it one of race, but rather it is an issue of the quality of the maintenance of public order".[97] At the end of 1942 the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs had outlined plans to move the Jewish refugees to Sweden. Asko Ivalo, an official working at the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ended up with the responsibility for this matter. In a deposition that he gave after the war, he stated that the Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rolf Witting, had approved a procedure that would involve putting feelers out through the Finnish embassy in Stockholm: "This was also done, but the response received inclined in a negative direction". Swedish Foreign Minister Christian Günther urged Finland "to continue to keep the refugees under its own authority because otherwise the explanation would arise that the Finnish government was incapable of assuming the responsibility for their safety, which would be politically disadvantageous for Finland".[98]

In the summer of 1943 the Swedish government was still refusing to accept fourteen Jewish children from Finland for fear of a subsequent Jewish "invasion" from Finland to Sweden. At the same time the Swedish government was negotiating the totally unrealistic so-called Adler-Rudel plan with the governments of the Western Allies. The idea was to transport 20,000 Jewish children from France and Belgium to Sweden, after which they would be transported to Palestine. All the parties, including Germany, knew that the plan was impossible because the allied governments had frozen it, as they had all other similar plans to transfer Jews from the German-occupied areas of Western Eu-

[97] A courier message, December 9, 1942 from the Finnish Embassy in Stockholm.UM T. UMA.

[98] Interrogation protocol for Asko Ivalo, November 10, 1947. T 16070. Ilm. pvk. no. 3188.I., p.77. KA.

rope. The Swedish government was not even prepared to present the proposal to Germany. *Steven Koblik* asks why Sweden demonstrated its desire to take 20,000 Jewish children from France and Belgium, but opposed accepting a few Jewish children from Finland to Sweden. Koblik refers to Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson, who at no stage ever believed that the plan would be implemented. The Minister of Social Affairs, Gustav Möller, however, remarked that keeping the Adler-Rudel plan "alive" would be favorable to Sweden in the capital cities of the west for propaganda reasons.[99]

In March 1944 all the Jewish refugees who appear on the list drawn up by the State Police were still in Finland. There were 136 of them according to their figures since, fourteen persons had "succeeded" in leaving Finland. In that context it was noted that "on November 6, 1942, five males, voluntarily accompanied by the wife and child of one and the child of another one, thus a total eight persons, were removed from the country".[100] At a time when Sweden was wooing both sides in the World War II, both politically and economically, for its own opportunistic reasons, no similar choice was available for Finland. In Germany's ally, Finland, the handing over of "those eight" Jewish refugees was the subject of an open and critical public discussion.

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[99] Salomon Adler-Rudel was the representative of the World Zionist Organization Jewish Agency. Steven Koblik, *The Stones cry out. Sweden's Response to the Persecution of the Jews 1933-1945*. New York: Holocaust Library, 1987, pp. 61-63.

[100] "Keski-Euroopasta saapuneet juutalaispakolaiset" ('Refugees who arrived from Central Europe'). State Police, March 29, 1944. Archive of the Finnish Directorate of Immigration. Information collected by Antero Leitzinger.

Who were the Foreign Jews in Finland?

Because of the public controversy raised by the deportation of the eight at the end of 1942, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs had requested the State Police to provide a complete report on the situation of the refugees who had come to Finland from Central Europe:

> 1) How many refugees are there in Finland from Germany and countries occupied by Germany, with each country listed separately? 2) Which refugees are classified as Jews? 3) What are the entry requirements for refugees (Jews and others)? Are refugees turned back at the border? 4) What are the regulations concerning the residence and employment of refugees? 5) Do any special regulations apply to Jewish refugees? 6) Has the government arranged any forms of assistance for refugees: Jews and others? 7) What formalities apply to refugees leaving the country? 8) Is the government providing assistance for the emigration of refugees?[101]

According to the report given by the State Police in March, 1944, the answers were the following:

> Genuine refugees from Germany and the countries that it has occupied who have come to and are residing in Finland:
>
> Former Germany and former Austria, 119; Poland 18; Czechoslovakia 2; Lithuania 2; Norway 13; Estonia, about 5.500; Ingrians, about 62,000. The Ingrians were thus erroneously included in this category even though they had not come to Finland "from a country occupied by Germany". Neither did the total number of refugees include the approximately three hundred Jews from Russia (the Soviet Union) and other countries who had already been living for decades

[101] The answer of the State Police to the inquiry, July 7, 1944; see also, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, March 29, 1943 to Ministry of Internal Affairs. UM 20, Ö.UMA.

in Finland with residence permits. In addition to them, there were also roughly three thousand citizens of "countries occupied by Germany", many from the countries enumerated above. Of them, the majority, "in many cases even all, would not agree to return to their own country under present conditions, but would rather remain in Finland as 'refugees' if deporting them from Finland were to come into question.

The number of these "citizens of occupied countries" was as follows:

Belgium 15; Netherlands 54; Norway 192; Denmark 475; France 38; Greece 13; Italy 131; Poland 144; Estonia 1,193; Latvia 34; Lithuania 26; Czechoslovakia 13; Hungary 31; Romania 6; Luxemburg 1; Yugoslavia 1; Austria 2.

The State Police document said, that "a person is considered to be a Jew a) if he/she is a follower of the religion of Moses; b) is of Jewish extraction, irrespective of religion; or c) at some time has been issued a passport by the German authorities containing the marking "J"." In the same connection it was said that there were 132 people in Finland (March 22, 1944) who were Jewish refugees. As we shall see, that number requires verification because the Jewish refugees who are not included in the lists drawn up by the State Police surprisingly seem to show up in the other contexts that the State Police had registered concerning Jews who had been rescued. Here, too, we notice contradictions between the original State Police documents and the ones produced after the war by the communist-directed State Police. The State Police produced a response to question three that stated:

In accordance with the statutory order issued on January 30, 1942, the entry and sojourn of aliens in Finland presupposes that the alien has a passport or identification card (article 1 and 2) as well as the required entry permit (article 3). An alien lacking these prerequisites cannot generally be allowed entry into Finland. However, the Ministry of the Interior can, after having requested a statement (ar-

ticle 16) from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, also grant asylum to such aliens for whom denial of entry would evidently otherwise be unreasonably detrimental to them... The regulations and the procedure are the same, regardless of whether the person in question is of Jewish or some other nationality.[102]

At the end of 1938 Finland had granted asylum to 183 Jewish refugees, primarily from Germany and "former Austria". When the Continuation War began in June 1941, this number had dropped to 149, and during the war up until the beginning of 1944 another seventeen "Jews to be regarded as refugees" arrived, mostly from Poland. In a report bearing the title "Jewish refugees who have come from Central Europe", drawn up the State Police and delivered to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on March 29, 1944, it is mentioned that "the eight" had been deported and that "after that fourteen people had succeeded in moving abroad". According to the State Police list, 136 Jewish refugees had been granted asylum at the beginning of 1944. They broke down by country of origin as follows:[103]

	Germany + former Austria	Czecho-slovakia	Hungary	Lithuania	Poland	Total
Men	61	1	1	1	5	69
Women	46	1	1	5	–	53
Children	12	–	1	1	–	14
Total	119		3	7	5	136

This figure is, however, also imprecise since the total number of Jewish refugees granted asylum in Finland is actually twice as high, even if those Jewish refugees who received Finnish citi-

[102] Ibid.

[103] "The Jewish refugees, arrived from the Central Europe", March 29, 1944". Archive of the Finnish Directorate of Immigration. Information collected by Antero Leitzinger.

zenship before the summer of 1941 are excluded from the calculations. There were, however, also people who had fled from the ravages of war. On the basis of precise calculations, the total number of Jewish refugees who were rescued in Finland between 1941 and 1944, now works out to at least 365, but the number is probably larger than this.

How does the number of Jewish refugees who were rescued increase so much when previously the number spoken of was less than half this size? The problem of listing them has involved very different kinds of sources, the use to which they were to be put, and the basic observation that the Finnish authorities had no intention of drawing up any kind of comprehensive list of Jewish refugees. The State Police did have "Jew" marked on the cards containing information about some Jewish refugees, but certainly not all of them. The figure of 365 foreign Jews mentioned above does not include those Jewish refugees about which no information whatsoever is to be found in the card catalogues of aliens maintained by the Ministry of the Interior. For example, in the well-known but controversial State Police list of 150, there are nine such people. There is no reason to doubt whether they were in the country, since the Helsinki Jewish congregation had provided the State Police with their personal information. Lists of this type contained very incomplete information about such things as Jews who had moved from Finland to Sweden and who were not on the State Police list at all. It appears evident that in 1942 the State Police began to locate Jewish refugees in Finland so that they could be sent to Sweden specifically at the request of the Helsinki Jewish congregation. The plan was then realized on February 1, 1944 specifically on the basis of an extensive list of Jewish refugees drawn up by the Jewish congregation. This list was sent to the State Police.

Finland as a Place of Asylum

The Jewish refugees who were in Finland were freely allowed to choose their place of residence even after Finland had joined the war against the Soviet Union fighting alongside Germany. The majority of them had settled in the capital, Helsinki, others in the second and third largest cities, Viipuri and Turku. The State Police and Helsinki Jewish congregation began to work together and settle the Jewish refugees in the countryside. There was nothing unusual about them, but the action was undertaken for exceptional reasons, and these reasons were presented in a letter to Prime Minister J. W. Rangell on November 2, 1942:

> Moving the refugees away from away from Helsinki is a consequence of our having been assured by the authorities, and for no other whatsoever, that they should not come into contact with Germans in any way, and the congregation understands this measure very well, especially when it is taken into consideration that the refugees in question are originally from Germany.[104]

The State Police memorandum "Jewish Refugees who have fled from Central Europe" did indeed refer to their "generally known attitude toward the ongoing war, one in which circumstances also forced Finland to become involved, and specifically on the side of the people and country from which they had been forced to escape to our country". The State Police memorandum to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs said that some of them had become politically active and begun to spread "propaganda that is detrimental to our country". In the countryside their "detrimental influence on the local population would not be as noticeable as it

[104] Helsinki Jewish Congregation, November 2, 1942 to Prime Minister J. W. Rangell. T 16070 Ilm.pvk. no. 3188.II., pp.159-160.KA.

would be in the national capital, where they were living in direct contact with people of kindred soul".[105]

Between 1941 and 1944 Finland had granted "sojourn permits" to 21,650 aliens representing Finno-Ugric ethnicities, most of them from the Soviet Union and Estonia. The people from Germany and the territories that it had conquered who had been granted asylum in Finland were in quite a different position. They were called "aliens granted asylum", and they were by no means all Jews. During the fall of 1941 the Finnish authorities began to relocate them to the interior of the country. The primary destinations were the parishes of Hauho and Lammi in Häme providence, Southern Finland, but some of them were also placed elsewhere. Despite this, many Jewish refugees remained in Helsinki. All in all, their number according to their places of relocation differs according to the statistical source. According to the table compiled by the State Police passport office on December 3, 1941, the Jewish refugees were relocated as follows:[106]

Locality	Men	Women	Elderly	Children	Total
Hauho	18	13		3	34
Lammi	14	14	5	3	36
Helsinki	15	8	5	1	29
Luopioinen		4			4
Parkano	2	2			4
Turku	1	1			2
Tampere	1		1		2
Aulanko	1	1			2
Haljala	1	1			2
Oulunkylä	1	1			2
Forssa		1			1
In protective detention	1				1

[105] "Memorandum. The Jewish refugees arrived from Central Europe", March 29, 1940. The information collected by Antero Leitzinger.

