

Fighting Jews:  
The Myth of Jewish Passivity in the Early  
Twentieth Century

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# ABSTRACT

## FIGHTING JEWS: THE MYTH OF JEWISH PASSIVITY IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Doctor of Letters Dissertation by

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The Holocaust was one the most horrifying and important events in the long history of the Jewish people. Although the Torah teaches the Jews that it is a necessity for Jews to fight for their survival, it has been assumed by many that most Jews were “lambs to the slaughter” during the Holocaust. However, this work argues that this is a myth based in anti-Semitism and lost history. From the onset of war in 1914 to the end of the Holocaust in 1945, Jews continually fought for both their rightful place in society and their survival. From the battlefields to the ghettos to the death camps, many Jews fought in any way possible to them. This study describes this ongoing struggle and provides numerous examples of how and where Jews found it necessary to stand up to those who wished their demise.

A case study used to strengthen my argument was of Sam Dreben, “The Fighting Jew,” (and my great-great uncle). Sam is an excellent example of why Jews, as a whole, cannot be considered a “passive” people. It is easily

demonstrated that Sam was anything but a pacifist, that he loved the fight, and he felt it was his calling in life. His fighting was not merely limited to battlefields but also continued on the home front against the scourge of racism and hatred in everyday life.

In this paper, examples are provided from the Talmud and Torah that delineate when and why a Jew should fight. Furthermore, I analyze how thousands of Jews fought bravely and served with honor, on both sides, during the First World War, though Jews were blamed for the rise of Bolshevism and Communism after the war.

I explore how scientific and governmental communities within Germany distorted science to justify their plan of Jewish annihilation; how this plan was openly discussed within the Nazi hierarchy; and implemented through ghettoization and death squads and camps in order to accomplish the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question.”

With eyewitness accounts and other historical reference, it is shown that in almost every ghetto and concentration camp, Jews resisted. Not every revolt was physically violent, and often consisted of large and small acts of sabotage, delay and moral resistance. It is quite clear from the evidence that the Jews of Occupied Europe never fully became “Lambs led to the Slaughter.”

## *DEDICATION*

*To Sarah,*  
a sincere thank you

*and to*  
*Mom & Dad*

*and to*  
*The Melvins*

*Thank you for all of your motivation, support and understanding.*  
*I love you all.*

*and*  
*In Loving Memory of Sam Dreben*

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

“Blessed be God’s name? Why, but why would I bless Him? Every fiber in me rebelled. Because He caused thousands of children to burn in His mass graves? Because he kept six crematoria working day and night, including Sabbath and the Holy Days? Because in His great might, He had created Auschwitz, Birkenau, Buna, and so many other factories of death? How could I say to Him: Blessed be Thou, Almighty, Master of the Universe, who chose us among all nations to be tortured day and night, to watch as our fathers, our mothers, our brothers, end up in the furnaces? Praised be Thy Holy Name, for having chosen us to be slaughtered on Thine altar?”

Elie Wiesel, *Night*<sup>1</sup>

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Pacifism as “the opposition of war or violence as a means of settling disputes; *specifically*: refusal to bear arms on moral or religious grounds.” Religious pacifism is often directed toward Christianity, but the myth of Jewish passivity often appears as the drums of war begin to beat. Rabbi Reuven Mann, writing in 2012, stated that the Torah is a very realistic document and recognizes that there are times when Jews are obligated to take up arms and fight.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the category of obligatory wars does exist, and the most prominent example of this is a war

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<sup>1</sup> Elie Wiesel, *Night*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 67.

<sup>2</sup> Rabbi Reuven Mann, “Judaism and Pacifism,” 2012, <http://www.mesora.org/Pacifism.html>.

of self-defense, wherein Jews are commanded to confront and oppose wanton aggression.<sup>3</sup> However, Jewish antimilitarism evaporated in the case of a war in which one side was clearly associated with long-standing persecution of the Jews.<sup>4</sup>

Did the Nazis' desire for a European-Aryan utopia in the early twentieth century stem from a misconception of Jewish passivity, which manifested into a policy that killed six million European Jews in the early 1940s? This work argues that Jews were not passive and that a myth of this is not true. From the onset of the Great War in 1914, to the end of the Holocaust in 1945, Jews continually fought for their right to be a devoutly religious and peaceful people. From battlefield to gas chamber, the Jews never went without a fight. This piece describes the struggle and provides numerous examples of how and where Jews found it necessary to stand up to those who wished their demise.

### Chapter Breakdown

This study will contain six chapters: an introduction; a discussion of the rise of anti-Semitism and the theory of the Jewish passivity in the 1930s; a case study of my great-great uncle Sam Dreben, a Jewish warrior who was given the nickname "the Fighting Jew," which argues against the pacifist tendencies of Jews; the development and implementation of the Nazi programs to destroy the European Jews to develop their desired utopia; how Jews, once faced with the realities of the Nazi Final Solution, resisted their oppressors in ghettos and the concentration camps; and a conclusion.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Derek Penslar, *Jews and the Military* (Trenton: Princeton University Press) 2013, 150.



The second chapter will address the Just war theory and how Jewish Law permits aggression in terms of justifying the survival of Judaism and a homeland. Thousands of Jews fought bravely, on both sides, during the First World War, and served with honor and distinction. How did such an action lead many in Europe to blame the Jews for selling out Europe? Once the Armistice went into effect, Jews once again became the focus of scathing contempt.

With Germany's defeat in the Great War and its subsequent economic decline, European Jewry, and to a lesser extent, American Jewry, were blamed for the rise of Bolshevism and Communism in Eastern Europe. Though the old antisemitic theory of Jewish pacifism held no truth, Adolf Hitler and the National Socialists gained control of Germany from this platform and found ways to exploit it.

Through the Talmud and Torah, for example, ancient Jewish laws provided reasons for when a Jew should fight, and granted permission to do so under these conditions. Jewish Law provides justification for fighting and the "Just War" theory is as much a Jewish notion as it is a Christian and Muslim notion. Jewish Law also explains and gives clear examples of when fighting is not necessary, and should be avoided. Long-surviving antisemitic thought states that when a Jewish community was threatened, the Jews would keep their heads down and deal with the situation and let God deal with their enemies in His time. Then, the Messiah would arrive and take the Jews to the Land of Israel.<sup>5</sup> This was the traditional Jewish version of "pacifism" that secular Jews rejected.

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<sup>5</sup> Bennett Muraskin, "Secular Jews and Pacifism," The Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations, A Voice of Cultural Jews, accessed March 1, 2014, <http://www.csjo.org/resources/essays/secular-jews-and-pacifism-by-bennett-muraskin/>.

The third chapter will provide a case study of my great-great uncle, Sam Dreben, “the Fighting Jew,” which helps to disprove the historic notion that the Jews would not fight. What did “the Fighting Jew” mean? Was it a nickname designed to paint Dreben as an outsider, or to defy the myth that Jews were passive? Dreben is an excellent example of why Jews, as a whole, are not passive. It will be explained that Dreben was anything but a pacifist or passive. Dreben said that he loved the fight, and he felt it was his calling in life. His fighting was not merely limited to the battlefields but extended to stopping the scourge of racism and hatred in everyday life. During the early years of the 1920s, Dreben’s fighting spirit was on display as a member of the El Paso chapter of the American Legion. He introduced a bill prohibiting members of the Ku Klux Klan from joining local posts. In defending his position, Dreben said,

These men, oath bound to secrecy, hide behind their masks and say that because I am a foreign-born Jew I am not good enough to be an American. Every time America has called for volunteers, I have put on the uniform. They did not ask me at the recruiting office if I was a Jew, and they did not ask me on the battlefield what my race or religion was. The soldiers didn't wear masks in France, other than gas masks, and they don't need them now. <sup>6</sup>

His bill to keep members of the Ku Klux Klan out of public office passed.

Dreben left Ukraine to escape the Tsar’s army, where Judaism was a certain death sentence, for the safety and promise of the United States, but became involved in the wars of Asia, Central and South America, Mexico and Europe. Why did this man choose to fight? Did he fight for his Jewishness or as an American? Or was it for both?

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<sup>6</sup> American Legion, American Legion/Community/History, accessed May 22, 2013, <http://www.legion.org/history>.

The fourth chapter will examine how the race doctrine was revived in the late nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Racial antisemitism had only limited impact in politics during this time, but the American eugenicist Charles B. Davenport's notorious proposal, "the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding," became the catalyst of the T4 program adopted by the Nazis as a well-developed euthanasia program for the mass killing of the mentally ill and physically challenged.<sup>8</sup> In the 1940s, once the war broke out, the T4 doctors and scientists were sent to supervise and implement the "14f13" program for effective and efficient gas chamber development in the death camps of Europe.<sup>9</sup>

This chapter will also examine how antisemitism was an issue not only for the European Jews, but for Jews all over the world. Immigration to America after the Great War gave rise to a new wave of anti-Semitism, which lead straight to the halls of Congress and to the White House. Jewish organizations lobbied Congress vigorously to change American policy, to no avail. In 1938, a conference was held in the resort town of Evian, France to address the issues of Nazi persecution of the Jews, and in what way the rest of the world could help. By the end of the conference, only two of the thirty-eight participant countries were willing to welcome immigrants through their borders; America was not one of these countries.

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<sup>7</sup> Walter Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Anti-Semitism: From Ancient Times to the Present Day*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 2006), e-book, 94.

<sup>8</sup> Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), e-book, 5.

<sup>9</sup> Laurence Rees, *Auschwitz: The Nazis & the "Final Solution,"*. (London: BBC Books, 2005), e-book, Loc 3109.

Since The Evian Conference, eugenics, theories of Social Darwinism and a new national policy were methods the (Nazi) German government would use to justify and implement programs to address their hatred of the Jews of Europe. On September 17, 1935, the so-called “Nuremberg Laws”— a crucial step in Nazi racial laws that led to the marginalization of German Jews and ultimately to their segregation, confinement, and extermination—were key pieces of evidence in the trials, which resulted in 12 death sentences and life or longer sentences for other Third Reich leaders.<sup>10</sup>

The Nazis greatly advanced the use of propaganda. Josef Goebbels, Reichs Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (*Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda*), head of German propaganda, used the imagery of old German myths to strengthen their efforts. The music and operas of Richard Wagner became a soundtrack for the Nazi propaganda machine.

Kristallnacht, on November 8, 1938, began the implementation of the Jewish pogrom, and put the Nazi desire for a German utopia into action. Jews were put into ghettos from the major cities to the small towns of Germany, and soon across occupied Europe. All the while, Jewish organizations in Western Europe and America were continually lobbying governments to address these German plans. But, as with the Evian Conference, nothing was done. In 1940, a meeting was held in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee to discuss and implement the ghettoization and other ideas which to address the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question.”

The fifth chapter will examine two different places where Jews fought back. The ghetto system was horrific for the Jewish populace. Within these communities, many

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<sup>10</sup> Greg Bradsher, . “The Nuremberg Laws.” *Prologue* (The National Archives) 4 (Winter 2010). See Appendix 1.

organizations formed to resist their situation. Smuggling and corruption were commonplace, albeit underground. Jewish ghetto governments, *Judenrat*, were put in place to maintain order within the ghettos, and to help with the deportations of the ghetto inhabitants. Analysis of the resistance groups, mainly in Warsaw, will show the ways in which Jews attempted to maintain their humanity and the fight for their survival; the ghetto revolts will be explored.

The concentration camps were examples of the mechanization of mass murder of not only the Jews, but all other enemies of the German state. Though the camps were designed for mass killing, they were also factories of labor for the German war effort. Jewish prisoners, as in the ghettos, formed resistance movements and revolted at many camps. The revolts at Treblinka, Sobibor and in the crematoria of Auschwitz will be examined for a study of Jewish resistance inside concentration camps. The result of these revolts, in most cases, stalled more mass killing, and in the cases of Treblinka and Sobibor, closed the camps. The revolt of Auschwitz resulted in the destruction of the gas chambers, and the evacuation of the camp, as the Soviet Red Army approached.

### Methodology

Many books and journal articles examine the “Just War” theory, one of which will be Niall Ferguson’s study *The Pity of War*; Evelyn Wilcock’s book *Pacifism and the Jews*; and Rabbi Lee Levinger’s 1921 memoir *A Jewish chaplain in France*. Along with personal interviews with rabbis, Jewish Laws are put into perspective, relating to the rights and reasons Jews are permitted to fight. Through First World War records and personal accounts, Jewish soldiers fighting on the side of the British, German and the

United States provide evidence that their bravery and their willingness to fight was prominent. Furthermore, many Jews from all armies received medals of valor and bravery.

Chapter Three will review the life of Sam Dreben. There are only two books about Dreben, but only one focuses solely on the life of Dreben. Other sources use Sam's life as a supporting role to the main theme of that author's particular topic. Much of the history of Sam comes from family history as well as newspaper articles from his friends.

The history of the Nazi programs of Jewish annihilation and utopia ideals come from German documents and from accounts from reliable and respected historians including Max Hastings, Saul Friedländer and Richard J. Evans. Journal entries and video documentaries also played a role in my research and added a richness of narrative.

Books on ghetto resistance are numerous, but the memoirs from participants provide a moving and clear look into the reasoning behind and implementation of the revolts. Video documentary films and journal entries were also valuable research material. One of the most valuable research pieces is the 1945 Congressional testimony given by the survivor of the Treblinka prisoner revolt, as well as a memoir from Shlomo Venezia, a Sonderkommando at Auschwitz. These memoirs proved to be invaluable in understanding and constructing a clearer picture of why and how these people organized their attacks.

Looking at the period between World War I and World War II, I wanted to understand how the defeat of Germany bore the horrors of Nazi mass murder. The Jews during the Weimar Republic following the war lived a comfortable life in Germany. With Weimar seeing an intensification of anarchy in its streets during the 1920s, and a

rise of Communism, how did the “stabbed-in-the-back” theory affect the rise of the National Socialists? With the election of Adolf Hitler as chancellor in 1933, his fervent hatred of the Jews took center stage. How were the Nazis able to develop a bureaucracy dedicated to the annihilation of multiple-millions of people?

What culpability should the other countries of the world bear? When given the opportunity to help the Jews, they did not. How deep was anti-Semitism around the world, and how did this aid the Nazis? With Nazi documents from the Wannsee Conference, and studying how the Germans developed an infrastructure of mass murder known as “The Final Solution,” many international Jewish organizations knew of the programs of Jewish annihilation. The two main democratic countries, the United States and Great Britain, did nothing to stop the Nazis until their armies liberated the camps in 1944-1945.

Once the Final Solution was in place, how did the Jews in the ghettos and concentration camps organize resistance and revolution? The use of memoirs and personal testimony was the most beneficial, though documentation was also invaluable. With so many Jews, and far fewer guards, how were the Jews able to resist as they did? Not every form of resistance was violent, but how did the Jews find any form of Jewishness and sanity in their environments?

During the Holocaust, the Jews of Europe were not lambs to the slaughter. Many believed, from their religious teachings, that God would send down the Messiah to rescue them in their greatest moment of need, while many thousands of others chose to defend their lives to the death. Six million Jews died in the Holocaust, and it is wrong to assume or believe that they went to their deaths willingly, without a fight.

## Chapter 2

### PASSIVITY AND THE ANTISEMITIC CONNECTION

“[the Jew] has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him.”

Mark Twain <sup>11</sup>

Antisemitism in Europe rose to a virulent level in the late nineteenth century. Alfred Dreyfuss, the only Jew on the General Staff of the French army, was falsely convicted of treason in 1894 but exonerated in 1906 when it was discovered that the charges against him had been forged.<sup>12</sup> A large portion of French society believed that Dreyfuss was acting on behalf of a large Jewish conspiracy to take down France and the military.<sup>13</sup> The strength of nationalism and the rise of antisemitism led many Jews to believe that the need for an independent Jewish state was more important than ever.<sup>14</sup>

For any soldier, the normal reaction when going to war was that of naïve excitement, pride, bravery and patriotism. It might be determined that their initial motivation was wrong. We see this internal conflict quite clearly through the work of the

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<sup>11</sup> Kirk Douglas, “On Jews and Justice,” Huffington Post (blog), July 1, 20103, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kirk-douglas/antisemitism-jews-justice\\_b\\_3530590.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kirk-douglas/antisemitism-jews-justice_b_3530590.html).

<sup>12</sup> Robert Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 142.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.



war poets from the Great War, Jew and Gentile alike. However, Michael Berger stated that during the Great War 100,000 Jews served in the German Army and 77,000 of them fought on the frontline, while 19,000 were promoted in rank, 30,000 received decorations for valor and 12,000 Jewish soldiers lost their lives. Many Jews did not want to fight, but their principles ebbed and flowed depending on the specific circumstances and interests of their communities.<sup>15</sup> As we study the origins of the belief regarding the pacifism of the Jews, we continue to unwrap increasingly insidious parables. Of eighty-two Jewish soldiers that earned the Iron Cross, one received the highest decoration and 23 were promoted to officers.<sup>16</sup>

Wherever Jews immigrated and made new homes for themselves, they hoped they would not face many of the familiar challenges they had faced in their former homelands. No one realized it, nor did it appear as though they expected it, but anti-Semitism was going to appear repeatedly where it was least expected. The antisemitic belief of the pacifist Jew, and other social Darwinian and eugenic theories of Jews as a “lesser race,” would appear to be an excuse for ignorance and hatred.