[106] Memorandum by State Police,"Central European Jews", December 3, 1941. XII J. 5. Valpo I. KA,

At the end of 1941 the State Police and the Helsinki Jewish congregation's aid committee arrived at a mutual understanding concerning relocation of the Jewish refugees still living in Finnish cities and the parishes of Lammi and Hauho. Initially the refugees were not even requested to perform the obligatory work service required of all healthy adults in Finland, citizens and aliens alike. According to Section 4 of the Law on Obligatory Work Service "a person who is obliged to do work must do the work and do it at the workplace indicated on the summons or as otherwise specified". As early as August 27, 1941, the Helsinki Jewish congregation proposed to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that Jewish men capable of working should be employed in work corresponding to their professional qualifications, because

> in a group of a hundred about 35-40 per cent are competent workers who should be allowed the opportunity to earn a living, in addition to benefiting the country by what they perform. They include professional garment workers, mechanics, fitters, etc....[107]

In principle, the State Police approved of the idea, even if compulsory work service for Jewish refugees assumed a collective form in practice. The State Police had proposed to the Employment Office of the General Staff of the Home Forces on January 16, 1942 that the aliens be allowed to work as their own group. The idea was, however, rejected. At the end of 1941 Bernard Blaugrund, the head of the Helsinki Jewish congregation's aid committee, informed the State Police that they only had sufficient funds to support the people at Hauho and Lammi for two months. The Helsinki Jewish congregation stated in a letter sent to the State Police in May, 1942, that "good mutual understanding has prevailed between the officials in the issue of refugees".[108]

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[107] Bernhard Blaugrund, December 4, 1941 to the State Police XV. A.2.a. EK-Valpo. KA.

[108] Ibid; Helsinki Jewish congregation, May 29, 1942 to the State Police; Jonas Jakobson's memorandum, 5.11.1946. XII. J. 5. Valpo 1. KA.

Finally the decision to relocate the Jewish refugees so that they could perform obligatory work service was influenced by tensions that had arisen at Hauho and Lammi, since the refugees themselves had become frustrated with their isolated status. In addition, the local men were either away fighting the war or performing work service, but the Jewish men were idle. The tension within them erupted in a manner that only exacerbated their already uncertain status. Anthoni had mentioned how difficult it had been to make "idle Jewish refugees put out forest fires, some of the male Jews had actually refused to participate in fire fighting".[109]

On May 11, 1942, the State Police had sent a new letter to the Employment Office of the General Staff of the Home Forces that included the request to declare "those Central European Jewish refugees in the age group subject to obligatory work service obligated to perform such service," and "in order to facilitate supervision" insofar as possible, to place the men in work brigade 8028/Kpk 6, where "similar refugees" had been placed previously.[110]

These were the worksites of the fortifications battalion (Lin. 3) situated in Kuusivaara and Alakurtti in the parish of Salla in northeastern Finland straddling the Arctic Circle. As early as March 23, 1942 thirty-three Jewish refugees had been brought to Salla from Hauho and Lammi, so that their number had increased to forty-four Jewish men capable to work on May 11, 1942. They were handed over to the State Police in Salla on June 22, 1942 to be sent to the construction site of the Kemijärvi-Salla railway line, where they would be working under engineer Heikkinen. The order had come to the military by telephone on June 6, 1942, specifically to the commander of the Salla work battalion, En-

[109] Arno Anthoni's interrogation report, October 16, 1944 and May 29, 1945. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. KA.

[110] State Police, May 11, 1942 to the Employment Office of the General Staff of the Home Forces. VP/KD 573/1835-1942. hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

gineer Captain Sundqvist. Altogether, the number of workers in the area was 68,592, so the Jews refugees made up a miniscule fraction.[111]

For the Jewish refugees, working on the construction of fortifications in the harsh conditions of northern Finland and, initially, in the vicinity of German forces, was an arduous experience. They stayed there for only three months, even this being too long a time for men unaccustomed to manual labor. The Germans demanded that they be relocated to Kemijärvi in the interior of the country. Arno Anthoni, the head of the State Police, had informed the Helsinki Jewish congregation that the decision obliging the Jewish refugees to work in the Salla area was a temporary one, as it indeed was. At the behest of the local German military authorities the refugees were subsequently moved from the immediate vicinity of the front to the railway construction site at Kemijärvi. In this connection, it should be noted that the *Waffen-SS* division Nord was operating in the area. The stories that the postwar State Police "ordered" from the Jewish men who wound up in Kuusivaara make for depressing reading. The statements that they gave after the war about their experiences at Northern Finnish "concentration camps", experiences that demonstrate themselves to be nothing more than a few months of obligatory labor service, are absurd compared to the Holocaust. Many, but not by no means all, of them felt guilty for having survived when millions did not. After the war, their desire to identify with "concentration camp prisoners" provided them with an alibi for their survival, but they also had to be able to justify, for themselves why they had survived at "concentration camps".

But there were also positive things to say in some statements about the conditions at the labor camp, and this praise extended to the behavior of the actual supervisors and military personnel. The the same kinds of evidence can also be found in State Po-

[111] A report of A.E. Ojasti, no. 403/42, June 23, 1942. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

lice reports.[112] In a letter from the Helsinki Jewish congregation to Prime Minister Rangell, the point was made that "as far as we know", the Jewish refugees have a loyal attitude toward this country, since they have a great debt of gratitude to the Finnish people and their government for the sympathy demonstrated for them when they sought refuge here. Neither have they complained when working at Kuusivaara, Kemijärvi, or Suursaari".[113]

The Jewish refugees were sent from Kemijärvi to do road construction work on the island of Suursaari, out of the eyes of the Germans on July 22, 1942. The number of Jews there vacillated between thirty-four and thirty-six until they were released on April 19, 1943. A dozen or so men were sent to the estate of Jokioinen to do agricultural work for a few months.[114]

The Documents Altered by the "Red" State Police

Why were only eight Jewish refugees deported from Finland and no more? What was the real reason for their deportation? Why did more than three hundred Jewish refugees avoid deportation? Why were all the Finnish Jews spared from the Holocaust? With respect to its historical significance, this result is downright trivial, but the fact the Finnish Jews were spared is the *only exception* in World War II when the entire national Jewish population of a state allied with the fighting on the side of Nazi Germany was spared. Little attention has been paid to this elsewhere precisely because it is so exceptional. Such deviations from the Holocaust have not suited the otherwise nor already so generally accepted view of the inevitably of the destruction of European Jews every-

[112] Rautkallio 2004, p. 344 and passim.

[113] A letter by the Helsinki Jewish Congregation, November 2, 1942 to Prime Minister J. W. Rangell. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. II. pp. 159-160. KA

[114] Rautkallio,2004, p 344.

where and anywhere that it was possible. For this reason people elsewhere have not wanted to understand or accept the Finnish exception that tests the rule.

The deportation of eight Jewish refugees has been as an example of Finnish participation in the Holocaust, something that it actually was not. Nevertheless, efforts have been made to convince people that this is the case, even quite recently. Nevertheless, no evidence of "plans" aimed at deporting the Finnish Jews have ever been found, not then, and not later. In Finland the deportation of the eight Central European Jews in November, 1942, has acquired the status of a symbol of the Holocaust, even though at that time they were not the *only* people to be deported. That is how it has been perceived, since it has been assessed uncritically on the basis of documents produced after the war by the communist-run State Police. No individual Jewish refugees were deported from Finland and handed over to the Germans. A central question of textual criticism concerns the quality and purpose of this documentary material. The reasons that resulted in the deportation of these eight Jewish refugees lead to the question of why others were not deported if it was ultimately an issue of racial policy.

More than twenty years ago I concluded with the observation that the tragedy that resulted in the deportation of the eight Jewish refugees in November 1942 was the result of the activities of one Jewish refugee, Walter Cohen. In addition to trying to gain advantages for himself, Walter Cohen also disregarded the directions issued by the Finnish authorities. The deportation of those eight people was not originally planned, but rather took place randomly. Now it is possible to find confirmation in Anthoni's and Müller's correspondence that the deportation order issued by the State Police concerned Walter Cohen and nobody else. His arrest on October 28, 1942 was not a chance occurrence, but rather actually the sum of numerous incidents that had taken place over the previous two years.[115]

[115] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

Arno Anthoni did what he had agreed to do orally with Heinrich Müller in a letter that he sent to him on September 13, 1942. In the letter Anthoni referred generally to the Central European Jews who had fled to Finland (*über die nach Finnland geflüchteten Juden*), but he only wrote about a specific one, that is to say, Walter Cohen, and his family.

In my 1985 book, I made reference to the correspondence between Anthoni and the Gestapo that took place in September 1942 and which preceded the joint deportation of the eight Jewish refugees and nineteen other non-Jewish aliens on November 6, 1942 to *Einsatzkommando 1a* in Estonia. At that time, material such as the dossier on Walter Cohen was not available since the personal files kept by the State Police were only transferred to the Finnish National Archives more than ten years later.

The previously mentioned correspondence between Anthoni and Müller is kept in Walter Cohen's dossier at the National Archives, but some of the same material has long been available in the documents used in the trial of Arno Anthoni. At that time the contents of Cohen's dossier were reported to be "unavailable", even though a dossier in his name had been located. Neither, in fact, did the Court of Appeal prosecutor, Ali Rautakorpi, pay any particular attention to the correspondence between Anthoni and Müller that specifically concerned Walter Cohen. He could not, because at that time no summary or complete copy of the letter sent by Anthoni to Heinrich Müller [no. 16602/A/13.9.1942] had been found in the State Police archive. This was the information the post-war State Police delivered to the prosecutor.[116]

Because of this problem with the documents I noted the following in 1985: "Problems, concerning the critical use of sources are also caused by the fact that some of the documents that are now available were not among the documents that the State Police provided for the prosecuting attorney after the war. Either they did not want to hand them over or they were missing

[116] Rautkallio 2004, 1985, pp. 165-169.

for some unknown reason".[117] The central documents thus concerned this specific correspondence between Arno Anthoni and Heinrich Müller, and this correspondence was not "missing", but rather was tidily preserved in the dossier on Walter Cohen. By concealing that material, the communist-led State Police wanted to sidetrack prosecutor Ali Rautakorpi concerning the phases in the case of the eight deportees.

The personal dossier on Walter Cohen, which was evidently not handed over to prosecutor Rautakorpi, nevertheless contained the now known correspondence as well as the deportation decision in a form different from what the red State Police has presented in its "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary". On the basis of the report he had received, Rautakorpi concluded that "the correspondence between the German authorities and the State Police had been destroyed during the summer of 1944 and at the same time a considerable amount of material had gone missing", and that the work had been hampered by the relatively poor order that had been maintained in the archive after Anthoni's departure". Nevertheless, Anthoni left the position of the director of the State Police in February, 1944, so he could not have been responsible for something claimed to have been done "in the summer of 1944"[118]

Inconsistent with these claims are the particularly good order of the personal dossiers, which is evident at the Finnish National Archive, where the material is now stored. Paavo Kastari, who assumed the duties of director of the State Police in February 1944, remarked: "No separate list was kept of the people who were deported, for which reason it is impossible to obtain certain information from the documents concerning the possible deportation of others".[119] Helge Rontu, who bore the central responsibility for gathering the material to be used at Anthoni's trial,

[117] Rautkallio 1985, p. 158.

[118] Ibid.

[119] A note by Paavo Kastari, November 4, 1944. XV.I. 2. EK-Valpo 1. KA. I have interviewed Paavo Kastari in the Spring of 1990.

made note in his memorandum "of the relationship that Anthoni had with the Gestapo": "Documents that would provide complete clarity of collaboration between the State Police and the Gestapo have been destroyed, and whatever can be found is scattered around in different places".[120]

Only One Person was Ordered to be Deported

Arno Anthoni's letter of September 13, 1942 to Gestapo head Heinrich Müller reveals that right from the beginning of the Jewish refugees' residence in Finland, the intention had been to deport *only one person* and his family. In Berlin there had been no separate discussion of the deportation of other Jewish refugees, and the initiative for this single deportation remained with Antonio. In his letter to Müller, Anthoni expressed the hope that he could transfer the following persons to Germany at the first opportunity ("*bei erster Gelegenheit*"): "Walter Cohen, former German citizen, Jew, physician, born June 4, 1914 in Helmstadt, wife Rosi, Jew, née Hirschberg, born in Berlin January 2, 1914, child William, born May 2, 1941 in Helsinki". In his letter Anthoni tells of Cohen having committed fraud and forgeries in Belgium, as well as of the false information that Cohen had given to the Swedish criminal investigation police, all of which will be discussed subsequently.[121]

This letter from Anthoni to Müller completely refutes all speculation about the State Police having been planning the collective deportation of Jews. This has long been known. During his interrogation, Anthoni remarked that "Cohen was certainly on that list on the basis of which the five people in question were

[120] Rautkallio, 1985, p.167.

[121] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

taken away". However, that list contained other people in addition to Cohen who were not deported, the majority of them were other aliens who were not Jewish refugees.[122] A completely illogical feature of the deportation drama was then thrust into the spotlight by the fact that Cohen himself was not deported, even though the entire process actually began with him.[123]

Anthoni's letter confirms that the markings in the abbreviated excerpt ["the copy excerpt"] of the "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary" were not only imprecise but also deceptive. According to this "abbreviated excerpt", a report of the following kind was added for the same date, September 13, 1942: "Müller will be told about W. Cohen, L. Levi, and H. Löwy, and an inquiry will be made as to whether they can be sent to Germany".[124] Anthoni does not mention the remaining two, who, like Cohen, were not deported, in his letter at all.

The abbreviated excerpt of the "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary" led to the conclusion that "Cohen, Levi, and Lewy" were the prelude to the deportations, when "the eight" were subsequently deported. The planned nature of the deportations, however, is made confusing by the fact that Cohen himself, as well as Ludwig Levi, of whom no record at all can be found in the aliens' card register, and Herbert Löwy were not deported. They were among the Jews "obligated to work" who had been sent back to Suursaari on November 7, 1942. They were also members of the group of people obligated to work that had been sent from Suursaari to Jokioinen in April, 1943. Why was it that just these three were registered in the State Police abbreviated excerpt of the "Extremely Confidential Diary" if, nevertheless, they were not subsequently deported?

The contradictions between the original letters and the reports from the "abbreviated excerpts of the Extremely Confidential

[122] Arno Anthoni's interrogation report, June 5, 1946. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. KA.

[123] "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary". T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. KA.

[124] Ibid.

letter Diary" do not end here. Müller's answer to Anthoni was sent by telegram on his behalf at the RSHA Estonian service point (*Dienstelle*) by an *SS-Untersturmführer* (second Lieutenant) Seefeldt. The telegram said: "*SS- Gruppenführer* Müller... knows about the transfer of these Jews (*"dass er mit der Übernahme dieser Juden verstanden ist"*)". Actually, there were three of them; Walter Cohen, his wife, and their child. The "confirmation of shipment", however, only contained Cohen's name. On the other hand, the same thing is presented in the abbreviated excerpt of the "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary" as follows: "Sefeldt [*recte* Seefeldt, Gustav von] answers that all three will be accepted", which thus was a reference to Levi and Lewy.[125]

As to the abbreviated excerpt of the "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary", more precisely, the collage of selected excerpts from letters put together by the red State Police and its mentions of letters containing Panzinger's and Sandberger's reports, they, too, wind up in an extremely unusual light. The letter that Panzinger sent on October 10, 1942 only makes reference to "the Jew mentioned in it", that is to say, Walter Cohen, for the reception of whom the commandant of the Security Police in Tallinn, Sandberger, had prepared himself. The entry for the same day in the red State Police's abbreviated excerpts from the "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary", in turn, tells that Panzinger had received "only the Jews".[126] If this is supposed to mean Cohen, he was still at a work camp in Suursaari with certain other aliens, constituting an immeasurably small minority since the majority of the workers at the camp were completely normal Finns who were under the work obligation. Stranger still is the report to Sandberger contained in the "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary" and dated October 30, 1942 in which stated "To Sandberger, that 27 people have been sent to Tallinn".[127]

[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.

In this context, reference is evidently being made to the twenty-seven aliens, among them "the eight", that is to say, five male Jewish refugees, the wife of one, and two children, who were sent later on November 6, 1942 on the *S/S Hohenhörn*. They have often been presented in public as constituting their "own group of deportees", even though that is not true at all. These five never appeared in any specific list. The report claimed to have been sent to Sandberger is made an impossibility by the fact that two of the people facing deportation were still in Suursaari on October 28, 1942, thus eight days before the deportations. These two had been sent from Suursaari to Helsinki on October 28, 1942 in a group of Jewish refugees consisting of ten persons and including Cohen, Levi, and Löwy. Deportations had been proposed in their names, even though none of the three was ever deported.[128] The three other deportees were in police custody on October 30, 1942, even though the "copy of the excerpt" put together by the red State Police claims that one of the five, Georg Kollman, had "left the country on October 6, 1942". Why Walter Cohen and Hans Szybilski had been transferred from Suursaari to the Helsinki regional prison, while the others were put into the State Police "remand prison", raises questions. There have been vague ideas about this, since all of the people taken from Suursaari have been assumed to have been taken directly to National Police headquarters on *Ratakatu*, a street in the center of Helsinki.

[128] A State Police report, by K. Mäkelä and Kalle Helenius, October 30, 1942. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

It Began with Walter Cohen

What, then, is to be said about Walter Cohen? Who was he and why was *Valpo* so much interested in him that it resulted in Arno Anthoni personally contacting Heinrich Müller concerning just this particular individual. The new information now available concerning Cohen's role in the events that led to the deportation of "the eight" confirms everything that has been told.[129] Cohen and his family survived and were able to move to Sweden in August, 1943. There he wrote his memoirs, however, his account does not bear any rational relationships to the facts. Walter Cohen tried to use cover stories to absolve himself of any guilt for the horrible events of November, 1942 Cohen himself was spared, but in his struggle to survive we encounter the distressing story of the eight Jewish refugees.

The information about the Cohen's provided by the Swedish authorities to the Finnish embassy in Stockholm was by no means favorable to them. In Belgium Cohen had a Belgian identity card (*Vreemdeling étranger*) written issued to Cohen's falsified name, David Nachemstein. Cohen had turned to the Finnish consulate in Antwerp and volunteered to fight in Finland's Winter War. The Finnish consulate general had issued the Cohen's temporary certificates of Finnish nationality on January 10, 1940 that were only valid for a month. The Cohen's had no intention whatsoever of traveling in Finland, and the Swedish Police had become perfectly aware of that. In actual fact, Walter Cohen escaped on a Finnish steamship, the *SS Hesperus*, which had arrived in Malmö, Sweden, on its way to Finland. Cohen himself told that he had joined the orthopedic group of the ambulance run by the "Jewish Refugee Committee" in Antwerp, but the truth

[129] See Rautkallio 1984, 1987, and 2004

is different. Oscar Teitelbaum, the director of this "center that promotes Jewish social assistance and welfare", had sent a letter dated January 12, 1940 to the Jewish congregations on Sweden and Norway urging them to prevent the Cohen's from entering the Scandinavian countries. Walter Cohen had embezzled funds from the Jewish center, obtained money from several people on false pretenses, and acquired a false passport made out to a "David Nachemstein". In Belgium Cohen had also failed to be able to prove that he had the competence to be a practicing physician. Teitelbaum appealed in his letter: "For this reason we ask you yet again to leave no holds barred in order to ensure that the police take this man into custody to prevent him from continuing. He must have the money in his possession, even though he would probably deny this".

In his letter, Teitelbaum remarked that the twenty-seven-year-old Cohen clearly looked older than his age, for which reason he was convincing as concerned his conduct and he was prematurely gray: "As has been confirmed to us of now, this is a question of a fairly skillful confidence man whose operations have to be stopped".[130]

There was considerable consternation over the contradiction between the claim that they were "born in Finland", but spoke neither Finnish or Swedish, and this led to further investigations. Cohen, who did not even spend a day fighting in the Finnish Winter War, tells in his memoirs, published in Swedish in 1947 and later in Finnish[131], that before he came to Finland, he had worked as an ambulance physician and had been relieved of this job and allowed to come to Finland as a volunteer for the Winter War: " I had already come to Finland during the Winter War from Bel-

[130] Oscar Teitelbaum ("Centrala Välgörenhets Administrationen och Sociala Judenhjälpen, Antwerpen"), 121.1940 to Mosaiska Församlingen, Stockholm; konsul Hüttner i Göteborg; Det Mosaiska Trossamfund, Oslo; Hjälpkommitén för judiska flyktingar, Oslo. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

[131] Walter Cohen, *Etsin turvapaikkaa* ('I was looking for a place of refuge'). Tikkurila: Ristin voitto, 1970.

gium [via Sweden] as a volunteer with Dr. Lorette's [also appearing in the form of Melatte] ambulance...".[132] Swedish police documents reveal that the Charles Melatte referred to by Cohen was a Belgian citizen and a chemist. He had nothing whatsoever to do with ambulances; Cohen was improvising. Later he concocted a tale according to which he had worked at a hospital on Stockholm, even though he had never set foot in that city, before his arrival in Finland.

The stories by Walter Cohen in different connections are mutually inconsistent. Even his account of how he arrived in Finland is totally different from what actually happened."Dr. Lorette's ambulance" is only one of Cohen's fantasies, one which he was still exploiting years after, evidently, because it had become true in his mind. He had also told the Finnish authorities later that in Belgium he had been a "physician in the employ of the state", this also being a tale that he had simply fabricated.[133]

Cohen having demonstrated his effort to remain in Sweden so clearly, P.K. Tarjanne of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs reported the State Police (Aarne Kovero): "...the C's entry into the country is to be prevented. Nor would they be of any use to our defense forces, either...". For this reason the Swedish authorities sent the Cohen's back to Belgium, but the Belgian authorities refused to accept them. They were taken to an airplane destined in Mälmö, Sweden for the deportation. Robert Paulson of the Swedish criminal investigation police wrote to Bruno Aaltonen at the Finnish State Police that "expenses in Malmö were 600 Swedish kronor... how this issue will be dealt with I do not know". The matter was returned to on the level of principle, but the expenses for Cohen's were naturally covered by Sweden.[134]

In Trelleborg the Swedish police had put the Cohen's on the

[132] Cohen, op. cit. 1970, pp. 140-141; Rautkallio, 1985, p. 72; William Cohen and Jörgen Svensson repeat the same story, "... volunteered to join the Finnish Red Cross..."., op. cit., p.71.

[133] Rautkallio 2004, p. 360.

[134] Rautkallio, 2004, p. 361.