From 1914 to 1918 Europe, and later America, were involved in the “war to end all wars” when excessive nationalism and industrial might threatened the very existence of people from all sides who were forced to choose between their religious beliefs and their country. The eastern theatre of Europe was considered the colonial region, and minorities like the Serbs, Poles, Bosnians and Jews were loyal to their empires, but

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<sup>15</sup> Penslar, Derek, *Jews and the Military*, 170.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

paranoid propaganda promoted the idea that the Jews were the natural prey of any passing patriot of Russia<sup>17</sup>. Was there a choice that needed to be made?

### Christian Pacifism and Jewish Passivity

Pacifism is not written about at length in either Torah or Talmud, but one will find that there is a close delineation of *Milchemet R'Shut* (a war that is permissible) and *Milchemet Chovah* (a Required War).<sup>18</sup> The larger topic can be found by looking to the idea of a just war, one often used by Christians, although there is a reluctance to do battle in “Biblical times” written in passages from I Maccabees, where the observant Jews would not fight on Shabbat (and were therefore murdered).<sup>19</sup> Neturei Karta, a small group of anti-Zionist, ultra-orthodox Jews, take the pacifist line, stating that “Jews are not allowed to dominate, kill, harm or demean another people and are not allowed to have anything to do with the Zionist enterprise, their political meddling and their wars.”<sup>20</sup> Dr. Steven Schwartchild, a Jewish intellectual and a pacifist during the Vietnam period, when asked what Jews should do if the Arabs invaded, responded by saying, “They have to learn how to die.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Hastings, Max, *Catastrophe 1914: Europe Goes to War*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), e-book, 371-372.

<sup>18</sup> Rabbi John Spitzer, email message to author, March, 2 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Neturei Karta International, "What is the Neturei Karta?" *Neturei Karta International*, 2003, accessed February 23, 2014, <http://www.nkusa.org/aboutus/index.cfm>.

<sup>21</sup> Rabbi John Spitzer, email message to author, March, 2 2013.

Professor John Keane on a BBC Radio 4 show, *In Our Time*, stated that pacifism “is self-contradictory when the desire to avoid violence can and often does bring it about.”<sup>22</sup> This produced the theory of “Just War.” Historically, in the just war tradition, a list of reciprocal rules of combat commonly evolved between two culturally similar enemies.<sup>23</sup> That is, when a set of values is shared between two warring peoples, it is often discovered that they implicitly or explicitly agree upon limits to the fight, but when enemies differ greatly due to different religious beliefs, race, or language, and as such see each other as “less than human,” war conventions are seldom practiced.<sup>24</sup>

An early example of this was during The Great Revolt which began in the year 66 CE, when Jews protested against heavy taxation and attacked Roman citizens in Judea.<sup>25</sup> During the Crusades, tens of thousands of Muslims were slaughtered and the Jews en masse were locked into synagogues that were burned down.<sup>26</sup> Just war appears to be a contradiction in and of itself, and religion is neither the aggressor nor the victim.

In a collection of essays that was edited by Terry Nardin, *The Ethics of War and Peace: Secular and Religious Perspectives*, politicians and international relations experts analyze the ethical standards of war critically.<sup>27</sup> Christian natural law cannot overlook the morality of any just causes of war.<sup>28</sup> In Judaism, the Bible and Talmud classify what

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<sup>22</sup> Niall Ferguson and John Keane, interviewed by Lord Melvyn Bragg, *In Our Time*, BBC Radio 4, June 3, 1999.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Moseley, “Just War Theory,” *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/justwar>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Josephus, *War of the Jews* II.8.11, II.13.7, II.14.4, II.14.5

<sup>26</sup> Ferguson and Keane, *In Our Time*.

<sup>27</sup> Dufault-Hunter, Erin, “Pacifism and Just War: Beyond the Sterotypes,” Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University, (2004): 89.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

is permissible and which types of wars are forbidden, based on God's authorization, based on the righteousness of the fight.<sup>29</sup>

For Orthodox Jews, there are no pacifist rules in a just war scenario. Orthodox Jews believed the Torah's purpose was to set the evil of man right, and non-violence would purify the atmosphere that would lead to war and the killing of man.<sup>30</sup> A more important issue for the Jews in Europe was their struggle with going to war. It had nothing to do with fighting and killing, but with the day-to-day hygiene of Jewish life in wartime; the day-in-the-life of the Jewish soldier made it almost impossible to keep Kosher.<sup>31</sup> This was a fundamental problem that would, for most, have serious consequences. The soldier had no way to monitor the food or other supplies provided by the military in accordance to Jewish law.

It was hard for a Jewish soldier to be in the army. The dietary restrictions were almost impossible to fulfill, and Talmudic permissions were constantly violated; the Sabbath could not be kept, and Passover services would have to be held under extreme circumstances, which would be nearly impossible if and when the unit was on the move.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, many Jews hid their religion from their Christian comrades, most due to fear of antisemitic retribution which was rife in the military world.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Wilcock, Evelyn, *Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists* (Lansdown, Stroud: Hawthorn Press, 1994), 74.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>32</sup> Levinger, Rabbi Lee J. *A Jewish Chaplain in France*, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1921), 149-150.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 150.

Erin Dufault-Hunter, in her essay “Pacifism and Just War: Beyond the Stereotypes” (2006), wrote that historically, Jewish rabbinical writings on “just” war were usually mentioned within the context of regimes in which they had little, if any, political influence, and their application of Old Testament teachings and rabbinic thought was almost wholly theoretical. Dufault-Hunter continues that it was not until 1948 when there was once again a Jewish nation that scholars seriously began to wrestle with how old teachings apply in this setting.<sup>34</sup>

Many Jewish scholars point out that the depiction of Jewish redemption at the end of days is God who punishes the Jews’ enemies, not the Jews themselves; therefore, it is a divine intervention, not a human one.<sup>35</sup> In the mediæval Judaic period, rabbinical authority made redemption a matter of patience by accepting subjugation and repairing the relationship with God, but it was understood that would come when God was ready and that it was a way to keep Jews separate from non-Jews.<sup>36</sup>

When Christians pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” does this fulfill Christian relationships with God and how does that embody the earthly kingdoms with violence? This is a question that was asked by Lisa Sowle Cahill in her book *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism and the Just War Theory*.<sup>37</sup> Cahill also examines the importance of pacifism as it pertains to the Gospels and how just war theory shares a desire to limit violence with the pacifistic ideal.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Dufault-Hunter, “Pacifism and Just War: Beyond the Stereotypes,” 90.

<sup>35</sup> Eisen, Robert, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism*, 84.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Dufault-Hunter, “Pacifism and Just War: Beyond the Stereotypes,” 91.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

The mediæval Jewish philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204) emphasized that peace must be offered before ever engaging in battle, but he varies in his attitude about conflict itself.<sup>39</sup> He identified the 613 commandments that bind the observing Jew to respect obligatory and non-obligatory war, and states the only reason there is war is because of the destruction of the Temple.<sup>40</sup> Maimonides' theory is disputed by the Orthodox; they argue that since Exodus, the only one that fights wars for the Jews is God, so the need for commanded or permitted war is moot.<sup>41</sup>

Fundamentally, Jewish law rejects the notion of a "siege" as is understood by the majority of international political organizations. Modern international law commonly accepts that in situations where "the commander of a besieged place expel[s] the non-combatants, in order to lessen the number of those who consume his stock of provisions, it is lawful, though an extreme measure to drive them back so as to hasten the surrender."<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, the Talmud unambiguously prohibits the waging of war in a situation where the casualty rate exceeds a sixth of the population.<sup>43</sup>

It has been shown that there are Jewish laws that permit fighting and that Jews are permitted to fight and to join in when one's country goes to war. The myth of Jewish pacifism is wrongly believed by many non-Jews, and it normally manifests through

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<sup>39</sup> Wilcock, *Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists*, 75.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 76.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Broyde, Michael J, "Fighting the War and the Peace: Battlefield Ethics, Peace Talks, Treaties, and Pacifism in the Jewish Tradition," *Jewish Law* (2010), accessed March 23, 2013, <http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/war1.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

antisemitic vitriol around the world. The reality that Jews fight in wars and do not only finance a war from behind a banker's desk is ignored or overlooked.

American Rabbi Lee J. Levinger wrote an extraordinary memoir, published in 1921, about his time in France on the Western Front. Entitled *A Jewish Chaplain in France*, Levinger explains that the American Jewish soldier of the Great War had to satisfy all religious ideals and that the Jew of twelfth century Spain or nineteenth century German Jewry were at equivalent spiritual rationalization.<sup>44</sup> Levinger continues that when it came to fighting, the Jew did not consider not fighting, nor did he look to Jewish law to justify his duties. But as far as religious tendencies, the soldier had a longing that there would be better days ahead and he had respect for democracy and a hatred for anything that smelled of hypocrisy.<sup>45</sup> The Jewish soldier and the Christian soldier were together on the fact that they needed religion and they cared very little about needing a place to worship at that time; the time to atone properly would come later.<sup>46</sup>

### The Great War and the Religious Quandry

To bring pacifism and the “just” war back into this discussion, a very good place to start is at the dawn of the Great War. On June 28, 1914, a Serbian radical, Gavrilo Princip, assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife. This action led to the mobilization of Austria and Germany, which, in turn, led Russia and France to

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<sup>44</sup> Levinger, *A Jewish Chaplain in France*, 206.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 149.

counter-mobilize, which prompted the mobilization of England – the United Kingdom, in order to defend France and Russia.

These countries needed man power, and the recruitment offices were out signing up would-be soldiers. For Jews, Evelyn Wilcock explains in her book *Pacifism and the Jews*, the first quandry over enlistment occurred in August of 1914, when some Jews refused, on principle, to volunteer for the British army, because the rationale for this new war was not well defined.<sup>47</sup>

No one quite knew what to do. Quakers, who are notoriously pacifistic, agreed to fight on the grounds of a special circumstance due to Belgium's attack by much larger and more powerful Germany.<sup>48</sup> The Jewish Recruiting Committee in Manchester had to find a solution to this problem due to growing political pressure. "England has been all she could be to the Jews; Jews will be all they can be to England" was the rallying cry, and the justification for the just war was remembered in the psalms, *Blessed be the Lord, my Rock, Who teacheeth my hands to war and my fingers to fight* (Psalm CX 54).<sup>49</sup> However, the Jewish Peace Society endorsed the righteousness of the allied cause.<sup>50</sup>

In Jewish opinion, a war is justifiable when there is a legal or moral justification to fight.<sup>51</sup> However, Jewish law needs to be able to recognize the validity of military service in order to be able to classify a war.<sup>52</sup> If God determines a war, there are no

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<sup>47</sup> Wilcock, *Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists*, 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 2

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.



exemptions, but if the war is man-made, a Jewish pacifist can quote Deuteronomy XX and garner an exemption from his host country's military.<sup>53</sup>

In order to be a real pacifist, Robert Eisen writes, one must take seriously the situation a particular war/fight represents, and take the side that is the lesser evil.<sup>54</sup> Serious pacifism needs to be honest, realistic and responsible, and it is commonly understood that Rabbinic Judaism is strongly committed to a peace ethic, which is stricter than anything written in the Bible.<sup>55</sup> Not all of the Talmud's principles are pacifistic, but it puts rational limits on using violence.<sup>56</sup> Eisen writes in *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: from the Bible to Modern Zionism* that rabbis who witnessed the destruction of the second Temple chose the strength of Judaism over the strength of the military.<sup>57</sup>

This brings one question to the central argument for Jews: is the Law enough for pacifism? Orthodox Jews were excused from service, due to their requirement to yeshiva for their daily study of Torah, while women are excused for their daily obligation to run the home.<sup>58</sup> The mainstream Jew was allowed to fight, as long as the Judaic laws' definition remained clear; self-defense. In another way, will this war strengthen God's presence on earth? To the soldiers, the moral standards by which they lived on the battlefield were not those preached in synagogue or church, but more of those an athlete

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Rosenwald, Lawrence, "Notes on Pacifism," *The Antioch Review* 65, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 106.

<sup>55</sup> Eisen, *The The The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism*, 69.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>58</sup> Wilcock, *Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists*, 77.

would feel on the pitch or a businessman would feel in the boardroom; it was that of fair play, but nothing of religious law or divine commandments.<sup>59</sup>

This war became a defense of democracy, but then, so was Judaism.<sup>60</sup> Many surveys showed non-Jews believed that Jews had mixed loyalty, and thus was the basis for a rising sense of anti-Semitism during the years of the Great War.<sup>61</sup> However, Jewish law did stress the need for Jews to defend the laws of their particular country, though this allows a Jew to claim conscientious objection status in wartime.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, neither the American government, nor Christian churches, nor Jewish scholars nor the Jewish community, believed that Judaism had any basis for pacifism in its laws.<sup>63</sup>

By 1917, on the eve of the American involvement in the Great War, Evelyn Wilcock points out that it was not practical that Jewish leaders preach pacifism, but Judah Magnes, a pacifist Reformed Jewish leader from California, spent the majority of his life contemplating Judaism and Zionism.<sup>64</sup> He spent his career trying to restore the authenticity of Jewish identity in the lives of Jewish Americans.<sup>65</sup> Wilcock mentioned that it was not practical for a Jewish leader to preach pacifism after the Americans entered the war, though Magnes became a vigorous defender of Jewish pacifism.<sup>66</sup> “The fact that we are at war cannot make us abhor war the less,” Magnes stated.<sup>67</sup> “Would it

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<sup>59</sup> Levinger, *A Jewish chaplain in France*, 146.

<sup>60</sup> Wilcock, *Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists*, 47.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

not have been a disgrace to the Jewish people had no one, particularly no Jewish teacher of religion (a Rabbi) taken the pacifist and radical stand?”<sup>68</sup>

Passivity is often brought on due to past war experiences or present war situations. Gentile soldiers as well as Jewish soldiers struggle with similar issues, regardless of religious background. As an example of battle-induced pacifism comes from the poetry of Wilfred Owen, a First World War British soldier and war poet. Owen became fully committed to pacifism after a battlefield injury in 1917 and his subsequent rehabilitation at Craiglockhart Hospital in Scotland. While convalescing, he met one of his literary heroes, Siegfried Sassoon, who provided him with guidance and encouragement to bring his war experiences into his poetry.<sup>69</sup> Owen’s poems voiced disillusionment with war and the traditional belief in the Horatian sentiment.<sup>70</sup> One of Owen’s best-known poems, written in 1917, though published posthumously in 1920, is entitled “*Dulce et Decorum Est*” (“It is Sweet and Honorable”). Owen himself characterized it as “a gas poem,” which graphically described the death of a fellow-soldier from a gas attack in the trenches.<sup>71</sup> The poem’s last stanza ends with a demand to the reader:

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> The Wilfred Owen Association, “Wilfred Owen: Poet of the Trenches,” 2013, accessed July 22, 2013, <http://www.wilfredowen.org.uk/Biography>. Siegfried Sassoon is remembered best for his angry and compassionate poems of the First World War. He avoided the jingoism and romanticism of many other war poets, and wrote of the horror and brutality of trench warfare. He contemptuously satirized generals, politicians, and churchmen for their incompetence and blind support of the war. (Poetry Foundation, n.d.)

<sup>70</sup> The Horatian ideal was that the hero had to take up arms to defend his country. This harkens back to Homer’s poem, *The Iliad* (Winkler, Martin M., “Dolce et decorum est propatria mori? Classic Literature in the War Film,” *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* (Springer) 7, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 177-214).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 183.

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest.  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old lie: dulce et decorum est,  
Pro patria mori? (it is sweet and seemly to die for one's country?)

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“*Dulce et Decorum Est*” plainly and forcefully gives the reader the opportunity to examine the question of whether war and one's country are worth dying for.

During the First World War, Siegfried Sassoon published an antiwar essay entitled *Public Statement of Defiance*, which he begins by stating, “I am making this statement as an act of willful defiance of military authority, because I believe the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it.”<sup>73</sup> His point was that he went to war because he believed it was to defend liberty, but it turned into a war of aggression, for which he and many others never signed up.<sup>74</sup> Sassoon challenged the lack of compassion and political abilities of his leaders and concluded his essay by stating, “I make this protest against the deception which is being practised on them; also I believe that I may help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority of those at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not share, and which they have not sufficient imagination to realise.”<sup>75</sup>

As Jewish law permits one to fight for the self-defense of one's country, what Owen and Sassoon described in their essays and poems might very well make one ask: was this what the laws were meant to permit? In continuation, Owen's commentary

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>73</sup> The Poem Hunter, *Siegfried Sassoon's Public Statement of Defiance*, March 31, 2010, accessed February 7, 2014, <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/sassoon-s-public-statement-of-defiance/>.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

continued by stating that the only way to stop the ruin of countless bodies was by stopping corruption at its verbal source, “the old Lie,” which is why he was horrifically honest about describing one’s death in battle.<sup>76</sup>

War poetry of the Great War was also popular and common among Jewish soldiers. Their experiences and poems were vivid and intense. Peter Applebaum translated these poems and wrote this introduction about what he found:

The styles are many and sometimes overlap: romantic, idealistic, and super-patriotic; war-like and Germanic; expressionistic; accusatory; sad, betrayed, and questioning; harsh and cruel; and biting satirical. And most of the work has not been translated into English before but lain dormant hidden from even German eyes.<sup>77</sup>

It is important to see that Jewish soldiers were as patriotic as all the other soldiers, and their hopes, fears and passions were as valid as everyone else. Many of the ways some Jewish soldiers expressed their feelings, like that of gentile soldiers, was through poetry.