SS Sirius, which arrived in Turku on February 14, 1940. The State Police was well aware of everything that Cohen had done, even though Cohen himself asked why he and his wife had been taken prisoner.[135] In such a situation they could not be deported, so they were taken into protective custody on the basis of section 14 of the Statutory Order on Aliens. There the order was given that their Belgian identity papers were to be taken away "so that they do not destroy them...".[136]

The Cohen's were quite aware of the fact that their free return to Belgium was impossible due to the offenses that they had committed there. In the provincial prison they had succeeded in winning over the prison pastor Johannes Kunila, who traveled to Helsinki at his own expense to clarify the "issue of the stateless German (?) Jew Walter Isr. Cohen and his wife". The Cohen's had impressed Kunila with their sincerity, and he regarded them as "decent folks". The pastor said that he had had dealings with different kinds of people and he "could decide who was who", and with that experience he was ready to vouch for the Cohen's.[137]

The release meant a new problem for the Cohen's, they wanted to avoid being sent back to Belgium at all costs. On March 3, 1940 Cohen sent three letters about his case to the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ten days later he also wrote to the Chancellor of Justice and the State Police. They produced no results, but the helping hand of pastor Kunila had a wide reach.

At his home Kunila had introduced the Cohen's to two brothers from the north-western Finnish town of Pietarsaari, Ernst and Sandfrid Mattson. The Mattson's headed a Swedish-speaking religious sect in central Ostrobothnia. Sandfrid Mattson obligated himself to assume the costs for the Cohen's expenses "for the entire duration of their stay in our country". The Ministry for Foreign Affairs had not opposed the suggestion:

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[135] Walter Cohen, March 29, 1940 to the State Police. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I.KA.

[136] Rautkallio, 2004, p. 361.

[137] Rautkallio, 2004, p. 363.

> ... that the Finnish authorities have nothing against the Cohen's living at your expense at your home in Pietarsaari for the time that they cannot travel abroad because of the state of war. Before they leave Turku they have to report to the State Police office in Turku and request that the necessary report be made of their having settled down in Pietarsaari.

After a brief display of resistance, deputy head Aaltonen of the State Police approved the Cohen's move to Pietarsaari, which took place on April 30, 1940. The decision had far-reaching consequences because Walter Cohen's situation compared to that of the other Jewish refugees had become exceptional. Cohen himself was unable to distinguish the facts connected with his position, as opposed to his fantasies and aspirations.

A Free Jew in the Nazi Germany's Shadow

The Cohen's had given up their Jewish religion in Pietarsaari and become members of the Mattsons' church. Their solution in this respect increased the sympathy that the locals demonstrated for them. Walter Cohen had many patients in Pietarsaari and was a popular man. In support of Cohen being granted the right to practice medicine, an appeal was organized in Pietarsaari, which 122 of the town's citizens signed. The appeal was submitted at the beginning of June, 1942, to Prime Minister J. W. Rangell.[138]

In May of the same year, that is to say a month before the appeal was submitted, Cohen had developed an unrealistic and quite audacious plan to leave Finland and go to the United States via Sweden. He requested a visa for Sweden, not appearing to comprehend that an American consular official cannot exert any influence with respect to obtaining a Swedish visa. The supervi-

[138] The list of names and signatures in Cohen's personal dossier. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

sory office of Finnish military headquarters (*päämajan valvontaosasto*) recorded the telephone discussion, this being evidenced by the marking in the memorandum "Kastari" (Paavo).[139] Cohen depicted to the consul a dreadful account of their life "in a concentration camp, doing forced labor" [Cohen had been declared obliged to carry out work duty on May 11, 1942]. In its memoirs Cohen made up a quite different and fantastic story about his contact with the consulate of the United States:

> In our despair, we telephoned the head American consulate, asking him to help us by issuing us a visa and allowing us to travel on the American battleship (sic) in the Finnish harbor that had been sent to remove those American citizens who wanted to return to their native country... The cool voice regretted that there were no possibilities whatsoever of being granted permission to enter the United States... Mr. Consul, Gentleman Consul, it will cost my life if I do not finally get a change....[140]

To his own distress, Cohen had only been moved to a labor camp in northern Finland in mid-May, 1942, this being more than two months after the Jewish refugees who had been in Hauho, Lammi, Tuulos, and Luopioinen had been sent to Salla. There Cohen managed to get some special privileges due to, among other things, the intervention of pastor Johannes Kunila. When he was in Kemijärvi, Cohen began his campaign to be exempted from work duty. He showed the letter to this effect to the wrong person: the Minister of the Interior. The Ministry could obviously not make a decision that fell within the range responsibilities of the Manpower Office of the Chief of Staff of the Home Forces:

> Walter Israel Cohen, who, in accordance with the Law on Obligatory Work, is working on a railroad project in the parish of Kemijärvi, has applied to be exempted from this work... because exemption from the work in question does not fall within the responsibilities

[139] Rautkallio, 2004, p. 365.
[140] Cohen, op.cit. p. 203.

> of the ministry, and because the applicant does not have the right to practice medicine in Finland, the application has not been acted upon...[141]

Both Cohen and the State Police were informed of the matter. This precipitated a struggle in which Walter Cohen initially imagined himself to be in a strong position.

From the first days of July, 1942, Cohen had been "on furlough" from the Kemijärvi work camp, actually, a completely free man in his own opinion, as he writes in his memoirs. He had received permission to travel to Helsinki on July 8, 1942, but he was only allowed to be there until July 13. Cohen was "obligated... to report to the main division...if it was necessary for him to stay in the location in question even after that date". On July 8, Cohen traveled to Helsinki via Pietarsaari.

In his memoirs Cohen compares himself to Nazi concentration camp prisoners. He tells that he traveled from Kemijärvi to Helsinki specifically for the purpose of "ending the *concentration camps* [ital. HR]" run by Finns, although it turns out that he was interested in nothing more than improving his own position. For this reason as early as March, 1942, he had submitted an application for Finnish citizenship, something which would have been quite exceptional for a "concentration camp prisoner".

In actual fact Cohen did everything that he could to differentiate himself from the "other Jewish refugees", with which he did not want to be identified. Cohen has turned everything upside down in his so-called memoirs, presenting himself even as a "person rescued from the Holocaust", even though his own actions resulted in tragedy for some other people. Cohen tells that as soon as he arrived in Helsinki he went directly to the Minister of the Interior, Toivo Horelli. This "concentration camp prisoner" who was walking freely says that he told the minister:

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[141] Minister Toivo Horelli, July 20, 1942 to the State Police. Ministry of Interior, June 30, 1942 to "Mrs. Rosi Cohen". Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

> ... I am one of the concentration camp prisoners, who, together with my other Jewish comrades, has been deceived and imprisoned so that the relevant officials have even summoned us to perform military service, more precisely, work service at the front line...".

Cohen tells that when he was being received by Horelli, he called the State Police "a henchman of the Gestapo", an accusation that would thus have applied to the minister himself.[142] Here we see another example how fantasies and truth become thoroughly confused in Cohen's actions.

At the end of July and beginning of August, 1942, Cohen claims that while he was free in Helsinki he met with several influential civil servants, politicians, and high military persons, among others Marshal Mannerheim's personal representative in President Ryti's office, major-general Heikki Kekoni. In Helsinki Cohen had somehow managed to establish contact with the president's brother, Martti Ryti, the director general of the telegraph administration. In the meantime Cohen had gone to the State Police headquarters on central Helsinki and reported that "his stay had been prolonged", something that he had been supposed to do on July 13. He acknowledged the prolongation of his travel permission, with Erik Jaarma and Olavi Viherluoto verifying the accuracy of his signature. In short "receipt" Cohen confirmed that he had informed the Ministry of the Interior of the announcement in question. It demonstrated itself to be a decision from the Manpower Office of the Chief of Staff of the Home Forces extending his furlough until August 25, 1942.[143]

Cohen resorted to his personal relations when he wanted to overturn the regulation concerning the obligatory work service, and he was prepared to turn to them in order to contact even the highest decision makers. Cohen had been off on his own ear-

[142] Cohen, op. cit., pp. 224-226.

[143] "The decision of the cancellation of Walter Cohen's furlough". The Chief Staff of the Home Forces. The Manpower Office, August 20, 1942. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

lier already for two weeks in Helsinki before the decision of August 20. What was he doing there, how did he finance his stay in the hotels, and why was he allowed to prolong the period of his travel? He had arrived to Kemijärvi later than others. His stay in Helsinki had been also already prolonged when all the other Jewish refugees obliged to perform work service were already in Suursaari. The final break with the State Police was unavoidable, but Cohen imagined he could use his contacts to ensure a favorable solution even with them.

The Tragedy Begins

Cohen's arrest in the Helsinki night[144], with his influential friends following the drama, would be a tragicomedy if we did not know about its terrible consequences, consequences that did not affect Cohen at all. The contradiction that arose between the cancellation of Cohen's deportation and the deportation of five (plus three family members) Jewish refugees was something that Arno Anthoni did not want to admit when he was being interrogated. Nevertheless, it was a fact that Walter Cohen had caused him a loss of prestige in the eyes of the Germans:

> When asked why, for example, a person such as the Jewish physician Walter Cohen, about which the State Police had so much more unfavorable information in their possession than it did about the five people in question who were deported, the person being interrogated is unable to produce an explanation... Cohen was certainly included in the list from which the five people in question were removed.[145]

[144] For details, see Rautkallio (forthcoming).

[145] Report of Arno Anthoni's interrogation, April 13, 1946. T 16070. Ilm. pvk. no. 3188. KA.

This question, asked by Helge Rontu, an interrogator for the communist-led State Police, was, of course, quite justified, because the original deportation was supposed to apply *only* to Cohen. This question was the object of special attention at Anthoni's trial because it was not possible to figure out what happened in the Cohen case due to a lack of documents.

Walter Cohen visited the State Police on August 17, 1942 and met with lieutenant Ari Kauhanen:" He actually would have wanted to meet with the head, but then he spoke about his case with me". Cohen, whose furlough had ended on August 15, said that he had spent it at a boarding house in the vicinity of Pietarsaari. He said that he had returned to Helsinki at the urging of the Vaasa Civil Guard Circle, and that the Home Forces Headquarters had given him furlough time until August 25. Cohen's visit to the State Police set off the series of the events that resulted in the deportation of the five Jewish refugees *without* Cohen. State Police officer Ari Kauhanen's six-paged "announcement" is strange to the extreme, even to the point of being an absurd memorandum of the discussion. It conveys the image of Cohen being the "interrogator" and Kauhanen being the one providing the answers.

Kauhanen begins: August 17, [19]42 the person named in the title came into the office".[146] So the initiative for the meeting was Cohen itself, nor could it be a question of prolonging the furlough because that had already been done, up until August 25. Why did Cohen want to meet the head of the State Police? Walter Cohen had people who would vouch for him, both real and imagined, and he thought that he could use them as a basis for assessing the prestige and authority of the State Police as they applied to him. He had no other rational motive for his visit and the manner in which he presented himself can be considered irrational. Cohen was also applying for Finnish citizenship with the help of his in-

[146] Ari Kauhanen's memorandum, "Former German citizen, the Jew Walter Israel Cohen. 4.6.12". Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

fluential relations, and he later renewed this initiative. He did not appear as a person who was trying to further the interests of the other Jewish refugees, although he tries to convey this impression in his memoirs.

The Cohen's did not even have any dealings with "the other" Jewish refugees, nor did any of them have influential contacts comparable to Cohen's. Walter Cohen had no formal contact with the Helsinki Jewish congregation, even though he sometimes deceived the authorities by presenting himself as a member of the congregation. In Pietarsaari the Cohen's assumed another role, presenting themselves as members of the local Lutheran religious community. In his memoirs, published after the war in Sweden, Cohen openly admitted to being a Christian. The unofficial spokesman of the Finnish Jews, Abraham Stiller, knew Cohen personally. In Stiller's own words, he held "this religious apostate in contempt", even though he regarded him as "indelibly" a Jew. Stiller's harsh statement is interesting because it was specifically Walter Cohen who himself wanted to take the honor for having sent the famous postcard from Suursaari. The postcard had been addressed specifically to Abraham Stiller, even though Cohen fails to name him or anyone else in his memoirs as its recipient. There are, however, various versions of who actually sent the postcard, these including the one given at time by Ragni Karlsson, a person who had been actively involved in caring for the Jewish refugees.[147]

The Cohen family had led quite a privileged life in Finland, particularly compared with the other Jewish refugees, but not even the privileges that they succeeded in obtaining were enough for them. Additionally, they did not regard themselves as "refugees" and certainly not as "Jewish refugees". The great tragic feature and paradox of the causes that resulted in the deportation of "the eight" is centrally connected with Walter Cohen's desire to have something other than a Jewish identity. Rosi Cohen even

[147] Rautkallio 1985, p. 177.

sent a letter from Pietarsaari dated September 29, 1942 on behalf oh her husband to President Risto Ryti. After some colorful episodes, Walter Cohen had been sent to Pietarsaari on August 22, 1942. The content of the letter did not correspond at all to the known facts, but rather its central feature was dissociation from "the Jewish refugees", which, of course, the Cohen's specifically were. Rosi Cohen expresses her surprise at the fact that her husband "found himself as early as May 1942 at a work camp designated for *Jewish refugees*, even though he did not arrive in this country as a refugee".[148]

In fact, the Cohen's had integrated themselves rather completely into life in Pietarsaari after their release from the Turku provincial prison. One of the reasons for their being accepted was their conversion there to Christianity. They are wealthier than average. They lived in an apartment with four rooms and a kitchen, paying 1,980 marks a month in rent. The State Police estimated that the furnishings were worth 100,000 marks and the medical equipment 200,000 marks. They had a car, and "there is probably money deposited in their bank accounts". The account does not correspond in any way to people living in need, and certainly not the life of a "concentration camp prisoner". In March, 1942, the Cohen's had submitted an application for Finnish citizenship. In support of it they had collected a petition signed by ninety-nine people. State Police officer Ari Kauhanen's comment was acerbic:

> He allegedly has such good relations because he wants to be admitted to citizenship... He has not completed his medical training but has been granted permission to practice medicine in Pietarsaari... There is probably no reason to naturalize the Jew here.[149]

[148] Rautkallio 2004, p. 375.

[149] Ibid.

Cohen's Arrest

If the episodes that took place during the stay of the Cohen family in Finland had not been recorded in such details in documents, one could have imagined that it was a question of the authorities over-reacting to negative developments. In Rosi Cohen's letter to President Ryti, she claims that her husband had worked in the Turku regional hospital as an amanuensis "under the direction of Professor Elfving", and that he had opened "his own practice in Pietarsaari, for which the National Board of Medicine had given permission with certain stipulations". Neither claim was true. Rosi Cohen skirts around this problem by stating that the fines imposed on her husband for practicing medicine illegally resulted from the fact that no Finnish university had confirmed his competence "even though he did have a permit to practice that had been issued by the National Board of Medicine". But that is not how the matter stood.

If Cohen's visit to State Police headquarters on August 17, 1942, was an effort his own interest, he chose the wrong strategy. Ari Kauhanen seemed to have "swallowed" Cohen's account of his influential contacts, but then Cohen launched an all-out attack against the police structure, and on its own turf. His brazen self-confidence could not have been based on anything other than his completely mistaken idea that the support of influential Finns would suffice to protect him from any actions taken by the State Police. One could even venture the thought that the defiant self-confidence was evidence of a narcissistic personality, of which there had been numerous examples right from his departure from Belgium in February 1940. Cohen made no effort to avoid taking advantage of people, even to the point of lying, in order to improve his position.

In his memoirs Cohen says that he compiled a written report in which "I suggest that in accordance with democratic principles the recently arisen 'Jewish problem' would be presented to the Parliament".[150] In fact, Cohen only presented his *own* problem, and he claimed that he sent "several copies of this personal report to different people who were in influential positions". The letter in question was also found in Cohen's hotel room when he was arrested. Two days, on August 19, Kauhanen ordered Cohen ["today I told the Jew, Dr. Cohen"] to go "this very evening to Pietarsaari, where, for all I care, he can wait to be received by Mannerheim until he has had enough furlough". Kauhanen urged Cohen to contact the Headquarters of the Home Forces "in advance" if he needed a furlough.

There were thus never any intention of moving Walter Cohen to Suursaari, where the other Jews who had been doing work service in Kemijärvi had already been for weeks. Kauhanen's announcement actually meant that the "special status" that Walter Cohen had tried to gain for himself had been given approval by the State Police. Evidently, Cohen's confident manner of presenting his case had resulted in nobody there wanting to take risks. Cohen resisted, claiming that if he had been "ordered to Helsinki" he did not apply to the State Police for travel permission. Kauhanen reminded Cohen that he was still subject to the law of the work service, even though the procedure now presented was exceptional:

> The position of the State Police on this issue has, at least for the time being, not changed, and of it does change, due notification will be given.[151]

Cohen began his last defiant maneuver, one which preceded what was to become a final tragedy for others, but not himself. He asked for a further extension of his furlough because he had

[150] Cohen, op. cit., p. 230

[151] Kauhanen's report, August 19, 1942. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

"agreed with General Kekoni about the meeting either today or tomorrow". Kauhanen says:

> He called from my room in the office to Kekoni in [the Hotel] Kämppi and requested more details about the meeting. Kekoni urged him to call again between four and five in the afternoon. I told Cohen that when he calls tomorrow, he has to say that the State Police has ordered him to travel to Pietarsaari today, and that the trip cannot take place tomorrow, if Kekoni does not call the Chief [Anthoni] about this and agree about it specifically.[152]

That evening things took sudden turn in a very dangerous direction, for Cohen himself and, through what was happening to him, for the other Jewish refugees as well. On that night, August 19, the fate of the Jewish refugees was decided. It was primarily a question of Walter Cohen when Arno Anthoni sent his own well-known letter to Gestapo heads Heinrich Müller on September 13. Anthoni had not received a telephone call from Major General Kekoni during the evening of August 19, either. Cohen was thus supposed to return to Pietarsaari, but he remained in Helsinki, at the Hotel Carlton.

In his memoirs Cohen depicts the arrest with considerable irony and contempt for the arresting officers:

> At eleven thirty in the evening I was arrested at the hotel. A pale, slim, and already quite bored looking man stood at the door of my room and bowed awkwardly. After that, he took a little card from his pants pocket and handed it to me – State Police, please follow me.[153]

This man, so insignificant in Cohen's opinion, drew up a very detailed report on the arrest, one that has not lacking in drama. Initially, Cohen was arrested in another room in which several people, men and women, were present. According to the State

[152] Ibid.

[153] Cohen, op. cit., p. 230.

Police report, the people were drinking alcoholic beverages and Cohen resisted arrest.[154]

Arno Anthoni certainly reacted strongly to the report that he received concerning the events of that night. The idea of handling Cohen over to the Gestapo began to take shape, but Cohen himself bore the guilt for this. He was first offered a way out, returning to Pietarsaari, which was a very concrete offer from the State Police, one that would have prevented him from being sent to Suursaari. Being exempted from obligatory work service had, after all, been the objective of Cohen's "intrigue", this being the expression used by Anthoni, against the State Police. It was Cohen's actions that had led to the President's brother as well as possibly the President himself being involved in his affairs. Now there was already a struggle going on to measure Antoni's personal prestige, one taking place right in front of one his subordinates.

On August 28 the Manpower Office of the Chief of Staff of the Home Forces canceled the furlough that it had originally granted Walter Cohen until August 25, 1942. Ari Kauhanen of the State Police had already initiated the procedure before Cohen's arrest. The decision actually makes reference to the "proposal by the State Police".[155] Walter Cohen's countdown had started. On September 10, 1942 the Ministry of the Interior rejected the Cohen's residence permit of July 8, 1942,

> ... because the applicant Walter Cohen has not presented a clarification of the necessity of his family's residence in Finland and because his residence in Finland cannot be regarded as positive, the application to prolong the residence in Finland cannot be regarded as positive, the application to prolong the residence permit in question is rejected....[156]

[154] See Rautkallio, 2004, pp.380-387 for a detailed account.

[155] Rautkallio, 2004. 384.

[156] Rautkallio, 2004, p. 385.

Walter Cohen, obligated to work service, was moved to Suursaari on August 22, 1942 to work on fortifications, joining the other Jewish refugees obligated to work who had been there fulfilling their obligation for more than a month while Cohen was living for more than a week in Helsinki hotels. L. Mäkelä, a State Police detective, escorted Cohen. Cohen did not want to ride in the third class because "in that class there are many passengers, among them workers and soldiers...". Mäkelä reported:

> He [Cohen] said if he had been able to have just two more free days in Helsinki, Anthoni would no longer be able to send him to Suursaari, and he continued that this was the last annoyance that he would be getting from Anthoni, but Anthoni would come to regret this once he had time to order things out through the intermediary of his good and influential friends. He said that he had decided that he would certainly take revenge on Anthoni for having done this....[157]

How did the Deportation of One Change into a Deportation of Eight?

It is of central importance that the episodes that resulted in Walter Cohen's arrest – more precisely, in the implementation of his work duty – were not planned in advance at all. Anthoni's letter to Müller of September 13, 1942 was actually the consequence of these unpredictable events that rose in connection with Cohen's case. The most interesting observation is that he was initially offered the opportunity to return to Pietarsaari from his furlough. If it had been the intention then, on August 19, to hand him over to the Gestapo, this would have been in contradiction with it. This raises the question: why were the five other Jewish refugees deported since they had not been mentioned previously in

[157] Report on "the official trip to Hamina, Kotka and Suursaari", August 22-24, 1942. L. Mäkelä, August 2, 1942. Valpo I. KA.

any connection? The deportation was supposed to apply only to Walter Cohen, nor did Anthoni even suggest that anyone else be deported in this context. The basic problem in these questions is the mutual contradictions in the documents produced by the wartime and post-war State Police structures.

No other Jewish refugee left as many entries in the official registers, including those maintained by bureaucracies other than the State Police, than Walter Cohen. He literally kept the State Police busy, even though the main targets of its activities were elsewhere, specifically conducting surveillance on spies, communists, and other individuals thought to constitute a threat to Finnish security. In addition to surveillance, the State Police conducted searches, arrested suspects, and even implemented some deportations. Only a few Jewish refugees had serious entries in the criminal register maintained by the State Police. Most of the Jewish refugees who were granted asylum in Finland were decent people who behaved in an exemplary manner, despite the restrictions imposed on both them, and the native population because of the war conditions.

The rumors of the deportation of some "political refugees" became public and began to spread just around that time. On that specific Monday, September 1, 1942, the main Finnish daily, *Helsingin Sanomat*, published an editorial bearing the title "*Turvapaikkakysymys*" ('The Issue of Asylum'), in which the newspaper took a position on the issue.[158] Public opinion in Finland, although the country was engaged in war, reacted quite quickly even to rumors of deportations of "political refugees", a term that actually referred to Jewish refugee. Their special status became an object of public debate in a totally different manner than that of the other, non-Jewish foreigners who were deported, most of them communists, reconnaissance parachutists, criminals, spies, and prisoners of war.

The decision to "release Cohen from the performance of work

[158] *Helsingin Sanomat*. Septemeber 2, 1942.

duty as soon s possible and to send him to the Kotka office of the State Police" was made on October 19, 1942, that is to say, before all public speculation concerning the deportation of all "other" Jewish refugees whose work service was to be ended.[159] The decision to deport Walter Cohen was really a separate one, a measure applying to him alone. Anthoni had personally initiated it as early as September 13, 1942 with his letter to Heinrich Müller. The decision to deport Cohen cannot be regarded as having any connection with the status of "the other" Jewish refugees, the five people who were deported and the others who were not. They would have been mentioned separately.