One of the more popular of the German Jewish poets from the First World War was Emmanuel Saul. He was born in 1876 in Rudenwalde, which is now north-west Poland, the son of a Rabbi. Saul made his career as a lawyer, and when war broke out, he was 38, with a family, but he unhesitantly enlisted.<sup>78</sup> He was killed in 1915 on the Russian Front and earned the Iron Cross for bravery. At his memorial, Lieutenant Dr.

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<sup>76</sup> Winkler, “Dolce et decorum est,” 184.

<sup>77</sup> Roberts, David, “German Jewish Poetry of the First World War,” 2013, accessed February 27, 2013, <http://www.firstworldwar.warpoetry.co.uk>.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

Richard Rosenthal stated: “He was a man of liberal opinions, devoted to the idea of equality for all German Jews.”<sup>79</sup>

By the start of February 1917, continental Europe was embroiled in the throes of a massive war, and German-American relations had broken down, helped by the German sinking of the luxury liner, *Lusitania*, and the Zimmerman Telegram incident.<sup>80</sup> *The American Hebrew* reported about a new public trend stating that Jews had been “neutral” on the passivity rumor; given that there were Jews fighting on both sides in the Great War, this myth of pacifism and dissent of American Jews was completely erroneous.<sup>81</sup>

These calls for or claims of Jewish-American neutrality proved to be pro-American, since President Woodrow Wilson had held a neutrality stance himself: “of all the immigrants coming to these shores, the Jews have brought with them no ties with any foreign governments of nations that hindered them from become part and parcel of America... It is natural that American Israel is pro-American, undivided, ready for any sacrifices the American people may be called upon to make for the sake of American rights, for the sake of justice, liberty and equality.”<sup>82</sup> Once war was declared in April, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson sent American troops to Europe. American Rabbi Lee Levinger was assigned to the American Expeditionary Force in France. His memoir provides a first-hand account of what Jews faced during this war. It provides the reader

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> In January of 1917, British cryptographers deciphered a telegram from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to the German Minister to Mexico, von Eckhardt, offering United States territory to Mexico in return for joining the German cause. Massie, Robert K. *Castles of Steel*. London: Vantage Books. 516.

<sup>81</sup> Wilcock, *Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists*, 23.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

with amazing insights to what the Jewish and Christian soldiers faced religiously and as human beings during this war.

American General John J. Pershing demanded that a large number of chaplains travel with his army.<sup>83</sup> Many of these chaplains had, by the end of the war, earned medals of valor in the field. Additionally, most of these men of God tried to make sure they were omni-religious, enabling themselves to comfort, pray for and elevate the morale of any soldier.<sup>84</sup>

It is believed that the role of the war chaplain is to be there to rest the soul of the injured or dying, but chaplains also have duties not known by the non-combatant, and those duties include being the concession to the pacific spirit.<sup>85</sup> Levinger admits that all but one half of one day of the week, the chaplain does other things instead of preaching; mostly, he is there to bolster the morale of the young men who face the horrors of battle every day.<sup>86</sup> The only time a soldier discriminated between religious practice was when a Jewish soldier needed the Kaddish said or a Catholic soldier needed to make confession.<sup>87</sup>

Rabbi Levinger wrote extensively about the brave, fighting Jews he served with while on the front in France. His memoir focuses mainly on the Twenty-Seventh Division, but he commits virtually all of his book to the challenges and heroics of Jewish soldiers during the war. In his chapter “The Jew as a Soldier,” Levinger begins by stating

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<sup>83</sup> Levinger, *A Jewish chaplain in France*, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 8.

that “the Jewish soldier demands no defense and demands no tribute.”<sup>88</sup> He also goes on to state that “the Jew was an American soldier – that really covers the story.”<sup>89</sup>

German-Jewish First World War poetry focused on the strengths and concerns of war and why war, as much a religious defense as it was national defense, can be understood as Levinger had:

That we are German needs no outside proof,  
The truth thereof shines clearly as the sun,  
We Jews all leave for war of our own wish,  
Joyful to throng around our country's flag  
To gain for ourselves – even if fate wills  
That we pay with our blood – our Fatherland...  
Warriors for culture, German, Jew unite  
And then will bloom one common destiny:  
Defeat may lead to our destruction, sure,  
But victory frees, ennobles, gives us joy.  
For what can we expect from our cruel foe,  
That now spills Jewish blood in their own lands,  
Flowing in streams, and causes grief and woe  
To Jewish children, women without fault?  
Therefore I left for battle, as I am.  
A German Jew to fight in holy war.

“To My Children”, Emmanuel Saul <sup>90</sup>

Rabbi Levinger explains further that the Jewish American soldier was, as Saul expresses in his poem, just a soldier and that he stayed on duty longer than his Gentile counterparts,

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Roberts.



and that to list all of the citations and decorations received by these men would be an analogous to “opening a mediæval romance of the deeds of knightly heroes.”<sup>91</sup>

As to the Jewish boys in the battalion, I cannot recall many of them by name, but certain figures stand out simply because they were so unexpected. The ordinary run of soldiers, whether Jews, Irish or Americans... who simply do what they are expected to do.

Colonel Charles Whittlesey, 308<sup>th</sup> Infantry, “The Lost Battalion”.<sup>92</sup>

Colonel Whittlesey, acknowledged that through his experience in battle, the Jewish soldier was as brave and reliable as any of the other soldiers under his command.

The myth of Jewish passivity has numerous layers. As one antisemitic layer after another is peeled away, it is discovered that another false theory is exposed.

With the Great War was coming to its conclusion, the Romanov dynasty in Russia was facing revolt. One revolutionary group was led by Vladimir Lenin, who has been accused of being a pacifist, and Leon Trotsky.<sup>93</sup> They wanted civil war and with the aid of peasants, they engineered a series of bloody revolutions that eventually ended in 1921 with the capitulation of the Romanovs and the beginnings of a Communist empire which stood until 1989.

### Jewish Passivity and the Communist “Connection”

The connection of Jewish pacifism and Communism has brought about accusations based not on fact, but on the legacy of a myth. The issue is not “Jews and

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<sup>91</sup> Levinger, *A Jewish chaplain in France*, 115.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>93</sup> Lenin Internet Archive, “A Turn in World Politics,” ed. Marxists Internet Archive, Lenin Collected Works (Progress Publishers) 23 (2005): 262-270.

Communism,” nor “Jews under Communism,” and certainly not “Jewish Communism,” but rather “Jewish Communists.”<sup>94</sup> Andre W. M. Gerrits stated in his book *The Myth of Jewish Communism: A Historical Interpretation* that Austrian philosopher Martin Buber argued that the Messianic vision of history fully contradicts the reality of the past and the present, and that Messianism is the quintessential vision of the Jewish people.<sup>95</sup> He continues the mythic ties by writing, “Socialism belongs to this category of ‘absolute reality’ ...a critical understanding of human condition and the aspiration of a better society and is directly related to Jewish communal thought.”<sup>96</sup>

In America, the image of the “Jew as a Communist” did not take hold, even during the infamous Rosenberg Trial in 1951.<sup>97</sup> Though the Communist movement did try to play upon Jewish fears by portraying anti-Communism as a form of anti-Semitism, this was not taken seriously in America.<sup>98</sup> In Germany, however, the myth of the Jew as Bolshevik was strengthened due to the German Revolution of 1918 to 1919.<sup>99</sup> This

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<sup>94</sup> Krajewski, Stanislaw, “Jews, Communism, and the Jewish Communists,” *Jewish Studies*, 2012, accessed April 2, 2013, [http://web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/01\\_krajewski.pdf](http://web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/01_krajewski.pdf).

<sup>95</sup> Gerrits, A.W.M. “Anti-Semitism and Anti-Communism: The Myth of ‘Jewish Communism’ in Eastern Europe,” *Dialogue and Universalism* 11, no. 12 (1995): 27–51, 48.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> On July 17, 1950, former members of the American Communist Party Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were arrested for allegedly passing atomic secrets to Russia, then sentenced to death under the Espionage Act of 1917. After serving two years at Sing-Sing Prison, the Rosenbergs were executed on June 19, 1953. Radosh, Ronald; Milton, Joyce (1997). *The Rosenberg File*. Yale University Press. p. 352.

<sup>98</sup> Muller, Jerry Z., “Communism, Anti-Semitism & the Jews,” *Commentary* 86, no. 2 (1988): 28.

<sup>99</sup> On January 6th, 1919, the German Communists started their failed take over attempt, but the Weimar government found an unlikely ally in the Free Corps (*Freikorps*), the Right-wing nationalists that hated communists more than the Social

became a key aspect of the National Socialist platform of a Jewish Communist threat in Europe. They recalled the 1919 rebellion and preached that Jewish Communists initiated the failed government takeover, and this proved that the Jews were trying to make Germany their homeland.<sup>100</sup>

The Bolsheviks did not believe that the Jews were a “nation,” and this was a key tenet of Vladimir Lenin. In 1913, Lenin stated, “The idea of a Jewish nation was essentially totally false and reactionary” and was further endorsed by Josef Stalin when he stated, “The demand of national autonomy for Russian Jews is something of a curiosity—proposing autonomy for a people without a future and whose very existence has still to be proved.”<sup>101</sup> According to Lenin, a “nation” should have four characteristics: a common territory, a common language, a common economic system, and a common culture.<sup>102</sup>

In 1918, during the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, the rabbis of Odessa told revolutionary leader, Leon Trotsky (né Bronstein), that “the Trotskyes start the revolution, but the Bronsteins pay the bills,” which showed the Russians that the Jews, as a community, did not support the movement.<sup>103</sup> This led the Red Army, in 1919, to

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Democrats. By January 15, the Freikorps crushed the communists and murdered leaders Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. (Anthony Anthony, *The Devil's Disciples: Hitler's Inner Circle*, (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004.)

<sup>100</sup> Muller, “Communism, Anti-Semitism & the Jews,” 28.

<sup>101</sup> Polonsky, Anthony, “Jews and Communism in the Soviet Union and Poland,” The American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies, 1, accessed April 4, 2013. 1.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Muller, “Communism, Anti-Semitism & the Jews,” 28. The murder of Jews was a peasant reaction to the vitriol. There were 70,000 killed in Ukraine and 50,000 by Whites (army officers and Cossacks) of the Russian Revolution Army. Their theory was that their survival depended on killing a counter-revolution by driving the Jews to the Bolsheviks.

exclaim that “the people who crucified Christ rule the Ukraine,” while other partisan groups would shout “Death to the Jews! ”.<sup>104</sup>

Stalin’s “Great Turn” [1929–32] became a very important change in Soviet policies in which the Jews were a target. Along with his reign of terror, Stalin reduced the number of Jews in the highest ranks of the NKVD<sup>105</sup> and the judicial system.<sup>106</sup> Stalin sought to force the assimilation of Jews in his new Soviet society by ending all boundaries designated where they could live and regulated which occupations they could pursue.<sup>107</sup>

The emigration of more than 2 million people from the Russian educated class after the Revolution created a huge gap in skilled personnel and created new opportunities for upwardly-mobile Jews.<sup>108</sup> The new role of the Jew in Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe gave new impetus to their “Jew as Capitalist” characterization, in the image of Trotsky, to the antisemite.<sup>109</sup> To those with open and clear minds, it would be quite obvious that the Jews were not necessarily Communists and that Jews were playing a part on both sides: capitalist and revolutionary.

Jerry Muller, in his 1988 essay “Communism, Anti-Semitism and the Jews,” explains that in Eastern Europe where significant Jews were not part of any revolution,

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> The NKVD was the public and secret police organization that directly managed the power structure of the All Union Communist Party.

<sup>106</sup> Polonsky, “Jews and Communism in the Soviet Union and Poland” 2.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>109</sup> Muller, “Communism, Anti-Semitism & the Jews,” 28.

there was very little if any, anti-Semitism; the myth of Judeo-Communism did not garner strength with the Right.<sup>110</sup>

The situation in Germany was different. Where there had been no large scale strength of political anti-Semitism before the start of the Great War and it was actually on a downward trend, the Nazis stoked this flame as they were rising to power.<sup>111</sup> As Hitler gained influence, he infused his psuedo-scientific theories of radical hatred into party ideology for extermination.<sup>112</sup>

By 1944, Stalin was obsessed by the closeness the leadership the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee had with Jews outside the Soviet Union, especially in the United States, and the enthusiastic support for the emergence of the state of Israel.<sup>113</sup> However, in the immediate postwar years, many Jews were involved with the Communist movement in Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. One of the most disputed issues was in Poland: many Jews joined the Communists, believing that they would now be protected by the new Communist-dominated authorities.<sup>114</sup>

This would be an empty hope. By 1946, a number of Jews were in leading positions in the security apparatus in Poland and at the same time, there was a strong tendency to categorize anyone who disapproved of the Ministry of Public Security's surveillance of its own members as Jews.<sup>115</sup> Polish Jews made up 18.7 percent of the Ministry's workforce and held half of the managerial positions. As a public outcry of

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. The Nazis were able to kill six out of every seven Jews in Eastern and Central Europe.

<sup>113</sup> Polonsky, "Jews and Communism in the Soviet Union and Poland," 12.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

dissatisfaction arose from Poles that they were uncomfortable with Jews “lording over them,” by 1956 Jewish employees were largely removed from their positions in the Ministry.<sup>116</sup>

Polonsky concluded that the presence of Jewish Communists in important positions within the security apparatus had been seen as a consequence of Stalin’s deep distrust of the Poles and it took place at the same time as the purge of Yiddish cultural activists in the Soviet, which was essentially an attack on Russified Jews within the new Soviet intelligentsia.<sup>117</sup> The resentment in the Communist Party against the position of Jewish communists and with Jews lasted through 1968.<sup>118</sup>

Jews, from their beginning, want to be respected and to be permitted to practice and live by Judaic law peacefully. Jews throughout history have been willing and able to defend their home countries when asked. Judah Magnas stated that Jews have the right to abhor death and to defend their right to not spill their blood.<sup>119</sup> What I will examine in the next chapter is that some Jews chose to fight for what they believe in. The next chapter will explore the life of my great-great uncle Sam Dreben “The Fighting Jew,” who chose to take up arms to fight for those who were being persecuted by their tyrannical governments, while never forgetting about his Jewish identity.

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Wilcock, “Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of Twentieth Century Jewish Pacifists,” 28.

Chapter 3  
SAM DREBEN, “THE FIGHTING JEW”

“Don’t worry, I won’t die here. Well you see, I’m a Jew and there ain’t no Jewish cemetery in Nicaragua. So they wouldn’t have a place to bury me.”<sup>120</sup>

Sam Dreben, after being severely wounded in battle, 1908

The myth that Jews are pacifists is obviously inaccurate and there are numerous examples that prove this. There are those who believe Israeli Jews are fighters, but that Western Jews are passive and unwilling to fight when necessary. But this, too, is inaccurate. This belief often changes shape; it starts as a concern or an observation, but inevitably becomes an anti-Semitic reaction. Here is an example, Dennis Prager’s Internet blog from August 2012, “Jews and Guns”:

With the long sad history of the Jewish people being the "Whipping-boy" of Europe and the Middle-East; untold millions through the centuries being blamed for plagues, defeats to enemies, exiled, and slaughtered on a scale that defies imagination, they haven’t embraced the concept of armed self defense. I am of course speaking of the American Jews, as Israel seems to be quite capable of defending themselves. Why do they live in such denial of the persecution they

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<sup>120</sup> O’Reilly, Tex, “The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly,” *Liberty Magazine*, December-October 1933-34. Page sequence unknown. There is no record of Tex O’Reilly being present for this exchange. Tex may have written it to express Sam’s toughness and Jewishness.

have faced? Do they really think it can't happen here? Don't they see the anti-Semitism that's creeping into the US?<sup>121</sup>

With respect to the Just War theory and the laws of Judaism, Jewish people were permitted to fight when it was deemed necessary for their survival and the survival of the homeland. The rising of the Second Temple in Jerusalem or to the responding attacks from Hamas in the Gaza Strip would be two such examples.

This chapter will examine the life of one ordinary Jew who, under unique circumstances, proved that the myth of the passive Jew would ever be attached to him. Here, the extraordinary life of my great-great uncle, Sam Dreben will be examined. Dreben spent eighteen years fighting in every rebellion and war he could get involved with and was given the nickname "The Fighting Jew" by friend and renowned writer Damon Runyon.<sup>122</sup> Was Runyon taking on antisemitic theory by giving his friend, Dreben this nickname or was he himself being anti-Semitic?

Born on the first day of June 1878, Sam Dreben was a Jew from the small Ukrainian town of Poltava. He was the youngest of five boys, and his mother dreamed of Sam becoming a rabbi. Sam witnessed the horrors of the pogroms and noticed many of his family members and fellow villagers killed.<sup>123</sup> The Dreben family made the important decision to move to Kiev, which would hold the Army at bay for a bit longer

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<sup>121</sup> This is a blog post, but it does characterize the image Jews have in the modern era. This blog site is from an ultra-right-wing fringe organization, so its opinions and postings do provide observations and opinions Jews in America and around the world face. "Are American Jews Basically Pacifists?," SurvivalistBoards.com (blog), February 2009, accessed March 15, 2013, <http://www.survivalistboards.com/showthread.php?t=250755>. .

<sup>122</sup> O'Reilly, , "The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben's Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly."

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.



from preying on young Sam. He left his hometown at the age of sixteen to escape the mandatory conscription into the Tsar's army placed upon young Jewish men, which was conscription for life

As with many Eastern Europeans, the Dreben family had relatives who were living comfortably in America: Philadelphia, in their case. Sam often read the letters sent back to Poltava from his uncle, and young Sam knew that an American was the only thing he wanted to become.<sup>124</sup>

Understanding what was in store for him if he stayed in the Ukraine, Sam decided that he needed to escape his obligatory conscription and emigrate. First, he settled in Liverpool, England, where he held two jobs in order to earn enough money for a steerage-class ticket to sail to the United States. Sam's jobs while in Liverpool were as a dock laborer and then as a tailor in 1898.<sup>125</sup> Sam knew that learning the craft of tailoring might get him a job with his uncle, who owned a tailor shop in Philadelphia, once he arrived in the United States. After six months of non-stop work, he finally saved enough money for a steerage-class ticket to America in early 1899.<sup>126</sup>

Like many immigrants to America, Sam embraced his new life in his adopted country through hard work and determination to succeed. Working ten hours a day in his uncle's Philadelphia tailor shop, Sam attended night school where he challenged himself to master the language of his new country. By the end of the 1870s, Jews from all over

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Sheila Dreben Schneider, personal conversation, October 2, 2012.

<sup>126</sup> Laskin, David, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), e-book, 149.

the country, and not just in the centers of the highest immigrant Jewish population, for the first time began to experience an outward and obvious trend of anti-Semitism.<sup>127</sup>

To look at him, one would never expect Sam Dreben to be a masterful warrior. He was stout and short with a heavy Yiddish-Ukrainian accent, but he was born to be a soldier. David Laskin, in his 2009 book *“The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War,”* wrote that Sam was a fearless infantryman, a gunrunner, crafty spy and always of excellent character.<sup>128</sup> His soldiers said that he was a walking vaudeville routine.<sup>129</sup> In a 1975 interview with University of Texas at El Paso’s Oral History Institute, Brigadier General SLA Marshall recalled conversations he had with Sam about his time in the Mexican Revolution, “which he described in very vivid detail and always gave himself a big part.”<sup>130</sup> I am going to explain his role in these wars, chronologically.

By the early 1920s, Sam Dreben, now a decorated war hero, was a minor celebrity. When Sam would visit his brother’s family in Chicago, he was given a parade. My grandfather, Harold Drebin, would tell stories of how exciting it was when “Uncle Sam” would visit and tell his nieces and nephews tall tales of his adventures as bed-time

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall (Retired), interview by Richard Estrada about Marshall’s experiences during the Punitive Expedition, World War I and the men he fought with and against during that time period, El Paso, TX, July 5, 7, 9, 11 and 19, 1975, 43.

stories.<sup>131</sup> My grandfather would reminisce that Sam's visits were some of the greatest memories of his life.<sup>132</sup>

Nearly ten years after Sam's death, Edward Sinnott, "Tex" O'Reilly, published a glorified biography of Sam, in the form of a military action novel.<sup>133</sup> What was Tex's reason for writing this serial? Was he trying to make money off of the story of Dreben? It was in 1933, the midst of the Great Depression, when O'Reilly wrote his seven-part serial entitled *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben* for *Liberty Magazine*. Sam was portrayed as "the Common Man," who happened to seemingly be in the middle of every important battle of the day, and in turn became the hero of every battle in which he was involved.

O'Reilly wrote his autobiography, *Roving and Fighting: Adventures Under Four Flags*, in 1918 and never once mentioned Dreben. For being the close friends O'Reilly

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<sup>131</sup> Notice the spelling of my grandfather Harold's surname. Our family is unaware as to when the spelling changed from Dreben to Drebin. Sam's brother was my grandfather's father and he was a Drebin. Sheila Dreben Schneider, personal conversation, October 2, 2012.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Military action novels were the precursor to the modern graphic novel. Tex and Sam both fought with Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson in Mexico and Sam fought in France with Wheeler-Nicholson as well. Tex may very well have been attempting to sell this story of Sam to Wheeler-Nicholson. O'Reilly, "The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben's Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly,". Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson was a writer of pulp fiction books, military action stories in a 1922 book named *The Modern Cavalry*. In 1925, he established the Wheeler-Nicholson Inc., a newspaper syndicate Wheeler-Nicholson began to publish a daily comic strip, and he published an illustrated book called *New Fun: The Big Comic Magazine* in February, 1934. One year later, he released his follow-up, entitled *New Comics #1* (Nicky Brown, 2010, accessed February 19, 2013,). That same year, Wheeler-Nicholson had the good fortune of uncovering the talents of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, who went on to publish, their first comic, *The Adventures of Superman*. Wheeler-Nicholson later renamed his magazines Detective Comics, which in 1940 became known as DC Comics.

claimed they were, it is strange that O'Reilly never mentioned Dreben. What was O'Reilly's ambition? Maybe he just missed his friend, but it is very unclear what his motive was.

The graphic military exaggerated-drama was the popular writing style of the day. O'Reilly wrote the stories in first-person description of Dreben's military experiences in the Philippines, Central America and fighting with Pancho Villa during the Mexican Revolution.<sup>134</sup> O'Reilly, it must be noted, made it clear on several occasions, that Sam was Jewish.

The serial started Dreben's story while he was still living with his family in Ukraine on April 24, 1898, the day the United States Congress declared war against Spain. Dreben had decided that the best way to embrace his new country was to join the Army. His aunt pleaded with him not to join, asking how she would explain this to his mother. "Soldiers get killed, Sammie," she said, as she pleaded with him.<sup>135</sup> To Sam, three square meals a day and a new set of clothing, albeit a uniform, was a good enough reason to enlist.<sup>136</sup> For someone who had escaped the Jewish pogrom of Ukraine and the conscription of young Jewish men into the Russian army, Dreben was quite willing to join the American army.

By the time Dreben and his regiment arrived in Manila harbor in late 1899, the Spanish-American War had ended. However, there were still problems in the Philippine

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<sup>134</sup> Though O'Reilly claimed to have fought alongside Dreben in all of these campaigns, he, interestingly, never once mentioned Dreben in his memoir.

<sup>135</sup> Art Leibson, *Sam Dreben, "The Fighting Jew,"* (Tucson, AZ: Westernlore Press, 1996), 19. O'Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben's Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly*.

<sup>136</sup> Leibson, Art, *Sam Dreben, "The Fighting Jew,"* 19. O'Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben's Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly*.

Islands that the American troops needed to monitor. An insurrection, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, threatened to end the treaty Spain had signed with the United States. American president William McKinley had thoroughly expected that “insurgents and all others [must] recognize the military occupation and authority of the United States.”<sup>137</sup> They did not, and Aguinaldo’s troops freely entered the capital city of Manila, established guerrilla outposts throughout, then fortified the suburban areas with soldiers ready at any moment to engage an enemy.<sup>138</sup>

As the new conflict began, Sam and his company found themselves on the outskirts of the little town of Cavite Viejo, ready for their directives. Believing he heard orders to advance, Sam went over the top of the trench they were encamped in and rushed the enemy trenches alone and without the support of his company. Someone from a different division asked, “who is that little wildcat?” and Tex replied, “Oh that’s little Sammie Dreben, the fighting Jew. Just a raw Johnny come lately, but a fightin’ fool.”<sup>139</sup>

Tex wrote about the event when Sam won his first distinction for bravery and it was here when Tex first wrote that Sam was “the Fighting Jew.”<sup>140</sup> This was an interesting approach for Tex to introduce Sam as a Jew. One could question whether Tex was addressing his own feelings of Sam’s religious identity. Might this have been a factor in the wording and decisions to write about him in such way, or might it have been the cultivation of the rising attitudes of American anti-Semitism in the mid-1930s? Furthermore, this could not have been what Tex actually said, since Damon Runyon

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<sup>137</sup> Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 26.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly*.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

coined this nickname for Dreben and used it in a few of his published articles about Sam in the early 1920s. Tex appeared to have decided that the story needed the cache of the “Fighting Jew” moniker.

What is interesting to note, this was the first time Tex and Sam had met each other. O’Reilly’s initial impression of Sam was that of a fearless soldier, but also, that Dreben was a Jew. This may have been the “hook” to get the reader interested in the story.

As Tex’s story continued the battle had concluded, and Tex described the camaraderie within the company and described what they all did to pass the time between battles.<sup>141</sup> Tex wrote that it was an unwritten rule that a soldier could not refuse an invitation to box and that Sam did not fare too well in his first bout, but took his outcome cheerfully.<sup>142</sup> The black eye that Sam received during his frequent boxing matches “became standard equipment; it was part of his uniform” remembered O’Reilly.<sup>143</sup>

O’Reilly claimed that the only injury Sam ever received during his military or mercenary career had been when Dreben joined the rebels in Nicaragua, as a soldier of fortune, under the rebel command of General Mena. Dreben, fellow American soldier-of-fortune Gabriel “Gabe” Conrad, and their squad of Nicaraguan rebels engaged in a skirmish against the forces of Nicaraguan dictator José Santos Zelaya López.<sup>144</sup> During that insignificant contest, Sam was shot in the hip. As O’Reilly remembers it, Sam was

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<sup>141</sup> O’Reilly described the games they played during the down times, which were the same games the Army played throughout its history. O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly*.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

turning to light a cigarette, and the enemy shot him “out of meanness.”<sup>145</sup> Conrad tried to console his wounded friend and to make sure Dreben would not go into shock. Conrad asked whom Sam would like him to contact if he were to die.<sup>146</sup> Ever so dramatically, O’Reilly wrote that Sam looked up at him and indignantly told him that he would not die on the battlefields of Nicaragua because there were no Jewish cemeteries in which to bury him.<sup>147</sup>

While convalescing, Sam met another American soldier of fortune, Tracy Richardson. Richardson was quite a few years younger than Dreben, but the two of them became friends and fought alongside of each other for many years and in many campaigns.<sup>148</sup>

In 1909, at La Libertad, rebel commander General Monchado needed machine guns immediately. Dreben and Richardson, who were masters with the Gatling gun, volunteered to join Gabe Conrad’s foreign legion and help to fend off the Nicaraguan forces. Pinned down, Sam and Tracy took the initiative on the day by charging up a hill firing their machine guns, and pushed back the federal troops until they dispersed.<sup>149</sup>

By now the rebels were tired and extremely hungry. General Conrad, suffering from an extreme fever, ordered Dreben and Richardson to search for food to feed his troops. As the story goes, under heavy fire, Sam came upon a pot of chicken soup, in an enemy’s tent, still boiling on the fire. He quickly handed his rifle to Richardson, gathered the pot and returned to his division with the soup. A more recent biographer, Art Leibson,

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben*, “*The Fighting Jew*”, 48.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly*.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

noted that for Sam, like most Jews, chicken soup is a “cure all,” so Sam continued to feed his general ignoring the wishes from Conrad to stop.<sup>150</sup> Within a few days, Conrad’s fever broke and Conrad was back to leading the division. Leibson questions whether the soup was the cure, but either way, the division was on the way.<sup>151</sup>

Tex continued the tale of how Richardson, with help from Dreben, captured Managua for the rebellion. Richardson had an idea, and went to the commander of the federal army and told him that he had the commander’s surrender order. After a short argument, the commander, General Gabe Conrad conceded.<sup>152</sup> Then, as the story continues, Richardson searched for the rebel general and convinced him to surrender.<sup>153</sup>

The two were able to find fancy new white suits and “found” two white horses to ride through the city.<sup>154</sup> Art Leibson explains, in “Sam Dreben, ‘The Fighting Jew,’” that Richardson rode a beautiful white horse but Dreben was on a little nag.<sup>155</sup> O’Reilly develops the story by revealing that as they rode down a small side street in the capital, Sam noticed a beautiful horse tied to a post, and this horse was that of Juan Estrada, the

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<sup>150</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben, “The Fighting Jew,”* 52. Art Leibson’s 1996 biography *Sam Dreben: “the Fighting Jew,”* is a questionable resource. Though Leibson listed a large bibliography, I cannot verify his work as completely original. A large portion of his work was taken directly from Tex O’Reilly’s Liberty magazine serial. Furthermore, Leibson did not list O’Reilly as a source. Therefore, I cite his writing in this paper with trepidation and the knowledge that it is quite possibly the work of Tex O’Reilly. For these reasons, I cite both Leibson and O’Reilly as the research source, if the material is in both publications.

<sup>151</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben, “The Fighting Jew,”* 52.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly.*

<sup>155</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben, “The Fighting Jew,”* 48. O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly.*



new Minister of War.<sup>156</sup> As Sam was about to mount his new horse, Tex quoted Sam as saying, “here’s where this Jewish boys gets himself a new horse.”<sup>157</sup>

What is interesting is why this was quoted at all. Tex was not there but wrote it, possibly sarcastically, but this story was probably invented for creative reasons. Was it to remind the reader that Sam was Jewish and that he had ascended from nothing into some prominence? Is this antisemitic, or does it ultimately depend on the reader to determine that, though it does seem unnecessary? Many one-line quotes are sprinkled throughout the serial.

In the third installment of the *Liberty Magazine* serial, entitled “Colonel Sam and Colonel Tracy,” the two soldiers of fortune were aimlessly wandering the streets of New Orleans and, as Tex penned it, “looking for wars”.<sup>158</sup> It was 1910 and a well-dressed Mexican man, named José María Pino Suárez, approached the two men and asked if they were interested in joining *his* fight.<sup>159</sup> Without hesitation Sam rattled off a series of questions; “Sure, when do I fight? Where do I go? When do I get started?”<sup>160</sup> What Sam and Tracy failed to understand was that the fighting had already begun. The two new

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<sup>156</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben*, “*The Fighting Jew*,” 48.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> José María Pino Suárez would later become the Vice President of Mexico.

<sup>160</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben*, “*The Fighting Jew*,” 48. A major incentive for mercenaries looking to participate in the Revolution was the prospect of earning an above average wage. This was attractive to those out of work or who earning low wages in America. Lawrence D. Taylor, “The Great Adventure/ Mercenaries in The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1915,” *The Americas* (Academy of American Franciscan History ) 43, no. 1 (July 1986): 25-45. JSTOR.

liberty fighters would join the *Maderistas*, of Pascual Orozco in to Chihuahua, and Suárez paid each of them \$300 to prove his earnestness.<sup>161</sup>

Dreben was commissioned Colonel, and the commanding officer of a ragged group, but was able to quickly organize the men and move north. After a series of hard fought battles, it became clear that he had been able to help the rebellion. When the news that President Díaz resigned reached Dreben, he joined Pino Suárez, in Merida, Yucatan. Suárez rewarded Sam with a banquet in his honor and a prize of \$5,000 in gold.<sup>162</sup>

By 1911, the next phase of the Mexican Revolution turned north. Rebel leader José Doroteo Arango Arámbula, otherwise known as Francisco “Pancho” Villa, became an important player in the development of the “Fighting Jew” persona. Dreben had become a very well-respected machine gunner. He had developed this skill while fighting in Central America. He could break down and rebuild a Gatling gun with rapid speed.

The fighting in the south of Mexico was ending, but Dreben discovered that more fighting was necessary in the north. This would allow Dreben to join with the Villa lead rebels in Ciudad Juárez. They would carry out a bunch of crazy raids. In one such raid, Villa obtained 122 bars of silver from a Wells Fargo train robbery, held an employee of

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<sup>161</sup> Leibson, *Sam Dreben, “The Fighting Jew,”* 66. The *Maderistas* was a rebel group that supported Francisco Indalecio Madero. They called him “*caudillo de la revolución*” (leader of the Revolution). He became the most powerful political leader in Mexico once President Porfirio Díaz stepped down on May 25, 1911. Two years later, Madero was elected President of Mexico on October 15, 1913 with close to 100 per cent of the votes, in the first clean election in nearly 40 years. Madero was the youngest president in Mexican history, being only 36 years old at the time of his inauguration.

<sup>162</sup> O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly.*

Wells Fargo hostage and forced Wells Fargo to help him trade the bars for the cash equivalent.<sup>163</sup>

Dreben became one of Villa's most trusted advisors. Sam was unreserved and never hesitated to join a fight. But everything changed after March 9, 1916. Villa and a group of nearly 485 *Villistas* attacked the border town of Columbus, New Mexico, killing ten American soldiers, two officers, and wounding five soldiers and eight civilians.<sup>164</sup>

In response, the American government closed all entry points into and out of the United States with Mexico. Though not immediately, Dreben eventually resigned his position as a soldier with Villa's freedom fighters and set up a business in El Paso, Texas; Villa became his key client.<sup>165</sup> Dreben knew that he had been lucky to have survived all the battles in which he fought, and ending his combat career was the logical thing to do.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Charles Burrell, "Wells Fargo's Hush-Hush Deal with Pancho Villa," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 5, 1999.