The unplanned and coincidental nature of the deportations of certain Jewish refugees is illustrated by the fact that in the papers drawn up by the red State Police, the Jewish refugees Ludvig Levi and Herbert Löwy are claimed to have deported, even though neither of them actually was. It remains an open question why it was just "the five" plus three who were added to the group of nineteen non-Jews that was transported to Estonia on the *SS Hohenhörn* on November 6, 1942. Originally Walter Cohen was supposed to be the only Jew in that transport of non-Jews because in the State Police documents that are now available there are no mentions at all before October 27 of those five deportees, although there are many of the others. Negative expressions of the type used about Walter Cohen do not occur in any of the State Police papers about the other Jewish refugees.

The Deputy head of the State Police, Ville Pankko, had named twenty-four people who were to be handed over to the State Police for deportation from Finland in his letter of August 27, 1942 to the director of the Helsinki provincial prison. Pankko's list included five Jewish refugees. The first one was a person who arrived in Finland in November, 1939, "as a German citizen", Heinrich Huppert. He was a traveling salesman by profession,

[159] Aarne Kovero (State Police), October 19, 1942 to the Manpower Office the Chief of Staff of the Home Forces. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I. KA.

who was born on November 26, 1896, and had been released from the temporary prison at Karvia on October 28, 1942. His deportation order was dated October 26, 1942, and included the information that his son Kurt, born August 29, 1931, would be accompanying him. Georg Kollman, a medical student, born November 9, 1912 in Vienna, had been deported on October 31, 1942, by the State Police. In January 1939 Kollman had been granted a "short-term residence permit". He and his wife, Janka Kollman, had received a deportation decision as early as January 15, 1940, but it had never been implemented. Kollman had been put into preventive detention on December 17, 1939 for embezzlement. He had been arrested at Suursaari on October 29,1942 and was being held there for deportation. Hans Korn, a technician born on June 26, 1919 in Bielitz, had arrived at Finland in January 1940. he had been sentenced to prison in the summer of 1941 for theft and fraud. A deportation order had been issued for him on April 29, 1942, and the rural police chief of Joutseno had had him transferred to Helsinki provincial prison on April 14, 1942. Hans Szybilski, a traveling salesman, born in Elberfeld on August 29, 1907, had moved from Sweden to Finland on December 1, 1938, but had not allowed to return to Sweden. A search of his apartment had revealed, among other things, air photographs, and his correspondence had already awakened suspicions of espionage in Sweden. A decision for his deportation was issued on October 26, 1942.

The case of the fifth imprisoned Jewish refugee, Elias Kopelovsky, was the most complicated of all. It must be said that it differed from the previous four cases in all respects. Kopelovsky was a businessman who had been born in Legen, Latvia, on September 22,1882. He stood out from the other four with respect to his background, status and wealth. He had had successful business relations with Finland before the war, having been involved in the bulk lumber trade. Kopelovsky had to leave Estonia, where he had settled in 1940, after the country was occupied by the

Soviets. The statements that Kopelovsky's Finnish business associates gave about him after the war were all positive.[160]

As was the case with the four Jewish refugees discussed above, Kopelovsky was issued a deportation order dated October 26, 1942. He was arrested at the hotel Torni in central Helsinki on October 26, 1942 and taken to the Helsinki provincial prison. The charges gathered by the State Police against Kopelovsky did not seem to be particularly serious. He was claimed to have "talked disparagingly about Finland's affairs. According to information obtained from Estonia Kopelovsky was considered to be a communist...In his opinion he was pro-Soviet and in his business dealings unscrupulous..."[161] Kopelovsky left a considerable amount of property in Finland, more than four million marks worth of different types of lumber which was stored in Haukipudas, Rajahauta in Ii, and in the harbor at Toppila in Oulu. The purchaser of these logs, railway crossties and pit timber had been the lumber yard of the Finnish Railways Administration. The lumber had been delivered on May 4,1942. The district court of Tel Aviv, in Israel, had confirmed as early as April 2, 1946 that Kopelovsky had perished at a German concentration camp.

The five Jewish refugees who were sent to the Helsinki provincial prison, George Kollman, Heinrich Huppert, Hans Korn, Hans Szybilski and Elias (Kliyahu) Kopelovsky, were thus included in the list of twenty-four people that Ville Pankko, the assistant chief of the State Police, had sent to the director of the Helsinki provisional prison as early as August 27,1942, that is to say, more than two weeks before Anthoni had started his correspondence with Heinrich Müller concerning the deportation of Walter Cohen.

These two issues must be kept distinct from each other. The inclusion of the five Jewish refugees in a more comprehensive

[160] Kopelovsky's story is told in detail in Rautkallio (forthcoming).

[161] "A list of the persons deported between 1941 and 1944 from Finland to Germany". A copy. H. Rontu September 19, 1947 to the Research Center of the prisoners of war. T 116070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. II, pp. 116-118. KA.

list of non-Jews to be deported did not make this deportation a matter of racial policy because the deportations were based on other grounds. This group of twenty-four deportees increased by yet another three when Georg Kollman's wife, Janka (née Holczerova, born September 10,1910), their child Frans Olof Kollman (born 1942), and the school-age child Kurt Huppert (born August 29,1931) "voluntarily", according to the State Police, accompanied their family members, there hardly being any alternative option available. All in all, the number of people deported in November 6,1942 on the *SS Hohenhörn* thus increased to twenty-seven people.

Why only Eight?

The manner of compilation and intended use of the lists of aliens, both Jews and others, compiled by the post-war Finnish State Police raise many questions, some of which have already been referred to, about the deportations. Concerning the aforementioned five (plus three), the red State Police informed the Ministry for Internal Affairs on march 22, 1946 that they did not appear in any known previous context as a separate group. They were only made into their "own group" afterwards. As to the actions of the war-time State Police, it has been consistently denied that any "lists of Jews" were ever compiled. Aarne Kovero, head of the State Police passport office, stated: "The foreign Jews staying in Finland were naturally included in the lists of aliens, but no separate lists of Jews were ever drawn up devoted to them alone".[162]

During the war these lists of Jewish refugees were indeed compiled, but not by the State Police but rather by the Jewish congregations. It is also curious that the "Extremely Confidential

[162] Protocol of Aarne Valtteri Kovero's interrogation, October 13, 1947. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no.3188. II. p.24. KA.

Letter Diary" compiled by the red State Police, about which so much has been said, makes no mention at all of the deportation of "the eight" that, decades later, was to be made into the "Finnish Holocaust".

The extraordinary document does indeed make mention of the fact that "Panzinger confirms that he has received *only the Jews* (italics HR), and this announcement was also dated October 22,1942. The red State Police drew up an undated memorandum on twelve Jewish refugees, Jonas Adler, Josef Carol Bick, Leopold Bruckman, Walter Cohen, Simon Grünzweig, Mendel Kamil, Erich Katz, Stefan Kollman, Kurt-Paul Lippert, Josef Riegler, Wilhelm Werber, and Elija Zillbergas, but not on Walter Cohen. Why, then, was such a list compiled if all of the twelve people mentioned in it were saved?

Is the answer to be found in the completely deceptive heading of the list "on the deportees of November 6, 1942. Central European Jewish refugees". These persons were not removed from Finland. The red State Police had thus made a consistent effort to give the Research Center for Prisoners of War and the Prosecutor at the Turku Court of Appeal the impression that its predecessor organization had made its "own lists", specifically with eventual deportations in mind. The claim that specifically these twelve individuals were deported on November 6,1942 is naturally a fabrication as well as a baseless claim.[163]

Twenty years ago I presented some rather careful observations concerning critical use of sources when evaluating the manner used by the communist-led State Police to produce what are clearly perceivable as being manipulated documents. I admit that I was naïve then with regard to the source criticism. This list of twelve people tries to strengthen the idea of there also having been other deportees *in addition to* "the eight". The "Extremely Confidential Letter Diary" also mentions Ludvig Levi and Her-

[163] "Deported in November 6,1942. About the Central European Jewish refugees". T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188. I., pp. 107-108.KA.

bert Lewy, both of whom were claimed to be on the Gestapo's deportation list. Nevertheless, nothing in the State Police documents (personal files) has been found indicating anyone to have had a special interest in them.

Walter Cohen left Suursaari without informing anyone only two weeks after having arrived there. Before that, however, he had informed the doctor of the Suursaari garrison, medication lieutenant Louis W. Perret, that he would soon be naturalized as a Finnish citizen. Perret telephoned the State Police and asked them if perhaps the "wrong" Jew was doing work service in the island. Perret requested an urgent "written notice to the address 2 kpk. 8762". State Police officer Ari Kauhanen wrote down in an official memorandum "C is always true to his habits. Rarely have we such an impudent fellow pestering the officials". Kauhanen ordered Perret to be notified "that Cohen is not a Finnish citizen nor is it probable that he will be approved for citizenship".[164]

Cohen had been notified on September 10th,1942 that his residence permit had not been approved. Leaving once again for a trip to Helsinki without permission, Cohen was fully aware of what awaited him. At that time Cohen was the *only* Jew doing work service on Suursaari who was awaiting deportation. Cohen was taken back to Suursaari on September 17th, 1942, now already for the second time that month. The chief of the State Police passport office, Aarne Kovero, stated laconically:

> The police arrested (Cohen) on August 20th, 1942 in order to return him to the work brigade. Sent on September 17th to Suursaari for work service.[165]

Walter Cohen's final act of defiance led to Anthoni's attention fixing itself directly on the "five Jewish refugees" about which the State Police had made the most entries in its register. Cohen did not tell whom he had met with in Helsinki, but whoever it

[164] Rautkallio 2004, p. 401.

[165] Rautkallio, 2004, pp. 401-402.

was, he was important enough because Cohen's deportation never took place. When nine Jewish refugee were then transferred from Suursaari at 9.30 AM on October 28,1942 to the harbor of Kotka, the action has to be regarded as a consequence of Cohen's constantly resisting the authorities. Cohen was naturally one of the nine people transferred from Suursaari. The others transferred to Helsinki along with him were Ludvig Levy, Herbert Löwy, Jonas Adler, Georg and Stefan Kollman, Rudolf Langer, Elja Zilbergas and Hans Szybilski. No evidence has been presented supporting the idea that specifically these nine were intended to be handed over to the Germans. Of them, only two, Georg Kollman and Hans Szybilski, eventually wound up in the group of eight that was handed over to the Gestapo on November 6, 1942.

The Deportation Becomes Known

Many opinions have been voiced concerning who sent the famous postcard from Kotka dated October 30, 1943. The postcard, in Swedish, says *Nio man i dag till Bangatan, hoppas ni kan träffa oss* ('Nine men today to Ratakatu [the street where State Police headquarters was located]'), hope that you can meet us]. It was sent to Abraham Stiller, a prominent businessman. Stiller was an influential background figure at the Helsinki Jewish congregation, even though he lacked any formal position. The person who sent the card was thus seeking assistance. Stiller's area of social influence extended far beyond the Jewish community, and the person who sent the card had to know this. Additionally, the sender knew Stiller's home address, *Åbovägen 22* (now Mannerheimintie).[166] Abraham Stiller was also on familiar terms with the State Police, both during the war and afterwards. In a State

[166] See, Rony Smolar, *Setä Stiller Valpon ja* Gestapo*n välissä* ('Uncle Stiller between the State Police and the Gestapo'). Pieksämäki: Tammi 2003.