<sup>164</sup> Yockelson, Mitchell, "The United States Armed Forces and the Mexican Punitive Expedition: Part 1," *Prologue Magazine* 3—Is this the page number?. Vol. 29, Document. National Archives. Washington, D.C., Fall 1997. In Frank McLynn's book, "*Villa and Zapata: A History of the Mexican Revolution*," he asks the question of why Villa attacked Columbus. There are many scenarios, but McLynn addresses one that is very interesting and may have some validity. Europe was in the midst of the Great War; Germany was hoping to keep America from joining forces with the Allies. With America fighting the Mexicans, this would slow or end the sales of arms to France and England. The American expeditionary force in Mexico would need these and other munitions later during the Punitive Expedition of 1916. Frank McLynn, *Villa and Zapata: A History of the Mexican Revolution*, (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2000), Kindle e-Book, location 4858.

<sup>165</sup> O'Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben's Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly*.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

From March 16, 1916, to February 14, 1917, an expeditionary force of more than fourteen thousand army troops operated in northern Mexico under the command of Brig. Gen. John J. “Black Jack” Pershing, “in pursuit of Villa with the single objective of capturing him and putting a stop to his forays.”<sup>167</sup> While it is unclear how he truly felt about the Columbus raid and subsequently about Villa, Dreben realized that this Punitive Expedition was serious; he severed all ties with Villa. This decision was timely, yet again, for Sam, since Pershing gave the order to “Get Villa, dead or alive,” which also included any immediate associates of the Mexican rebel.<sup>168</sup>

That next morning, Dreben asked for a meeting with General Pershing and offered his services, which were immediately accepted, and Sam was placed as a scout.<sup>169</sup> His job was to enter Mexico, gather as much intelligence as he could, then immediately, and directly, give it to the American general. Once Pershing agreed to allow Dreben to join his side of the fight, Sam was often used as Pershing’s personal valet. When Sam was not driving Pershing around the area, he and his troops, the *Drebeneers*, would reconnoiter Villa’s movements.<sup>170</sup> During the Punitive Expedition, a young lieutenant George S. Patton remembers hearing the tales of the legendary Dreben.<sup>171</sup>

After several harrowing experiences as a scout, Sam finally decided to unceremoniously retire and, as Tex O’Reilly put it, buckle down to the unromantic task

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<sup>167</sup> Yockelson, “The United States Armed Forces and the Mexican Punitive Expedition: Part 1.”

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> O’Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben’s Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O’Reilly*.

<sup>170</sup> Gerald Meister, “Sam Dreben: Fighting Jew, Forgotten Hero,” *worldwar1.com*, accessed January 16, 2013, <http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/dreben.htm> (accessed January 16, 2013).

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

of earning a living selling insurance and real estate.<sup>172</sup> Sam hit hard times. His business ventures all seemed to end in owing people money. One of his attempts was setting up the Dreben Petroleum Company. He could not raise enough money to make a legitimate attempt at making it a success, so Sam sold his company to pay outstanding obligations.<sup>173</sup>

In 1917, Sam married Helen Spence, whom he called his “Texas Honey” and who was nearly half his age.<sup>174</sup> At roughly the same time, the United States was entering the Great War, but since Sam was almost forty and newly-wed, he chose not to reenlist.

In January 1918, Sam and Helen welcomed a daughter into the world, but something changed within Sam in the months after his daughter was born.<sup>175</sup> In “*The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*,” David Laskin considered if Sam may have felt isolated or if his pride of country was so strong that he needed to reenlist and head off to war in Europe.<sup>176</sup> Sam enlisted as a buck private in the Texas National Guard and was assigned to Company A, 141<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 36<sup>th</sup> Division.<sup>177</sup> Dreben was the most qualified and experienced soldier in the ranks. By the

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<sup>172</sup> O'Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Drebens Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly*.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Laskin, David, “The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War,” 307.

<sup>175</sup> I have done extensive research as well as asked many senior members of my family on the Dreben/Drebin side, and I was able to learn the name of Sam's newborn daughter.

<sup>176</sup> Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 309.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

time Sam and his company arrived in France, in mid-1918, he was promoted to Sergeant.<sup>178</sup>

Richard F. Burges, the commander of the unit Sam eventually joined, stated to Sam, “Patriotism was not an ideal phrase but a deep and abiding devotion to the country of his adoption.”<sup>179</sup> A newspaperman who was aware of Sam’s accomplishments and attributes, Burges stated that his Jewishness and his American citizenship were the two most cherished possessions that he had.<sup>180</sup>

The regiment sailed from New York on July 26, 1918, and arrived at Brest, France on August 6. It was sent to the 13<sup>th</sup> Training Area at Bar sur Aube, where it remained until September 26, 1918, when it began its movement to the front lines, going into the Epernay-Chalons area as reserve of the French Group of Armies of the Center.<sup>181</sup> It was within their first week in France that horrible news from home came to Sam: Helen had a miscarriage while he was en route to France. It was an option for Dreben to request “hardship leave” and return to Helen, but he chose to stay with his men.<sup>182</sup> It has been assumed, in family lore, that Dreben believed his raw recruits were more in need of him than Helen was.

On the evening of October 5, 1918, the American and French armies were stalemated at St. Etienne, north of Blanc Mont Ridge in France’s Champagne region.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 308.

<sup>181</sup> Texas Military Forces Museum, 141st Infantry Regiment, accessed May 18, 2013, <http://www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/1940/141.htm>.

<sup>182</sup> Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 578.

<sup>183</sup> Meister, “Sam Dreben: Fighting Jew, Forgotten Hero,” 11.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Marines were pinned down and could not advance, and had been taking on relentless machine gun fire all day. Dreben and his company came in relief of the Marines in the morning of October 6. The Texas division was slow to advance, but Dreben and his young soldiers of Company A were heading to the front of the position.<sup>184</sup> At 5:15 a.m. on the morning of October 8, Dreben and his company charged the position and, without losing a man, killed or captured the entire unit.<sup>185</sup>

Later that day, the 141<sup>st</sup> and 142<sup>nd</sup> infantry suffered staggering losses, roughly 1300 casualties and 300 more the following day, but by October 10 the Germans seemed to disappear.<sup>186</sup>

The Battle of Blanc Mont Ridge was a major turning point of the war. The Germans' defensive position, The Hindenburg Line, had been broken on the Western Front, and the American victory freed the sacred city of Rheims.<sup>187</sup> According to the official citation describing Dreben's heroism, he:

[d]iscovered a party of German troops going to the support of a machine gun nest situated in a pocket near where the French and American lines joined. He called for volunteers and with the aid of about 30 men rushed the German positions, captured four machine guns killed 40 of the enemy, captured two and returned to our lines without the loss of a man.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 525.

<sup>185</sup> Levinger, *A Jewish chaplain in France*, 120. Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 582.

<sup>186</sup> Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 582.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Meister, "Sam Dreben: Fighting Jew, Forgotten Hero," 11.

For his accomplishment, Sgt. Dreben was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, with the Croix de Guerre and the Medaille Militaire added by the French (their highest honor).<sup>189</sup>

Finally, and only a few weeks later, on November 11, 1918 at 11.00 hours, the Armistice was made official, effectively ending the war. Sam returned home to El Paso to a hero's welcome. He returned to civilian life, restarted his insurance sales business, and joined the newly formed American Legion, which focused on service to veterans, service members and communities.<sup>190</sup> The usual troubles of civilian life soon found Sam again. Helen and Sam divorced on June 9, 1919 in El Paso, Texas.

In 1921, the third anniversary of the Armistice, General Pershing selected Sam Dreben, among other Great War heroes, such as Sergeant Alvin York and Major Charles Whittlesey of "The Lost Battalion" to serve as the Guards of Honor on November 11 for the burial of the Unknown Soldier of World War I at Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> As the United States Department of Defense states, the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) is the second highest military decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Army and is awarded for extraordinary heroism. The *Croix de Guerre* was instituted on April 8, 1915 by the French Government to recognize acts of bravery in the face of the enemy specifically mentioned in dispatches, while the *Medaille Militaire* was instituted on January 22, 1852 and is awarded to non-commissioned officers and other ranks for acts of bravery in action.

<sup>190</sup> American Legion, American Legion/Community/History, accessed May 22, 2013, <http://www.legion.org/history>. The American Legion evolved from a group of war-weary veterans of World War I into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States.

<sup>191</sup> Rachel Feree, Jessica Jeffers, and Lindsay Werner, *Sam Dreben Soldiered All Over the World*, 2004, accessed May 19, 2013, <http://epcc.libguides.com/content.php?pid=309255&sid=2603472>.



On July 18, 1923, Sam married his second wife, Maeda Andrews, in Dallas, Texas. With Maeda's urging, the newlyweds moved to Los Angeles, California, where Sam worked as a special agent for the West Coast Life Insurance Company.<sup>192</sup>

On March 14, 1925, Sam had been feeling poorly for a few days, so he went to his friend, who was also a doctor, for a routine exam. He mistakenly injected Sam with a toxic substance, rather than his prescribed medication. Because of the mixup, Sam died the following morning at Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles.<sup>193</sup>

Two days later, the state flag flew at half-mast at the Texas capitol, and its legislature adjourned for a day.<sup>194</sup> When news arrived of Dreben's premature death, General Pershing sent Maeda a heartfelt telegram proclaiming his friendship with Sam and called him "the finest soldier and one of the bravest soldiers I have ever known."<sup>195</sup>

Norman Walker of the *Los Angeles Times*, on March 25, 1925, published a posthumous article on Sam entitled "How Pershing and Foch Escorted Sam Dreben to Generals' Banquet." The article explained how Dreben was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroism at Blanc Mont, and was the personal guest of General Pershing at the American Headquarters in Paris. Mr. Walker wrote,

Turning to Marshal Foch, Gen. Pershing said: "Marshal Foch, I want you to meet one of my finest and bravest soldiers." Seeing his military medal, which is

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<sup>192</sup> It is assumed that they were divorced due to Sam's alleged infidelities, but all the research is inconclusive. Art Leibson writes, inaccurately, that Sam and Helen separated then divorced before leaving for France in 1917, but it is fact that they divorced in 1919, a few months after Sam returned. This could answer the question about why he did not return to be by her side after her miscarriage. However, Leibson's research and book is not cited and so is not reliable.

<sup>193</sup> Feree, Jeffers, and Werner, *Sam Dreben Soldiered All Over the World*.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Unknown paper, "Sgt. Sam Dreben, 'The Fighting Jew,' Dies in California." *Unknown*, March 18, 1925.

awarded by France only for great heroism, the little marshal of France grabbed the little Jew soldier, embraced him and kissed him on both cheeks.<sup>196</sup>

There was a movement within the American Legion and governmental politics in Texas that proved to be another battle Sam was willing to fight, with as much heroism and fearlessness as any other. The Ku Klux Klan was attempting to garner support and power within the ranks of the American Legion in El Paso. Sam, along with other supporters, fought tirelessly to keep them out:

I am a loyal member of the Legion and a loyal American citizen. These men (Klansmen), oath-bound to secrecy, hide behind their masks and say that because I am a foreign-born Jew I am not good enough to be an American. Every time America has called for volunteers, I have put on the uniform. They did not ask me at the recruiting office if I was a Jew, and they did not ask me on the battlefield what my race or religion was. The soldiers didn't wear masks in France, other than gas masks, and they don't need them now.<sup>197</sup>

After a lengthy debate, the Legion chairman ruled that Dreben was out of order; but Dreben pushed for a vote and his resolution passed unanimously.<sup>198</sup> David Laskin wrote that this was the first major defeat for the Klan in El Paso.<sup>199</sup>

Newspapers all over the country published the news of his death. Sam's friend, Damon Runyon wrote in the eulogy, "If I were asked to write his epitaph, I would put it in a few words. I would simply engrave in the granite shaft: SAM DREBEN, ALL

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<sup>196</sup> Norman Walker, "How Pershing and Foch Escorted Sam Dreben to Generals' Banquet, *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 1925. The actual description of Sam is inherently anti-semitic, but, in the context of the era and the style in which it was written, it is hard to interpret the verbiage to be hateful.

<sup>197</sup> Feree, Jeffers, and Werner *Sam Dreben Soldiered All Over the World*.

<sup>198</sup> Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 674.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

MAN.”<sup>200</sup> The American Legion, Hollywood Post 41, buried him at Grandview Memorial Park in Glendale, California.<sup>201</sup>

In the May 11, 1942 edition of the *Daily Mirror*, Damon Runyon published a new poem in honor of his fallen friend, Sam, entitled, “The Spirit of Sam Dreben Goes Marching On – Hail Dreben!” Runyon wrote,

The beats loyal and true – That’s  
Dreben, A Jew!...

I see upon his breast, the DSC, The Croix de Guerre, the Militaire – These too.  
And I think, Thank God Almighty we have more than a few like Dreben, a  
Jew!<sup>202</sup>

Laskin wrote that if Sam Dreben had not been an actual person, Hollywood would not have been able to concoct such a character.<sup>203</sup> Long-time friend and fellow soldier-of-fortune Tracy Richardson once said that Sam had, “a courage that nothing daunted. He seemed to take thousands of wild chances with death and emerged by fool bull luck. But when you knew him, you’ve learned how carefully he planned every detail and how little he left to chance.”

Sam Dreben confirms that passivity was not a trait he held. As someone who fled the mandatory draft into the Tsar’s Army, Dreben answered the call every time there was a need for a warrior, quickly and without hesitation. What makes his military career unique was that he chose who and where to fight, but when the United States went to

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<sup>200</sup> Personal documentation from Dreben/Drebin family

<sup>201</sup> Feree, Jeffers, and Werner, *Sam Dreben Soldiered All Over the World*.

<sup>202</sup> Damon Runyon, “Hail Dreben!,” *Damon Runyon’s The Brighter Side*, May 11, 1942. (Publisher unknown.)

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

war, Dreben always stepped up to aid his adopted country. As Damon Runyon stated, Sam was a brave and heroic Jewish-American man.

## Chapter 4

### THE DELUSION OF A NAZI UTOPIA AND A FINAL SOLUTION

I decide who's a Jew and who isn't and I decide who will live and who will die.

Karl Lueger, Mayor of Vienna - after the *Anschluss*.<sup>204</sup>

How did the myth of Jewish pacifism, Jewish hatred and the Nazis' desire for *Lebensraum* (living space) evolve and manifest into the largest bureaucratic and social program of anti-Semitism ever seen in human history? This chapter will examine a variety of different instances of how the scientific and governmental communities within Germany distorted science to accomplish their plan of Jewish annihilation.

As the National Socialists came to power in 1933, Hitler publicly proclaimed that the Treaty of Versailles was dead. Hitler fervently believed that they were stabbed in the back by an international Jewish conspiracy.

It is difficult to explain the reaction of the Jews as the Nazi regime took power, but many fell into depression, while others believed Hitler and his policies were a passing

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<sup>204</sup> John Merriman, "Fascism," *HIST 202: European Civilization, 1648-1945*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University), October 9, 2009.

episode.<sup>205</sup> Zionist Jews believed Hitler's power was not a momentary quirk, but an exploitation of well-established German principles.<sup>206</sup>

The end of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the Third Reich brought about new and dangerous changes of governmental bureaucracy and science that took the hatred of Jews and other "lesser" races to a new and horrific level. Holding fast to the ideals of a Utopia for the "Master Race," Germany implemented plans under the unsympathetic eyes of the democratic world, thus allowing Hitler and his government to develop the largest and most involved system of mass genocide the world has ever seen.

The Nazis adopted a theory based on an American pseudo-scientific movement of the late 1880s, described by eugenicist Charles B. Davenport as "the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding."<sup>207</sup> Ultimately, by the mid-1930s, the Nazis had put Davenport's theory into practice, preferring to implement euthanasia as an instrument of mass murder by killing people who were mentally and physically handicapped. By the early 1940s, the Nazis expanded their practice into national policy, and they began killing the Jews and other "undesirables" of Europe with military and mechanized efficiency.

It is necessary to discuss the "*Volkish* thought" as it grew out of the nineteenth century, which historian George Mosse contends "showed a distinct tendency toward the irrational and emotional."<sup>208</sup> *Volkish* thought, which was fundamentally a populist

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<sup>205</sup> Yisrael Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, (Washington DC: B'nai B'rith Books, 1988), 27.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, 5.

<sup>208</sup> George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964), 13.

ideology, promoted the idea of “authentic German culture” and the superiority of the German race, language and history.<sup>209</sup> This ideology existed primarily within the margins of German society for most of the century, but the mainstream of the German Right began to follow its theories more following the end of World War I and with the establishment of the Weimar Republic.<sup>210</sup> These German conservatives fought against “the entire social and ideological” course of the Weimar Republic’s policy of “industrialization, urbanization, and Jewish assimilation.”<sup>211</sup> The *volkish* movement also became more attractive to many in the educated middle-class, who increasingly doubted whether the “cultural and intellectual paradigms which had dominated the second half of the nineteenth century were capable of dealing with the social and existential effects of modernity.”<sup>212</sup>

With little to no condemnation from the international community, the Nazi programs began to grow in scope and speed. By the late 1930s, the German people began to question these programs, but when they were told that many Germans were also Jews, they pulled away from the criticism.<sup>213</sup> As a result, ultra-nationalistic and ultra-antiparliamentarian policies became normal practice in Germany and her satellite territories.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Richard S. Levy, ed., *Anti-Semitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2005), 743.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Frederic Spotts, *Bayreuth: A History of the Wagner Festival* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 131.

<sup>212</sup> Margarete Kohlenbach, “Transformations of German Romanticism 1830-2000,” *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*, ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 258.

<sup>213</sup> Merriman, “Fascism.”

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

## Jewish Emigration and the Rise of International Antisemitism

In the last half of the nineteenth and the early decades of the twentieth century, Jewish immigrants from all across Europe were arriving in the United States. Nevertheless, by the end of the nineteenth century, attitudes toward the Jewish communities within the United States were experiencing profound changes. By the late 1870s, Southern and Eastern European Jews were arriving in America in large numbers, becoming part of the largest influx of people in the history of America.<sup>215</sup> Two million Jews from Russia emigrated by the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to escape pogroms and discrimination.

German composer Richard Wagner, who became a hero to the Nazi leadership, wrote grand operas depicting pseudo-Germanic heroes that often attacked Jewish culture.<sup>216</sup> Wagner, a notorious antisemite, believed that “Jewish spirit” was bringing down the depth of music, and a remedy to the problem was that Jews should assimilate and replace Judaism with German culture.<sup>217</sup> Interestingly, after his marriage in 1870 to second wife, Cosima, he expanded and internalized his antisemitic beliefs to mirror

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<sup>215</sup> David Grubin, “The Jewish Americans,” DVD, directed by David Grubin, (Arlington, VA: PBS Home Video, 2008).

<sup>216</sup> In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote that Jews had never produced any creative art, least of all in music, while Richard Wagner believed that the Jews represented the “evil conscience of our modern civilization,” but his statement calling the Jew “the plastic demon of the decline of mankind” was a phrase that was repeated often by the Nazis. Robert S. Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust* (New York: Modern Library / Random House, Inc., 2001), e-book, 65.

<sup>217</sup> Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (London: Penguin Books, Ltd, 2003), e-book, 89.



hers.<sup>218</sup> He believed that the Jewish culture should not be permitted to assimilate into the German culture.<sup>219</sup>

After a disastrous fire on December 8, 1881 at the Ring Theater in Vienna, where hundreds of people were killed, Wagner commented to Cosima that all the Jews should have burned in the performance of “Nathan,” and this became an underlying vision of the Nazis on racial purity of the “Aryan race.”<sup>220</sup>

In a 1919 letter, Adolf Hitler, who was a rising star in the Munich conservative-political world, wrote that the Jews brought “racial tuberculosis of peoples.”<sup>221</sup> Furthermore, he rejected anti-Semitism on all grounds, and stated that “the final aim must be the removal of the Jews altogether.”<sup>222</sup>

In David Laskin’s 2009 book, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, he writes that boys as young as twelve were taken into “military martyrdom” of Russian Army service.<sup>223</sup> While many of the Jewish boys lost

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> This statement was from Cosima Wagner’s diaries in 1881. Ibid, 90. Written in 1779, but first shown in 1783 in Berlin, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s play, *Nathan der Weise* (*Nathan the Wise*), set in 1192 during the Third Crusade in Jerusalem and tells the story of the wise Jewish merchant Nathan, the enlightened Muslim leader Saladin, and how they resolved the senseless problems among the three religions. Lessing, the son of a clergyman, in his play, addressed sacred themes of friendship, tolerance, relativism of God, and rejection of divine miracles and the essential importance of communication. Colleen Kearney Rich, “Lending a Stage Hand: Theater of the First Amendment Nurtures Playwrights and Composers,” *The Mason Gazette*, January 6, 2006. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 90.

<sup>221</sup> Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 290.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Laskin, *The Long Way Home: An American Journey from Ellis Island to the Great War*, 32.

their lives while in service, many more believed that their Jewish identity had been stripped.<sup>224</sup>

Anti-Semitism was not isolated to Europe; xenophobia was on the rise in America, as well, by the turn of the century. Ellis Island was reporting low entrance exam scores among the immigrant Jews from Europe while other reports of similar outcomes of Jews in the U.S. Army.<sup>225</sup> Jewish intellectuals, on the other hand, were making significant achievements in academia and science in the United States, which caused Princeton psychologist Carl C. Bingham to theorize that “the able Jew is popularly recognized not only because of his ability, but because he is able and a Jew. Our figures then, would tend to disprove the popular belief that the Jew is highly intelligent.”<sup>226</sup>

In America, Jews began to notice they were being discriminated against in hotels and in shops. This was a new feeling for them, though it was not unique, not even for the Jews who had been born and raised in the United States. One example of this new instance of anti-Semitism was at the Grand Hotel in Saratoga Springs, New York. This was the first and largest incident of anti-Semitism in America to this point.<sup>227</sup> Jewish banker Joseph Seligman and his family were denied entry at Saratoga Springs Grand Hotel in 1877. This almost turned into an international incident, and was the first time

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Friedlander, Henry, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, 7.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> David Grubin, “The Jewish Americans,” (2008).

that Jews in America had to internalize that they may not be welcome in America; that they were not as integrated into American life as they thought.<sup>228</sup>

Antisemitism had clearly been on the rise in Europe, especially Germany, since the late nineteenth century. In the United States, the liberal German Americans deplored the antisemitic trend in German-language newspapers.

In Michigan, Father Charles Coughlin was the most influential antisemitic advocate in the country and reached millions of people with his weekly radio broadcasts.<sup>229</sup> On his radio broadcasts, Coughlin was known to recite sections of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*,<sup>230</sup> claimed the “Judeo-Bolshevik threat” was because Lenin and Stalin were Jews and on November 20, 1938, two weeks after Kristallnacht, said that “Jewish persecution only followed after the Christians were persecuted,” because millions of Christians were killed by the Communists in Russia.<sup>231</sup>

Nazi propaganda used *The Protocols* to help justify persecution of the Jews, and was made required reading for German students. In *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry 1933–1945*, Nora Levin states that “Hitler used the *Protocols* as a manual in his war to exterminate the Jews”:

Despite conclusive proof that the *Protocols* were a gross forgery, they had sensational popularity and large sales in the 1920s and 1930s. They were translated into every language of Europe and sold widely in Arab lands, the US,

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* published in 1903, is the most notorious and widely distributed anti-Semitic publication of modern times ([www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)). It spreads stories about Jews, which were repeatedly discredited. These lies continue to circulate today, especially on the Internet. Antisemitic groups use the *Protocols* as a common way to spread their hatred of Jews ([www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)).

<sup>231</sup> Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Google Books, 66.

and England. But it was in Germany after World War I that they had their greatest success. There they were used to explain all of the disasters that had befallen the country: the defeat in the war, the hunger, the destructive inflation.<sup>232</sup>

Fascism took hold in the 1930s, and within Germany, it acted as a social device for the development of the Nazi propaganda system and the politics of the Third Reich.<sup>233</sup> Hitler exploited this trend by stoking the fear of Communism, claiming the only answer to this rising issue was the strong government of the National Socialist Party.<sup>234</sup>

By the time Austria was annexed by Germany in March 1938, the Jews were dealing with the most violent and radical anti-Jewish measures in Austria, such as seizing Jewish businesses and looting Jewish homes. Germany firms initiated by Hermann Goering, the supervisor of Germany's four-year rearmament plan, quickly adopted this.<sup>235</sup> The "Aryanization" of Jewish businesses and mandatory disclosure of their total assets was in place by the spring of 1938. *The Times* reported that since Jewish stores in Berlin were now being targeted with anti-Semitic hatred, it could no longer be the most tolerant city of Jews, and that the Berliners now chant slogans stating "Germans must not buy from Jews" and "Out with the Jews." which led to one thousand Jews being sent to concentration camps, first established in 1933.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Nora Levin, *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry 1933–1945*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), Quoting from IGC.org.

<sup>233</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 18.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 91.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid, 100.

Due to these new policies, Zionism, which had been relatively weak in Austria before the Anschluss, began to grow with new recruits.<sup>237</sup> Zionist agents organized the departure of 40,147 Austrian Jews to Palestine in 1938 and 1939.<sup>238</sup> Furthermore, sixty thousand Viennese Jews applied for residence in Czechoslovakia.<sup>239</sup>

The news reported from Central and Eastern Europe was becoming more extensive and detailed. The leaders of democratic countries in the west, particularly the United States, seemed unwilling or unable to do anything to stop these events. In 1938, Americans held fast to their traditional image of a nation for the oppressed, though they were not willing to freely open their doors and U.S. immigration laws reflected this prejudice.<sup>240</sup> For example, these new laws demanded that for an immigrant to gain entry, each newcomer needed an American sponsor agreeing to sign an affidavit of financial backing promising the immigrant would not need public assistance.<sup>241</sup>

In the 1994 Public Broadcasting Service *American Experience* documentary, “*America and the Holocaust*,” Dr. Viola Bernard stated: “They were afraid, for example, of the argument that Europe was trying to dump all its Jews on the United States and anti-Semitism certainly was a powerful ingredient, frequently covert instead of overt.”<sup>242</sup> Additionally, dozens of “Patriot” groups had sprung up by 1939. Laura Delano, cousin to American president Franklin Delano Roosevelt commented, “Twenty thousand charming

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<sup>237</sup> Bernard Wasserstein, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012), e-book 369.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Martin Ostrow, “America and the Holocaust”, 1994, accessed April 1, 2013, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/holocaust/peopleevents/pandeAMEX101.html>.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ostrow, *America and the Holocaust*.

children would all too soon grow into 20,000 ugly adults.”<sup>243</sup>

It was not just family members who had the ear of the president; there were high-ranking government officials in Washington D.C. who shared their antisemitic beliefs, as well. For example, Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long of Missouri addressed his office’s directive on how to curb the influx of immigration into the United States in a June 26, 1940 memo outlining effective ways to obstruct the granting of U.S. visas.<sup>244</sup> It becomes obvious that the State Department never recognized the true threat to the Jews of Europe, and their attitude could be summarized thus: if we are patient, we will find that the problems of the Jews in Germany are not really life-threatening.<sup>245</sup>

Many public organizations throughout America blamed the economic and social problems in America on the Jews, and much of the vitriol was reminiscent of the slogans used within Europe, particularly Germany and Austria. As an example, Lewis Weinstein, a Boston attorney, remembered hearing people in the street shout, “We’ve got to get rid of the Jews. They don’t help us; they kill us. They kill us financially, they own everything, and we’re stuck with their victims.”<sup>246</sup>

With the flood of new anti-Jewish laws and the emigration of German Jews to the democratic countries, leaders in Germany and the United States knew immigration needed to be addressed. President Roosevelt organized a meeting of twenty-nine governments in the small French resort town of Evian-les-Bains eleven days after the Anschluss. The conference convened on July 6, 1938, and its goal was to address the

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> See Appendix for copy of memorandum. Breckinridge Long, Assistant Secretary, *Effective Ways to Obstruct the Granting of U.S. Visas* (Washington DC: United States Department of State, June 26, 1940).

<sup>245</sup> Ostrow, *America and the Holocaust*.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

plight of Jewish refugees expelled from Germany and Austria.<sup>247</sup>

Dealing with the realities and addressing logical solutions were not going to be achieved at Evian. The British government wanted to make sure that the idea of Jewish immigration to Palestine would not become a viable option, and the Americans were not willing to modify their immigration quota restrictions.<sup>248</sup> Of the twenty-nine countries that attended, most sent only low-level politicians, while a number of volunteer groups sent members that were permitted to monitor the meetings and make submissions.<sup>249</sup>

One after another, each country expressed its moral concern for the plight of the Jews, but in the same breath, gave its reasons for why they would not be able to accept any number of immigrants. Brazil, for example, expressed readiness, but “to respond to the noble appeal of the American government within the limits of her immigration policy,” while Ecuador was unable to do anything since it was an agricultural nation and it would be “too great an influx of intellectual workers.”<sup>250</sup> One after another made excuses for its inability to accept Jews; except, surprisingly, one nation rose to the occasion and stated that it was willing to accept one hundred thousand people.<sup>251</sup> By 1942, the Dominican Republic accepted 472 Jews at the cost of three thousand dollars each, paid for by the Joint Distribution Committee.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 100.

<sup>248</sup> Wasserstein, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War*, 370.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 369.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 370.

<sup>252</sup> Wasserstein, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War*, 370. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) is the world’s leading Jewish humanitarian assistance organization. Since 1914, JDC has exemplified that all

As Robert S. Wistrich wrote in his 2000 book, *Hitler and the Jews*, that the most disappointing aspect of the conference was the refusal of Great Britain and the United States to even contemplate admitting of any significant number of Jews. The moment the United States, the sponsoring nation, made it clear that it was unwilling to open its doors, the conference was hopeless, while the *Times* of London wrote that “the refugee problem can be solved only by a mixture of mercy and cool calculation, both of which were shown in excellent proportion here at Evian.”<sup>253</sup>

One observer at the Evian Conference, Golda Meir, the future prime minister of Israel, would never forget and barely forgave the inaction from this conference.<sup>254</sup> In her autobiography, Meir wrote, “I don’t think that anyone who didn’t live through it can understand what I felt at Evian was a mixture of sorrow, rage, frustration and horror.”<sup>255</sup>

It is important to mention what the perceived outcome was to the Conference. With a small mention in the World section of the July 18<sup>th</sup> edition, *Time Magazine* wrote, Evian is the home of the famous spring of still and unexciting table water. After a week of many warm words of idealism and few practical suggestions, the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees took on some of the same characteristics. There were two days of stalling tactics which went on before a president would be elected. No delegate wanted the post, each fearing that his nation would then be responsible for the

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Jews are responsible for one another and for improving the well being of vulnerable people around the world (jdc.com).

<sup>253</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 102.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.



conference's all-too-probable failure.<sup>256</sup> All nations present expressed sympathy for the refugees but few offered to allow them within their boundaries.<sup>257</sup>

The German newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* reported on the proceedings at Evian by stating, “Nobody wants them,” and in July 1938 Hitler gloated, “It is a shameful spectacle to see how the whole democratic world is oozing sympathy for the poor tormented Jewish people, but remains hard hearted and obdurate when it comes to helping them.”<sup>258</sup>

For all intents and purposes, the failed ideas at Evian for dealing with Jewish emigration, the programs put into place by Hitler and the Nazis were given a perceived “green light” by the entire world. Though there were some international Jewish organizations that protested the Nazi treatment of the Jews, the overall pressure to stop the persecution was quite limited. The passive attitude of the Jewish community here comes into question, but it is not the passive reaction that needs to be questioned, it is the utter shock and horror that a government would plan to develop a bureaucracy that would work to eliminate an entire group of people. Many in Germany believed that once Hitler gained power and “settled in,” he would discontinue the persecution.<sup>259</sup> The idea of fighting a massive political and social movement did not seem a good strategy for the collective Jewish communities of Europe.

Furthermore, after the events of the Evian Conference, Jewish morale and hope

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<sup>256</sup> Annette Shaw, “The Evian Conference, Conclusion,” Christian Action for Israel Exclusive, 2001, accessed April 17, 2013, <http://www.cdn-friends-icej.ca/antiholo/evian/conclusion.html>.

<sup>257</sup> “World, International: Refugees,” *Time Magazine*. Vol. 32., July 18, 1938. 16.

<sup>258</sup> Shaw, “The Evian Conference, Conclusion.”

<sup>259</sup> Jeremy Issacs, “1. A New Germany, 1933-1939,” *The World at War*, Blu-Ray, Directed by Jeremy Issacs, Performed by Thames Television, (ITV: UK), 1973.

for international assistance was at an all-time low. The Holocaust may not have been inevitable, but the Nazis did make it clear that they had *something* planned.

### Social Darwinism and Eugenics Theories in Germany Gets a “Green Light”

Eugenicists, Social Darwinists and the national policy of the Nazi Germans were able to justify and put their hatred of the Jews into reality. The Nuremberg Laws from September 17, 1935 made it legal to discriminate against the Jews, and it was after this law was passed that Germany used “Jews” to refer to the vague term “non-Aryan.”

There were three laws attached to the Nuremberg Laws, the first was *The Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor*, that prohibited intercourse, marital or extramarital, between “Jews” and “Germans” and also the employment of “German” females under forty-five in Jewish households.<sup>260</sup> The second was *The Reich Citizenship Law*, which took away German citizenship from Jews and introduced a distinction between “Reich citizens” and “nationals.”<sup>261</sup> The third and final law made sure there was a contingency. If the first two laws were proven not to work, the third law would hand over the “Jewish problem” to the National Socialists for a final solution.<sup>262</sup> The

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<sup>260</sup> American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, *The Nuremberg Laws*, 2013, accessed March 25, 2013, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/nurlaws.html>.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Yitzhak Ahrad, Israel Gutman, and Abraham Margalio. eds., *Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*, 8th ed., (Lincoln, London, Jerusalem: The University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 81.