Police announcement dated June 3,1944, Stiller was described as "our friend".[167]

Abraham Stiller also had good relations with the postwar red State Police. In December, 1946, he handed over "papers dealing with the persecution of the Jews in Finland between 1941 and 1944, with the Jews sent by Anthoni from Finland to Germany, and the measures that arose from this that were in his possession confidentially to the State Police for the copy...". It is unclear what those papers were because the appendix to the "announcement" signed by the deputy head of the State Police, E. Hautojärvi, is only a list of "stateless Jews".[168]

In the past, Abraham Stiller had not speculated about who had sent the card. It seemed that the value of the postcard as a surprise to its recipient would not have been as great as it seemed in retrospect. Abraham Stiller was a key witness because of the postcard sent by these nine men. The postcard sent to him became publicly known only after the war, when it was included in the materials used for the trial of Arno Anthoni. In all of his statements that he made, Stiller has stuck to the same story:

> On one Friday morning, October 30, 1942, I received a card, for which reason I went to the State Police to request a clarification since the card mentioned that the refugees were being moved from Suursaari to State Police headquarters in Helsinki.[169]

In his statements Stiller did not name any specific person as the sender of the card, neither has it been confirmed that the card was sent on the joint decision of the nine men. In a letter that he wrote to Israel, Stiller remembered thirty years later that the post card had been sent from Suursaari, as though he would have known about this in advance.[170]

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[167] A report of Erik Jaarma", June 3, 1944. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188.KA.

[168] "Anouncement" by E. Hautojärvi, December 28, 1946 "Papers received in confidence from director A. Stiller". Hmp. 1932. EK-Valpo I. KA.

[169] Rautkallio, op. cit., p. 405.

[170] Ibid.

Ragni Karlsson, the editor of the Swedish-language socialist newspaper *Arbetarbladet* ('The Worker Newspaper') and a person actively involved in refugee affairs, told the committee appointed by the Helsinki Jewish congregation to deal with "questions concerning anti-Semitism" on June 3, 1945 that the person who had sent the postcard was Hans Szybilski. Emanuel (Mikko) Poljakov, who had long acted as a spokesman for the Helsinki Jewish congregation, in turn, had said that one of the nine refugees taken to the ship had given the postcard to a person called "Laitinen". Other stories have been told about the route taken by the card, its dramatic text has resulted in journalistic interpretations, films, and television presentations.

In his memoirs Walter Cohen takes full credit for having sent the postcard himself, but the only proof existing of that is his own account:

> "One of my workmates had the card with him. The address that was written on it was that of a good friend of mine in Helsinki".

Cohen claims that he wrote a prescription (even though he did not even have the right to do so) for the same "guard" on the ship, as compensation for which the guard promised to send Cohen's postcard to Abraham Stiller. Stiller, in turn, has expressed his antipathy toward Cohen in different contexts, so much for this "good friend".

The only person escorting Cohen and the other eight Jewish refugees was senior detective Syrjälä from the Kotka office of the State Police. There were no other "guards" on the ship, unless the small crew is included. At the harbor in Kotka they were met by two men sent from Helsinki, State Police headquarters, detectives L. Mäkelä and Kalle Tuominen. The idea that one of them would have functioned as Cohen's mailman is impossible. The report submitted by the State Police men, Mäkelä and Tuominen, who escorted the nine Jewish refugees states the following:

> The daughter of the Finnish Jew, Simo Leifson (*recte* Leinson/HR), now serving as a sergeant at the local headquarters of the Kotka home defence forces district has seen the departure of the Jews from Kotka. Leifson possibly reported the matter to Helsinki Jews.[171]

Abraham Stiller only gave a copy of the postcard to the commission of the Helsinki Jewish congregation on anti-Semitism on April 6, 1945. That same date is marked as the day when a copy of the State Police document "List of the people sent to Estonia on November 6, 1942 on the steamship Hohenhörn" was given to Abraham Stiller. The document contains the entry "given to director A. Stiller April 6,45".[172] Stiller was only interrogated about the deportation affair on June 30, 1946. When he was interrogated, Stiller had given the State police the same story in writing that he had already presented to the commission of the Helsinki Jewish congregation on anti-Semitism at its meeting of June 3, 1945. This story was subsequently included as such with another protocol of an interrogation that took place on December 16, 1946.[173]

Stiller had turned to General Kekoni, Marshal Mannerheim´s representative in Helsinki:

> For this reason the witness turned to General Kekoni ...requesting urgent assistance regarding this action that was a violation of the right to asylum. General Kekoni, who reported that he would be meeting Marshal Mannerheim at lunchtime, promised to present the issue to him, and he requested Stiller to return to the matter that afternoon at 4 PM. At the time in question the general told the witness that Mannerheim had characterized the affair as *ruskigt* 'terrible', by which he meant that he had been unable to exert any influence because 'two people ranking higher than General Kekoni' had stated convincingly that 'it was a question of spies and that the government knew what it was doing'.

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[171] A report by L. Mäkelä. October 30, 1942. Hmp. 1932. Valpo I.KA.

[172] XV A2-A3. EK-Valpo. KA.

[173] Protocol of Abraham Stiller´s interrogation, December 16, 1946. T 16070. Ilm.pvk. no. 3188, p. 84. KA.

General Kekoni was of the opinion that there was reason to appeal to the President of the Republic, Risto Ryti. Before Stiller had done this, however, he first called the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rolf Witting, whom he personally knew, and gave an account of the matter to him. Witting promised to ask the Minister of the Interior, Toivo Horelli, about it, after which he reported that the President would not receive him, but he left to tell the President about Stiller's and his case. Major Nordlund returned after a moment with an announcement that "the matter fell within the scope of things to be taken care of by the Ministry of the Interior".[174]

The ministers of the Finnish government that had taken a stand on the issue gave the same assurance: the matter fell within the authority of the Minister of the Interior. Marshal Mannerheim also gave the same assurance, although afterwards in his memoirs he glossed over his interference in the deportation, making it look as though he would have prevented any possible additional deportations if the Germans had demanded them. The deportation of November 1942 had already been decided earlier:

> "Only much later did I find out that, with certain members of the government hearing, the statements that I made have generally been interpreted as having decisively influenced the final result of the treatment of this issue. During both my presidency and afterward I have received several demonstrations of gratefulness that were a source of great personal pleasure, from Jews in Finland as well as abroad, concerning the attitude I adopted on this issue. Gratitude is rare in the modern world, for which reason the smallest expressions of gratitude seem all the more precious".[175]

Since Prime Minister J. W. Rangell, Minister of Interior Toivo Horelli, and the head of the State Police, Arno Horelli, were away elk-hunting during weekend when the deportation took

[174] Ibid.

[175] C. G. E. Mannerheim, *Muistelmat* ('Memoirs'), vol. II, Helsinki: Otava, 1952. pp. 388-389.

place, Stiller had contacted Väinö Tanner, the Minister of Supply and Chairman of the Social Democratic Party. Tanner, serving his sentence for "war guilt", was interrogated at the Helsinki central prison on October 2, 1947. He said:

> As concerns the matter in question, during the fall of 1942, I do not recall the precise date, a Jew called director Stiller appealed to me personally, informing me that the following morning about 50 Jews were to be sent to Germany.

Tanner tells that he contacted Ville Pankko, the assistant head of the State Police, by telephone, and that Pankko confirmed what Stiller said, but with one fundamental correction. According to the protocol of Tanner's interrogation, Pankko also confirmed "that there was no intention in any known situation to send about fifty Jewish refugees to Germany".[176] We do not encounter such a number in any document or deposition that is known.

The publicity that arose concerning the deportation of eight Jewish refugees came as a complete surprise for Germany's Foreign Ministry. Berlin approved as evident the fact that in Finland democratic institutions and free expression of opinion on the national level were functioning in a war situation. Under-secretary of State Martin Luther (*A.A. Judenreferat*) wrote in his memorandum that "the fiction was created that Germany had pressured Finland" to implement deportations about which nothing was even known in the German Foreign Ministry. Additionally, Luther's interpretation of an issue that he did not know about was that the "head of the Finnish criminal investigation police" had been in contact with the "head of the German Criminal Police [*Kripo*], Arthur Knebe. At the same time, Luther admitted in his memorandum that Germany's Criminal Police had not given the Ministry for Foreign Affairs information about the whole matter in any way. Adolf Eichmann (Gestapo IV B 4) was also totally

[176] Protocol of Väinö Edward Tanner's interrogation, October 1, 1947. T 16070.Ilm.pvk.n no. 3188, I. pp. 15-16. SA.

unware of the deportations. At the German Foreign Ministry the deportation affair was regarded as a joint matter carried out by the police structures of the two countries. The Jewish division of the German Foreign Ministry juutalaisosaston (*Judenreferat III des Auswärtigen Amtes*) stated that "Eichmann has reported orally that his division has not participated in the entire matter [the deportation of these eight Jews/HR].[177]

The Rescued Ones – the Participants

The loyalty of the Finnish Jews to their homeland was evaluated in a unique manner. During World War II the Jews of no other country in the sphere of German influence during had the possibility to make such choices. In a statement dated November 1944 issued by the Central Council of Finnish Jews and bearing the heading "The Freedoms and Rights of Finnish Jews were not Violated in any Way", answers were sought for the exceptional result:

> "The status of the Finnish Jews during the war was not of such a type that it would have been in violation of the principles prevailing in a democratic state- Not even during the time when Finland was in an alliance with Germany were their freedom or rights violated. This has to be mentioned especially in Finland's honor, particularly when examining the fate of Jews in those countries that were allied with Germany during the war".[178]

Only information available after the war gradually revealed the most repulsive aspects of the warfare waged by Finland's German comrades-in-arms. The rank-and-file Finnish Jewish soldier

[177] Franz Rademacher (Judenreferat III des A.A.) to Martin Luther, December 17, 1942.A.A. 1397/360-454. BA.

[178] Taimi Torvinen, *Kadimah. Suomen juutalaisten historia* ('Kadimah.The History of the Finnish Jews'). Keuruu: Otava,1989, pp. 164-165.

sought answers for the question of why he had been saved when, at the same time, that specific comrade-in-arms had destroyed millions of his coreligionists. The front line newspaper put out by the Jewish soldiers from Turku, *Front Karolina*, attempted to justify this horrifying contradiction on the front page of its last issue in September 1944:

> ...The bestial Nazis trampled millions of Jews elsewhere in Europe under their boots. Jews by the millions have been tortured and killed, not in honest combat on the field of battle, but rather using sadistic bestiality. They were slaughtered on the alter of "the new order" without having any opportunity to defend themselves... But we want to emphasize that all of this was also known to our men on the front line, something that could have led to the loss of their loyalty. The feeling of responsibility, however, always won out, this despite the fact that the danger of Nazism and its Gestapo methods lay in ambush as heavy clouds over the Finnish sky.[179]

The Finnish Jews naturally sought reasons for their having been rescued from the Holocaust in the national environment of which they considered themselves to be a part. Among them there actually arose a mythical notion that Marshal Mannerheim had ultimately "protected" them with his personal intervention. Mannerheim himself undoubtedly gave reason for such speculation. He had conveyed his desire to visit the synagogue to honor the memory of the fallen Jewish soldiers to the administrative council of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation. The visit took place on Finnish Independence Day, December 6,1944, precisely at 3 P.M.[180]

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[179] *Front-Karolina,* Fall edition, 1944.