Nuremberg Laws were drafted and then ratified by politicians with the full support of the German populace.<sup>263</sup>

*Die Reichsvertretung de deutschen Juden*, in response to the Nuremberg Laws, stated that these laws were a blow to German Jews. But that they must create a workable relationship between the Jews and non-Jews of Germany, allowing a viable and strong economic environment for the Jewish communities and where defamation and boycott had to end.<sup>264</sup>

On September 24, 1935, *Die Reichsvertretung* listed five urgent tasks to which Germany needed to commit for Jewish survival:

1. A Jewish educational system so young Jews could become upright Jews and secure their faith and an independent cultural structure.
2. The increased need for emigration.
3. The need and expansion of a welfare service to care for the sick, needy and aged.
4. A safeguard for the economic position of the Jews by developing employment bureaus, economic advice and personal or mortgage loan agencies.
5. The development and construction of a Jewish state in Palestine, which would be funded by the German Jews.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Arad, Gutman, and Margaliot. eds., *Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*, 84.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid, 85-86.

Sociologist Gustav Ichheiser in 1946 wrote an essay called “The Jews and Anti-Semitism,” which explored the relationship between the Jews and anti-Semitism in Germany, as related to Social Darwinism, Eugenics and pacifism. His thesis argued that Social Darwinists and eugenicists believed certain preconceived facts and avoided the truth by simply accepting things for the way they seemed to be.<sup>266</sup> Dr. Iccheiser wrote that prejudices are not normal, but are beliefs based on shared falsehoods that one group holds against another.<sup>267</sup>

Harold E. Quinley, who examined three national surveys conducted in the United States in 1938, 1940 and 1968, puts Dr. Iccheiser’s thesis to the test in the article “Anti-Semitism in America.” These surveys asked Americans to list the qualities they most admired in the Jews. The overall findings were that most Americans believed Jews were good in business, religious, family-oriented, intelligent and ambitious.<sup>268</sup> Though the results are stereotypes, the findings did not demonstrate that the Americans questioned were openly antisemitic.<sup>269</sup>

Nevertheless, it seemed that anti-Semitism in America was more a matter of custom than it was a tradition. In addition, it may have been a plausible reason why there was not a strong response to any racial programs against the Jews.

It was at the conclusion of the Evian Conference of 1938, where, to their astonishment, Nazi officials realized that the United States, Britain, and others who

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<sup>266</sup> Gustav Iccheiser, “The Jews and Anti-Semitism,” *Sociometry* 9, no. 1 (February 1946), 93.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Harold E. Quinley, *Anti-Semitism in America*, Judaica Series, (New York: Free Press, 1979), 8.

<sup>269</sup> David Grubin, “The Jewish Americans,” (2008).

criticized Germany for its treatment of the Jews refused to address the matter directly by admitting them as immigrants.<sup>270</sup>

As we continue to look at the passivism myth as it relates and leads to anti-Semitism and genocide, many Darwinian-inspired eugenicists espoused pacifism, though they refused or did not have the intellectual curiosity to explore the limits of pacifism, especially about race relations.<sup>271</sup> Little attention has been paid to the appeal of one particular kind of racist thought: exterminationist racism.<sup>272</sup> Racism does not always imply extermination, but often functions as a justification for slavery or economic oppression.<sup>273</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century, racial ideologies gained prominence, which maintained that the educational efforts of religious and secular-humanitarian emissaries were in vain.<sup>274</sup> Under equally favorable climatic and land conditions, the higher race always displaces the lower, i.e., contact with the culture of the higher race is a fatal poison for the lower race and kills them. [t]he evolution of humanity and of the individual nations progresses, not through moral principles, but rather by dint of the right of the stronger.<sup>275</sup>

Some Social Darwinists believed that the key to *progress* was to eliminate the “lower race” and argued that racial extermination, even if carried out by bloody means,

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<sup>270</sup> Jay Howard Gellar, "Germany and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History." *ABC/CLIO* (Thomas Adam), 2005, 1-5, 2.

<sup>271</sup> Iccheiser, “The Jews and Anti-Semitism,” 96.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Richard Weikert, “Progress through Racial Extermination: Social Darwinism, Eugenics, and Pacifism in Germany, 1860-1918,” *German Studies Review*, 26 (2003).

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

would provide humanity with a moral improvement.<sup>276</sup> In *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler suggested that one of the moral problems of the Jewish race was their need to protect their blood purity, thus being accomplished by the regulation of intercourse between Jews and non-Jews.<sup>277</sup>

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler described that the Jewish response never failed when there was a threat, because it was dealt with immediately and turned any issue upon his enemy.<sup>278</sup> Hitler further stated the Jew was never the persecuted, but always the aggressor, and always considered those who resist him his enemy and did everything possible to destroy him.<sup>279</sup>

Some pacifists were eager to create a new, modern human that would embrace ideas that argued against with the preexisting code of humanitarian conduct. Not only had the infrastructure of scientific racism pointed toward extermination as policy, eugenicists with pacifist sympathies began to endorse some kind of exterminationist racism.<sup>280</sup>

The promise of radical modernization including Social Darwinism appeared to offer the liberation and progress of humanity, which strongly appealed to many leftists.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Translated by James Murphy, (Munich: Liber Electronicus 2013), e-book, 598.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid, 686.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> Weikert, "Progress through Racial Extermination: Social Darwinism, Eugenics, and Pacifism in Germany, 1860-1918."

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

Nevertheless, many Social Darwinists and eugenicists viewed themselves and their racial theories as rational, scientific, progressive, and modern.<sup>282</sup>

As the threat of war was becoming a foregone conclusion in the late 1930s, Jewish pogroms were becoming more prevalent. In addition, the pacifism and unsympathetic anti-Semitism from the political leadership of the international representatives at Evian proved to be one of the important consequences that aided the implementation of the Final Solution by the Nazis, and the demise of six million Jews and approximately six million other innocent victims.

### National Socialism and the Utopian Fantasy

In 1915, D.H. Lawrence wrote: “I want to gather together about twenty souls and sail away from this world of war and squalor and find a little colony where there shall be no money but a sort of communism as necessities of life go, and some real decency.”<sup>283</sup> Early twentieth century literature teemed with worlds of imagined escape, feminist utopias, industrial visions, and rich conceptions of the world as it could or should be.<sup>284</sup> One writer who explored these ideas was H.G. Wells. He created notions of a future that would seem ghastly to us now, where the weak were killed while the strong prospered and procreated.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> John Carey, Steve Connor, and Laura Marcus, interview by Melvyn Lord Bragg about Modernist Utopias, *In Our Time*, BBC Radio 4, March 10, 2005.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

The twenty years between the two wars were extremely difficult for Germany.<sup>286</sup> Some argue that the nation had become corrupt, weak and its bloodstream became infused by degenerate elements.<sup>287</sup> Adding to the chaos, the German government felt scorned and economically damaged due to the war reparations England and France demanded. Germany immediately began to develop reasons and excuses for the cause of this humiliation, and these justifications would set them on a course to totalitarianism.

One German theory was that Germany lost the war because it had been stabbed in the back by an international Jewish conspiracy. Hitler believed that there was no reason the German government had to agree to the cease-fire. He considered it invalid because the war had not crossed the border into German territory, so they did not have to defend their land. Furthermore, Germany blamed the Jews for starting the Bolshevik revolutions in Russia, and spread Communism across the whole of Europe, thus overtaking Germany.

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Millions of Germans did not join the Nazi Party, and their reluctance was due to their belief that the Jewish-Bolshevik movement had seduced them.<sup>289</sup> The Nazi Party

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, (London: Penguin Books, Ltd., 2005), e-book, 759.

<sup>288</sup> Professor David Cesarani, in an interview with Laurence Rees, states that the Nazis believed the Jews had acquired vast power, and that they had used this power in a malign way. He continues by stating that it was the power of the Jews that had led to the Bolshevik revolution, and their power led to revolution in Germany as well which had stabbed the German Army in the back and brought down Imperial Germany Laurence Rees, *Interview with Professor David Cesarani: The Nazi hatred of the Jews*. April 2012, accessed August 21, 2013, [http://ww2history.com/experts/David\\_Cesarani/The\\_Nazi\\_hatred\\_of\\_the\\_Jews](http://ww2history.com/experts/David_Cesarani/The_Nazi_hatred_of_the_Jews).

<sup>289</sup> Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 267.



scapegoated the Jewish media, art and entertainment communities for the “seduction” in the post war Weimar government.<sup>290</sup>

However, many who feared the rise of Bolshevik support in Europe fueled this fear by pointing to the Jews, for they believed it was Jewish leaders who had planned and organized it.<sup>291</sup> These fears were exploited in propaganda and conspiracy theories, which stoked the fires of anti-Semitism, which began to be heard and read all over Germany. For example, the conspiracy theory that Jews wanted to destroy Christianity; the ultimate objective of the Jews was to destroy civilization; and Russian Jews were the leaders of the world revolutionary movement.<sup>292</sup>

Saul Friedländer examined a diary entry by the future Nobel Prize laureate Thomas Mann from May 2, 1918: “the world still had an instinct of self-preservation and must act against such people with all the energy that can be mobilized and with the swiftness of martial law.”<sup>293</sup>

With the rise of National Socialism in the early 1920, the practice of anti-Semitism continued its rise in popularity. When Adolf Hitler became German Chancellor in 1933, the country was in the heart of a deep-rooted economic depression. To make matters worse, the Treaty of Versailles had left Germany virtually bankrupt and without a military infrastructure. Hitler continued to fan the flames of responsibility by repeatedly

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<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Friedländer, Saul, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*, Vol. 1, (New York, NY: Harper-Collins, 2008), 231.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Though Thomas Mann was staunchly anti-Nazi, his 1918 diary entry brings to light what his early beliefs were about a Jewish plot to end Christianity. Ibid., 232.

saying that the problems facing Germany were due to the Jewish influence financially funding Britain and America in the defeat of the Fatherland.<sup>294</sup>

The racial hygienists were eagerly waiting since the late 1890s, for a regime like the Nazis to improve the racial condition in Germany.<sup>295</sup> Since 1924, Hitler had read volumes on the subject of racial hygiene while jailed at Landsberg Prison, as well as H.G. Wells and his theories about utopias.<sup>296</sup> Noticing, as the 1920s roared on, that the Nazis had similar feelings as racial hygienists, he quickly reworked their theories to match those of the Nazi policy in order to get noticed and to receive funding to continue their research.<sup>297</sup>

By the scientific standards of the time, the research of eugenics was at the cutting edge of science, and the eugenicists prided themselves on applying their studies with meticulous precision.<sup>298</sup> Their studies, though, were not free from errors in methodology, and their inability to recognize that their own prejudices tainted their premise and corrupted their conclusions.<sup>299</sup> It must be noted that the eugenic research in Germany, though it violated every ethical standard in its use of unprincipled methods, did not defy the canon of science.<sup>300</sup> Dr. John Carey, Emeritus Professor of English Literature, Oxford University, editor of *The Faber Book of Utopias*, examined how in the twentieth

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, 759.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, 759.

<sup>298</sup> Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, 7.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

century the cult of “Life” was defined as “the ultimate value,” and when one sets out to design a Utopia, the population must be cleared of ugliness, not wickedness or evil.<sup>301</sup>

On July 14, 1933, the German legislature passed the Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring. This was a program of mass sterilization of children and those who were deemed ill, asocial or mentally ill.<sup>302</sup> This law gave the Nazis the capability of reaching deep into the German social stratum. Furthermore, this gave the Nazis the ability to open “Racial Offices,” passing a law prohibiting marriages between Germans and Jews, and developing a more serious and deadly program: euthanasia.<sup>303</sup>

A proclamation of September 29, 1933 from the *Die Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden* (The National Representation of German Jews) stated that this was a very important time in Jewish history and it was vital that all Jews be united, not only the Jews of Germany.<sup>304</sup> They believed that anyone who ignored their fellow Jews not only excluded themselves, but also had committed a wrong against the German Jews.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> See Appendix for copy of Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases (July 14, 1933).

<sup>303</sup> German History in Documents and Images, Unknown. In the Nazi context, “euthanasia” represented a euphemistic term for a clandestine sterilization or murder program. The law applied to any person suffering from a severe hereditary physical or mental damage and is subject to sterilization. Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, 27.

<sup>304</sup> Arad, Gutman, and Margaliot. eds., *Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*, 57.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid. *Die Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden*, a German Zionist organization that stood for the unity and strength of the German Jewish community and the sacrifice of Jewish brotherhood worldwide. They stood for unity, confidence in God, labor and the “honor of the Jewish name,” while calling for the strength and continued rise of the German Jews in that time of trouble. Arad, Gutman, and Margaliot. eds., *Documents on*

Charles Darwin referred to the concepts of a eugenics program as “a utopia of its own.”<sup>306</sup> Hitler, most likely, was motivated by his study of Nietzsche during his years in prison.<sup>307</sup> In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler stated:

The state must take care that only he who is sound shall be a parent. To prevent defective persons from producing equally defective offspring, is an act dictated by the clearest light of reason. Its carrying out is the most human act of mankind. It would prevent the unmerited suffering of millions of persons, and above all would, in the end, result in a steady increase in human welfare.”<sup>308</sup>

With this desire to increase “human welfare,” the Reich Woman’s League in 1934 started programs that encouraged women to have more children, and to take better care of the ones that they already had.<sup>309</sup> On Mother’s Day, 1939, three million women who had given birth to four or more children were given the title of “Mother of the Reich” and awarded a special Mother’s Honor Cross.<sup>310</sup>

The findings of a report commissioned in 1939 showed that 8,000 children were born to SS soldiers, which accounted for 1.1 children per man.<sup>311</sup> This number was far

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*the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*, 58-59.

<sup>306</sup> John Carey, Steve Connor, and Laura Marcus, interview by Melvyn Lord Bragg about Modernist Utopias, *In Our Time*, BBC Radio 4, March 10, 2005.

<sup>307</sup> Paul Popenoe, “The German Sterilization Law,” *Journal of Heredity* (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory; American Philosophical Society; Truman State University; Rockefeller Archive Center/Rockefeller University; University of Albany, State University of New York; National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument; University College, London) 25 (1933).

<sup>308</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 539. Popenoe, “The German Sterilization Law,” 25.

<sup>309</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, 775.

<sup>310</sup> The Mother’s Honor Cross had three grades: Bronze for four children, Silver for six. If a woman gave birth to eight children or more, she received a Gold Honor Cross personally from Adolf Hitler. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, 776.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

below the required number of children, per Nazi, that was expected. The study showed, too, that since the 1936 SS program of *Lebensborn* (First Born), which was an extension of the SS Marriage Order of 1932, every SS member was to father four children, in or out of wedlock.<sup>312</sup> The program accepted unmarried women who were either pregnant or had already given birth and were in need of aid, as long as both the mother and the father of the child were “racially valuable.” Nearly 60% of the mothers were unmarried. The program allowed them to give birth anonymously, but in cases in which the mothers wanted to give up the children, the program also had orphanages and an adoption service.<sup>313</sup>

While German laws pushed for the growth of the perfect German society, a national “euthanasia program” was beginning to take shape. This National Socialist program, was based upon the American program, which was at the forefront of this engineered racial program.<sup>314</sup> The German effort consisted of five programs of systematic mass killing: (1) the sterilization or (2) killing of defective children and the mentally challenged, (3) the gassing of concentration camp prisoners, (4) the decentralized killing by starvation and (5) medical injections in long-term care

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<sup>312</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum “Victims of the Nazi Era: Nazi Radical Ideology,” Holocaust Encyclopedia, accessed August 23, 2013, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/?ModuleId=10005143>.

<sup>313</sup> David Crossland, “Nazi Program to Breed Master Race: Lebensborn Children Break Silence,” *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), November 7, 2006, accessed August 15, 2013.

<sup>314</sup> American eugenicist Charles B. Davenport described the program as “the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding,” and in the United States Social Darwinism was used to justify the law of nature as the “survival of the fittest,” and eugenics provided a foundation/validation for it. Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, 4-5.

institutions in the occupied east beginning in the summer of 1942 until the end of the war.<sup>315</sup> This would become known as *Operation T4*.<sup>316</sup>

*Operation T-4* put Christian morality into question, though some Protestant officials, as well as the Catholic Church, did not protest some of the measures, but the Social Darwinian views of the Nazis. Seeming to respect and report without a willingness to challenge the ethics of this emerging agenda, Paul Popenoe wrote in his 1933 exposé that “apparently the Nazis are doing their best to prevent criticism on this score, no doubt with the realization that their actions are regarded with suspicion in many quarters. Newspaper accounts had generally said 400,000 people were to undergo sterilization under this law. The statement appears to be unfounded, but what German authorities had said that about 400,000 people would be examined, to determine whether they should be sterilized.”<sup>317</sup>

In order to avoid complications, the government met with representatives of the Vatican,<sup>318</sup> under which (1) no Roman Catholic judge shall be asked to sit on a sterilization court, (2) no Roman Catholic surgeon shall be asked to perform an operation for eugenic sterilization, and (3) no Roman Catholic, otherwise liable to sterilization,

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<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> The “Special Treatment 14f13,” which refers to the gassing of concentration camp prisoners unable to work, organized by the members of the “Operation T-4” and the SS [1941-1943], United States Holocaust Memorial Museum “Victims of the Nazi Era: Nazi Radical Ideology.”

<sup>317</sup> Popenoe, “The German Sterilization Law,” 25.