[180] Minutes of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation, November 28,1944 and December 8, 1944. The minutes compiled immediately after Mannerheim's visit to the synagogue by the administrative council of the Helsinki Jewish congregation proposed that special thanks be extended to President Mannerheim for his role in the rescue of the Finnish Jews, and that a "group of trees" be planted in his name in "Eretz Israel". Archive of the Helsinki Jewish congregation; C. G. E. Mannerheim, *Muistelmat* ('Memoirs'), vol. II,, 1952, pp. 388-389.

The special national significance of the event was emphasized by the fact that the nation, just having survived the war, did not celebrate its independence day in any particular way. A war against the Finns' former comrade-in-arms had begun on Finnish soil, and Finnish Jewish soldiers were also participating in it. Mannerheim had prepared himself for adulatory praises, and he accepted them with composed dignity. The visit by their commander-in-chief gave Finland's Jewish war veterans a strong alibi for identifying with the country's "special war", a war which had nothing in common with the destruction of Jews elsewhere in Europe.

Even in the spring of 1945 the extent of the destruction of European Jewry was not yet known to the outside world. In Finland the first photographs of the piles of corpses at the Buchenwald and Nordhausen concentration camps that came into the hands of the Western allies were published in April of 1945. Nevertheless, the most monstrous deeds of the Holocaust were to be seen at the extermination camps that were liberated by the Red Army in the east.[181]

Simon Federbusch (1892-1969), who had served as Chief Rabbi in Finland from 1931-1941, inquired in his telegram of March 12,1945 how the Finnish Jews managed with Germans, and whether they needed outside help. Leo Weinstein, the chairman of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation, responded that the Finnish Jews did not have any special needs...despite German pressure, their rights had been preserved intact, for which the upright attitude of the Finnish people was to be praised. Weinstein added that the number of members of Finnish Jewish congregations had remained unchanged throughout the war; in Helsinki there were 1,200, in Turku 350, and in the former Viipuri 250 members. Weinstein did not mention that the number of mem-

[181] "The Horrors of Buchenwald. A Swedish Doctor's Description of a German Concentration Camp", *Helsingin Sanomat,* April 23, 1945. "Buchenwald and Nordhausen. Two German Concentration Camps that the Allies have Gained Control over", *Helsingin Sanomat*, May 5, 1945.

bers of Jewish congregations in Finland had actually increased, since 99 Jewish refugees had received Finnish citizenship between April and June of 1944.[182] Rabbi Federbusch, who was the head of the cultural section of the World Jewish Congress in New York, was delighted with what he had heard. He said that he would report about the position of Finnish Jews to the American press.[183]

Did the Finnish Jews ever regard the deportation of eight Jewish refugees to be an act of racial policy, since they recognize the uniqueness of their own rescue? The question is justified because in the opinion of the Finnish Jews, the resistance put up by the Finns repelled the effects on Nazi racial policies in Finland. After the war, World Jewry also directed similar recognition to those who rescued Jews elsewhere, but then it was an issue of the rescue of individuals and groups. In Nazi-Germany's array of allies it was only in Finland that the rescue of the Jews affected all of the country's own Jews as well as of the Jewish refugees from other countries, with the exception of the eight deportees who were resident in Finland.

According to present calculations, the number of Jewish refugees rescued in Finland demonstrates itself to be larger than the figure previously presented in official documents. The Helsinki Jewish Congregation provided the State Police with confidential information that has not been presented in any context up until now concerning the Jewish refugees who had been in Finland in 1943 and 1944. This also included people who had come to Finland before 1939 but only received Finnish citizenship after 1941. Up until that time these foreign Jews were thus refugees in Finland. This information was certainly available to the *post-war* Valpo, but it was not made public then, nor did the Helsinki Jewish Congregation make it public when the rescue of Jewish

[182] Rautkallio 2004, p. 431.

[183] Simon Federbusch on March 16,1945 to Helsinki Jewish Congregation; Leo Weinstein on April 11, 1945 to Federbusch; Federbusch on April 20, 1945 to Weinstein. Archives of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation.

refugees became a secondary issue in public discourse due to the furor surrounding the eight deportations. Historical research has also failed to focus attention on the cooperation between the Helsinki Jewish Congregation and the State Police to protect Jewish refugees. On the basis of the registry of foreigners maintained by the Ministry of the Interior and the written information provided to the State Police by the Helsinki Jewish Congregation, *a minimum* of 342 Jewish refugees can be identified who were granted asylum in Finland.[184]

The cooperation between the State Police and the Helsinki Jewish Congregation for Jewish refugees produced results. In the late 1960's the directors of the congregation were still publicly denying the accusations brought by some of the Jewish refugees who had been granted asylum in Finland that they had been treated badly there. The accusations included a considerable claim on the Finnish state for monetary compensation. Such a procedure has been common in the countries that have been demonstrated to have been participants in the implementation of the Holocaust. The Helsinki Jewish Congregation had supplied the State Police with lists, most of them updated, as supplementary information "about the refugees who are not included in any lists that have been compiled up until now", as Leo Weinstein, the chairman of the congregation, pointed out in his discussion with Aarne Kovero, the bureau chief of the State Police.[185] The congregation accepted requests to enter Finland and informed the State Police of them. These lists and registers of foreigners contain many names that are not included in the State Police list of ("the copy)" of 150 people who are "former citizens of Germany and Austria". The two different versions of this list have been referred to previ-

[184] These people are listed in Rautkallio (forthcoming) according to profession, former citizenship, date of arrival in Finland, time in Finland, departure from Finland, and date of being granted Finnish citizenship. For details, see Rautkallio 2004, pp. 442-453.

[185] Aarne Kovero's memorandum, May 17, 1944. XII.J.5.EK-Valpo I. KA.

ously. This observation leads to the conclusion that altered lists of this type were drawn up only after the war on the basis of original documents.

The collaboration between the Helsinki Jewish Congregation and the State Police concerning the issue of Jewish refugees was kept secret from the Germans for easily understood reasons. One hand-written State Police memorandum contains the entry "Jew. Congr. abt. 75 Germ. and Aust. ref. arr. 39", in another connection "Germ. requested!"[186] If there would have been demands of this kind they did not lead to the desired results in any known case. To the contrary, most of the 342 Jewish refugees who have been located as of now were still in Finland during the spring of 1944 when the possibility of sending them to Sweden finally became feasible. Some Jewish refugees who had moved to Sweden returned to Finland before the end of the war.

The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was developing a plan at the end of 1942 to send the Jewish refugees residing in Finland to Sweden. Finnish Minister of Internal Affairs Toivo Horelli was in favor of sending a large number of Jewish refugees – 150 people – to Sweden at the beginning of December, 1942:

> The Ministry of Internal Affairs...reports...that it has no specific objections to the plan, but rather regards its implementation as very positive.

Swedish Prime Minister O.A. Hansson rejected the plan, justifying his decision by pointing out that a large number of Jews were coming to Sweden from Norway at that time. Additionally, Hansson regarded it as important for the Jewish refugees to remain in Finland, since such a measure would prove to the

[186] "Löydetty helmik. 1946 huoneen no. 15 kaapista". ('Found in February, 1946 in he closet of no. 15'). Signed "EH" (Erkki Hautojärvi?). The document has as remarks the dates August 28, 1941 and May 19, 1942. Amp. VIII.A.3 EK-Valpo II. KA.

Western powers that Finland "demonstrates its independence by protecting these Jewish refugees *at least* (italics HR) for the time being".[187]

Despite the difficulties that arose concerning the transfer of Jewish refugees to Sweden, only one single family received a Swedish entry visa about a year earlier than everybody else. After all of the dramatic phases related in the foregoing, it is hardly surprising any more that the Jewish family in question was the Cohen's; they went to Sweden in August, 1943. Walter Cohen, who had worked on the state-owned farm at Jokioinen, had succeeded in meeting the Swedish ambassador Hans Beck-Friis when visiting Helsinki. Evidently Cohen had once again succeeded in getting a prestigious advocate for himself since the ambassador had made a personal visit at the end of January, 1943 to the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he complained about Cohen's position. Beck-Friis did not even mention the transfer of any other Jewish refugee to Sweden. Walter Cohen had complained to the Swedish ambassador that efforts were underway to "deport" him and his family "to the south". Chancery head Aaro Pakaslahti had replied "that the issue was certainly nothing of the kind, but they might be transferred to Sweden?" In this manner Beck-Friis provided the Cohen's with his personal guarantee, but it took several months before they were transferred to Sweden despite the sincere efforts of ambassador.[188]

The summer of 1943 saw the Swedish government interrupt the flow of Jewish refugees from Finland – with the exception of Walter Cohen – until the summer of the next year. Some Jewish refugees who had already been living in Finland for years re-

[187] Minister of Internal Affairs, Toivo Horelli and head of the State Police, Arno Anthoni December 4, 1942 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An appendix, "Ent. Saksan ja Itävallan kansalaisia" ('Former citizens of Germany and Austria') contains a numbered list of 150 people. T 16070. Ilm. pvk.no.3188.SA; Jarl Wasastjerna, December 4, 1942, from Stockholm. UM 5 C 2.UMA.

[188] Taimi Torvinen, *Pakolaiset Suomessa Hitlerin valtakaudella* ('Refugees in Finland during the Hitler Regime'). Keuruu: Otava, 1984. p. 256.

ceived Finnish citizenship during 1943, something that was also regarded as a signal to the West by Edwin Linkomies's government that had been appointed on March 5,1943. The new government took measures that significantly facilitated the life of Jewish refugees. Leo Ehrnrooth, who had just been appointed Minister of Internal Affairs and was a personal acquaintance of the influential Abraham Stiller, even made personal visit to inspect the apartments of Jewish refugees.

In the fall of 1943 Jewish refugees who had been staying in Hauho and Lammi were allowed to move to the cities that they wanted to move to, but not all of them were ready to do so. For example, in August 1943 six Jewish refugees wanted to move back to the Hauho and Lammi municipalities. All of the Jewish refugees who had been on Suursaari island had had been moved to the interior of Finland as early as the spring of 1943, and finally the Jewish men who had been doing agricultural work on the state farm at Jokioinen were released from the work service. Their welfare increasingly became the responsibility of the Finnish Jewish congregations. In June 1943 they established a special committee, *Kommittén för de judiska flyktingarna* – The Committee for the Jewish Refugees.

The last time the Finnish Jewish Congregations had supported people in need by taking collections was during the Winter War, 1939-1940. Then, too, the Jewish congregations in Sweden had imposed limits on the number of Finnish Jewish children allowed to enter the country. In March 1940 the "*För Mosaiska församlingens i Stockholm hjälpkommitté*. Aid Committee för Mosaic Congregation in Stockholm, informed the Helsinki Jewish Congregation that it could unfortunately no longer "accept more responsibility for charitable operations...the committee cannot fulfill the hopes you have expressed concerning the transfer of certain Jews to Sweden".[189] Leo Weinstein of the Helsinki Jewish Congregation had, when in Stockholm, renewed the re-

[189] Rautkallio 2004, p. 440-441.

quest made to the Mosaic Congregation in February, 1944, that between twenty-five and thirty Jewish refugees could transfer to Sweden. Additionally, he hoped that the Jewish congregations in Sweden could accept Jewish children, expectant mothers, as well as elderly and infirmed people from Finland. This resulted in the hoped for result. The final turn only occurred in June, 1944, when the Swedish government granted entry visas to 106 Jewish refugees from Finland.[190]

[190] Torvinen 1985, p. 260-261.

This essay, based on a book of the same name to be published later this year, is a summary of the main themes and research results of that book. My intention has been to provide participants in the conference "Escape from the Holocaust" to be held at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars on June 17, 2008 with a guide to the subject matter to be discussed there.

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