<sup>318</sup> The Roman Catholics had been combating the sterilization law and being a Roman Catholic himself, Hitler knew the Church had been the source of a large part of his opposition, and it took a strong stand against sterilization in Germany. Ibid.

shall be sterilized so long as he remains in an institution, at the expense of his family or at the expense of the church.<sup>319</sup>

Though he had only been in office for two months, American president Franklin Delano Roosevelt had, by May 1933, repeatedly avoided pressure by Jewish American organizations and declined to make any public statement about the pending Jewish plight in Germany.<sup>320</sup> He stated that it was not an event that was affecting American citizens and that personal influence and unofficial channels should be used.<sup>321</sup> The American Ambassador to Germany, William E. Dodd, was quite vocal, though not very aggressive, about his feelings toward Nazi policy.<sup>322</sup> Personally, he did what he could to help Jews emigrate from Germany, while his public statements on the issue were seldom forceful and never received the full support of the United States State Department.<sup>323</sup> He subsequently was relieved in 1937.<sup>324</sup>

According to the July 1935 issue of the *Eugenics Review*, approximately 56,000 people were sterilized in Germany in the first twelve months after the introduction of the Sterilization Law.<sup>325</sup> The Sterilization Law was met with a great deal of public

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<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> Gellar, "Germany and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History," 1.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid. American Ambassador Dodd's successor, Hugh R. Wilson, was a career Foreign Service officer and was far less confrontational but after *Reichskristallnacht* of November 9-10, 1938, President Roosevelt recalled Wilson to Washington for consultations, and Wilson did not return to Germany. Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Eliot Slater, "German Eugenics in Practice," *Eugenics Review*, (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory; American Philosophical Society; Truman State University; Rockefeller Archive Center/Rockefeller University; University of Albany, State University of New York; National Park Service, Statue of Liberty National Monument; University College, London) 27, no. 4 (1936), 1.

resentment throughout Germany, especially among the common people, who particularly disliked its compulsory nature.<sup>326</sup>

Jewish agencies were in constant uproar about all of the Nazi programs that had been imposed. No one was louder than Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. He and other Jewish leaders spoke out against Nazism shortly after Hitler came to power, calling for an immediate end to the anti-Semitism of the Third Reich.<sup>327</sup> In response, the Nazis announced further restrictions against the Jews, claiming Jews in America ordered these because of the “atrocities propaganda.” More than nine years later, Wise received a telegram from London warning of Hitler’s plan to kill the Jews of Europe, proving that his tireless anti-Nazi publicity campaign had achieved little to help German Jewry.<sup>328</sup>

As Bernard Wasserstein stated in his 2012 book, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War*, a German Utopia theory was developing.<sup>329</sup> The Jews of Eastern Europe found their futures in question, as the German Propaganda Ministry, under Josef Goebbels, began suggesting an alluring solution to the German situation with stories of overt Zionism, Communism and the need for territorialism.<sup>330</sup> By 1936, nearly 400,000 Polish and German Jews immigrated to Palestine, which was reaching a third of the population.<sup>331</sup> Wasserstein also noted that Revisionist Zionist

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<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> Ostrow, “America and the Holocaust.”

<sup>328</sup> Wise’s attempts to pressure the Nazis to let Jews leave and America to open its doors to Jews from Europe failed. It seemed that, in response, the U.S. tightened its immigration procedures, no thanks to the failed Evian Conference in 1938. Ostrow, “America and the Holocaust.”

<sup>329</sup> Wasserstein, Bernard, “On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War,” 345.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.



reprisal attacks against the Arabs added to the British frustration that interfered with the negotiations to develop a new homeland for the Jewish people in Israel.<sup>332</sup>

Max Weber stated in *Economy and Society* that “when a fully developed, bureaucracy stands, in a specific sense, under the principle of *sine ira ac studio*. Bureaucracy develops more perfectly the more it is ‘dehumanized,’ the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal and emotional elements which escape calculation.”<sup>333</sup> Eminent scholar on the Final Solution’s destruction of European Jewry, Raul Hilberg, explained the bureaucrats’ language was quite consistent with that of Weber’s argument:

Most bureaucrats composed memoranda, drew up blueprints, signed correspondence, talked on the telephone, and participated in conferences. They could destroy a whole people by sitting at their desks. Except for inspection tours, which were not obligatory, they never had to see “100 bodies lie there, or 500 or 1,000.” However, these men were not naïve. They realized the connection between their paperwork and the heaps of corpses in the East, and they also realized the shortcomings of arguments that place all evil on the side of the Jew and all good on the German. That was why they were compelled to justify their individual activities.<sup>334</sup>

For the politicians of the day, avoiding contact with the issue directly seemingly made the realities easier to live with.

On March 12, 1938, 180,000 Jews were brought under Nazi rule when Hitler reunited Austria with Germany in what was known as *Anschluss*.<sup>335</sup> The public

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<sup>332</sup> By 1935, 66,000 Jews immigrated, which was the largest number in any year until 1948, but the British needed to add more troops as reinforcements due to the continued attacks on Arabs. As the clouds of war began to engulf Europe, the Muslim world began to take aim at the British in Palestine too. Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Traverso, Enzo, *The Origins of Nazi Violence* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 42.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>335</sup> Wasserstein, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War*, 371.

humiliation was more blatant than it was in the Reich.<sup>336</sup> The non-Jewish Austrians relished the public degradation and welcomed the anti-Jewish practice, often proudly wearing their Nazi Swastika armbands.<sup>337</sup>

In *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Volume 1*, Saul Friedländer explained that Nazi propaganda succeeded in influencing Austrians in the years before and just after Anschluss. The Austrian nationalist organization, the right wing Patriotic Front was in danger of failing on its mission to destroy the German occupation, due to anti-Semitism within the organization.<sup>338</sup> Everyone in Vienna was investigating Jewish influence and although there was not one Jew in the Patriotic Front leadership, the Viennese told each other that the Nazis were right and all Jews should be cleaned out.<sup>339</sup>

Now that the Austrians were a part of the overall German Reich, the Nazis sped up their determination to remove as many Jews as quickly as possible.<sup>340</sup> Pogroms began at full speed. Some forty-two synagogues were destroyed and 2,000 Viennese Jewish families were removed from their homes, and by March 20, 1938, the Star of David was posted on all Jewish property.<sup>341</sup>

The violence against the Jews of Austria in the early days after occupation had gotten so bad that the Gestapo had to order the arrest of those attacking Jews “without

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<sup>336</sup> Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*, 587.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., 242. The Patriotic Front was a partisan organization that fought the Nazis. They believed they were the Austrian line of defense in the mid-to-late 1930s. Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, 967.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid, 863.

discipline.”<sup>342</sup> On March 28, Hermann Göring issued orders to “take quiet measures for the appropriate redirecting of the Jewish economy in Austria.”<sup>343</sup> In June, fifty percent of all Jewish businesses were closed in Vienna alone.<sup>344</sup> In addition, due to this new directive, hardline Nazis in Vienna proclaimed that they wanted a “general cleansing of a Jewified Austria.”<sup>345</sup>

Antisemitic attitudes among the Austrian governmental employees of Vienna had been the key factor in their enthusiasm for applying the procedures of Jewish persecution and the formation of a logistical apparatus, to bring about extermination.<sup>346</sup> These attitudes prompted their professional and generalized indifference to the overall situation.<sup>347</sup> The *wissenschaftliche Soldaten* or “soldiers of science” became the instruments of a bureaucratic foundation that formed the means of transmission and implementation of engineered and manufactured genocide.<sup>348</sup>

On November 9 and 10, 1938, throughout Germany, annexed Austria, and in areas of the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia, *Kristallnacht*, literally, “Night of Broken Glass” occurred, as Nazi supporters destroyed Jewish shops, homes and synagogues.<sup>349</sup> Jewish passports required a “J” stamped into them, and all males were ordered to add the

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<sup>342</sup> Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*, 589.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> Wasserstein, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War*, 371.

<sup>345</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, 977.

<sup>346</sup> Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence*, 42.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

<sup>349</sup> William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, (New York, NY: Rosetta Books LLC, 1951-2011), e-book, 714-15.

name “Israel” and women “Sarah” to their names.<sup>350</sup> In addition, all Jewish organizations and associations were reorganized into the *Judenraten*.<sup>351</sup> Since the outcome of Evian, Jews found emigration rates exceedingly slow, with few results of substance.<sup>352</sup>

Within Zionist circles, the increased desire of emigration was a growing concern. They believed that if the Jews were to leave, this would prove that they had surrendered and given in to the anti-Semitic policies in Europe.<sup>353</sup> The Jewish World Congress decreed an economic boycott of the countries where Jews were being oppressed, which would be managed in Poland and the United States.<sup>354</sup> Jewish figures in the United States feared that a boycott could ricochet and lead to boycotts in America, too, which would completely hinder their efforts.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 37.

<sup>351</sup> Jewish councils were set up within the Jewish communities of Nazi-occupied Europe on German orders. The *Judenraten* were given the responsibility to implement the Nazis’ policies regarding the Jews. These Jewish councils often performed a balancing act: on one hand, they felt a responsibility to help their fellow Jews as much as possible, on the other hand, they were supposed to carry out the orders of the Nazi authorities - often at the expense of their fellow Jews. The role played by the *Judenraten* is one of the most controversial aspects of the Holocaust period. Yad Vashem, *Yad Vashem The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority*, 2013, accessed October 1, 2013, [www.yadvashem.org/odot\\_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%206389.pdf](http://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%206389.pdf).

<sup>352</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 38.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

## The Final Solution

The “Final Solution” (*Endlösung*) became the code name for the streamlined, industrialized mass killings of the European Jews carried out in death camps.<sup>356</sup> *Reichsführer* of the *Schutzstaffel* (SS) Heinrich Himmler was named the program executive.<sup>357</sup>

The Germans invaded Poland in the early morning of September 1, 1939, starting what would become known as the Second World War. Once a foothold was established in Poland, Nazi leaders shifted priorities to focus on their anti-Jewish policy from expulsion to concentration of European Jewish populations in locations suited to future permanent removal.<sup>358</sup> German authorities established ghettos in the *Generalgouvernement* and in the Warthegau (an area of western Poland directly annexed to the German Reich). From late 1939, German SS and police authorities deported Polish, German, Austrian, and Czech Jews to these ghettos.<sup>359</sup>

In 1941, Hitler authorized the Europe-wide scheme for mass murder:

- to inform and secure support from government ministries and other interested agencies relevant to the implementation of the “Final Solution,” and

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<sup>356</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 13.

<sup>357</sup> *Reichsführer-SS* was a military title and the highest rank of the *Schutzstaffel*. *Schutzstaffel*, translates to “Protection Squadron” or “Defense Corps” (abbreviated **SS** or with the sig runes which was worn as lapel pins on uniforms) was a major paramilitary organization under the Nazi Party (NSDAP). United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “The Final Solution,” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, accessed on August 27, 2013, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en?ModuleId=10007328>

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> *Generalgouvernement* was the part of German-occupied Poland not directly annexed to Germany, attached to German East Prussia or incorporated into the German-occupied Soviet Union. Ibid.

- to disclose to the participants that Hitler himself had tasked Heydrich and the RSHA with coordinating the operation.<sup>360</sup>

In a speech given by Hans Frank, the Governor General of occupied Poland, on December 16, 1941 on the extermination of the Jews, he states,

In one way or another, we must finish off the Jews. The Führer put in to words once: should united Jewry again succeed in setting off a world war, then the blood sacrifice shall not be made only by the peoples driven into war, but then the Jew of Europe will have met his end.

I will on principle, approach Jewish affairs in expectation that the Jews will disappear. However, what should be done with the Jews? We cannot shoot these 3.5 million Jews, we cannot poison them, but we will be able to take measures that will lead somehow to successful destruction; and this in connection with the large-scale procedures, which are to be discussed in the Reich.

Where and how this is to be done is the affair of bodies which we will have to appoint and create, and on whose work I will report you when the time comes...<sup>361</sup>

Frank was suggesting was that there needed to be a clear vision and plan for the destruction of the Jews. Exactly how would the Nazis efficiently organize the mass killing millions of Jews and subsequently destroy the corpses?

On July 31, 1941, Hermann Göring authorized Reinhard Heydrich, SS-*Obergruppenführer* (Senior Group Leader) and Chief of the Reich Security Main Office

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<sup>360</sup> *Generalgouvernement* was the part of German-occupied Poland not directly annexed to Germany, attached to German East Prussia or incorporated into the German-occupied Soviet Union.

<sup>361</sup> Arad, Gutman, and Margaliot, eds., *Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*, 8th ed., 247-249.

(RSHA), to coordinate a general plan with the various Reich representatives to exterminate, though the word was deliberately unused, the Jews of Europe.<sup>362</sup> It was not until after the war, and with the knowledge that this event had happened, that historians began to refer to it as the “Wannsee Conference.”<sup>363</sup>

### The Wannsee Conference

On January 20, 1942, a meeting ordered by Reinhard Heydrich with minutes recorded by Adolf Eichmann, Gestapo Chief of the Department for Jewish Affairs, convened at a villa at 56–58 Am Großen Wannsee, overlooking the Großer Wannsee (Great Wannsee Lake) outside Berlin.

Christian Gerlock, in his essay “The Wannsee Conference, the Fate of German Jews, and Hitler's Decision in Principle to Exterminate All European Jews” (1998) points out that the event has not been fully appreciated in history. Gerlach points out that the two goals of the meeting were to

1. Extermination of all the European Jews
2. Liquidate all the Jews in Europe<sup>364</sup>

The attendees did not deliberate on whether such a plan should be undertaken, but rather decided that it should be implemented in the General Government, where the Jews represented an immense danger as carriers of epidemics and were undermining the

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<sup>362</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 102.

<sup>363</sup> Christian Gerlach, “The Wannsee Conference, the Fate of German Jews, and Hitler’s Decision in Principle to Exterminate All European Jews,” *Journal of Modern History* 70, no. 4 (December 1998): 759.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, 760.

economic system from within the black market.<sup>365</sup> It was determined that the responsibility for handling the Final Solution would lie centrally with the *Reichsführer SS* and the Chief of the German Police, without regard to geographic borders.<sup>366</sup>

Total liquidation, or at least the initial policy of extermination of the Jewish people, had begun in September and October of 1941 in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union.<sup>367</sup> There appeared to be two decisions, as Gerlach pointed out, with liquidation. The first was to execute Soviet Jews and the second was concerning the extermination of Jews from the rest of Europe.<sup>368</sup>

The Wannsee Conference was designed to organize these policies into a far more cohesive plan. According to the minutes, there were many different opinions, and problems arose with authority from the leaders of the different areas. Furthermore, how would the plan address German “Part Jews,” western, northern and southeastern Jews and those working in the armaments industry?<sup>369</sup>

Initially, German Jews were to be resettled in the east, and only eastern Jews were to be liquidated, but as Adolf Eichmann stated in his testimony at his 1961 trial, “the Wannsee Conference was indeed the beginning of the real extermination story.”<sup>370</sup> In

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<sup>365</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 157.

<sup>366</sup> Arad, Gutman, and Margalit. eds., “Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union,” 251.

<sup>367</sup> Gerlach, “The Wannsee Conference, the Fate of German Jews, and Hitler’s Decision in Principle to Exterminate All European Jews,” 763.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*, 763-764.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*, 764.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 765.



this way, the policy of annihilation shackled the German occupation and alliance policy.<sup>371</sup>

This policy was an instrument for a radicalization inside Germany. The result of deportations was not concealed from the public and a widespread emergent fear and revenge propaganda campaign about an international Jewish conspiracy began after the change in the tide of war in 1942-43.<sup>372</sup> It was made clear to the German people that it allowed itself to become inescapably entangled with Nazi anti-Jewish policy.<sup>373</sup> This subliminal threat to the German population seemed to be the real issue behind the question of the Germans' awareness of the Holocaust.<sup>374</sup>

The Wannsee Protocol was drafted as the outline for the number of Jews in each country of Europe, including 330,000 in England, totaling 11 million Jews in Europe.<sup>375</sup> The minutes of the Protocol stated that because of the war with the Soviet Union: "Emigration has now been replaced by evacuation of Jews to the East with the appropriate prior authorisation by the Fuhrer (Hitler)." It went on to say that: "Europe will be combed through from East to West in the course of the practical implementation of the Final Solution." Jews would be: "utilised for work in the East" during which a

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<sup>371</sup> Peter Longerich, "The Wannsee Conference in the Development of the 'Final Solution,'" *Holocaust Educational Trust Research Papers* 1, no. 2, 2000), 13.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> See Appendix for a copy of the Wannsee Protocol document and translation. London Jewish Cultural Centre, *The Wannsee Conference*, 2011, Accessed October 5, 2013, <http://www.theholocaustexplained.org/ks4/the-final-solution/planning-the-final-solution/the-significance-of-the-wannsee-conference/#.U16sGBZgIyE>.

large proportion will no doubt drop out through natural reduction. The remnant that eventually remains will require suitable treatment.”<sup>376</sup>

The Protocol highlighted the details that in Slovakia, Croatia and Romania governments assisted the Nazis with anti-Jewish activities.<sup>377</sup> In Italy, the Nazis planned to liaise with the Italian police. The document stated that France would not prove difficult.<sup>378</sup>

Anti-Jewish policies in Scandinavia immediately faced serious local opposition, so it was decided that the “Final Solution” in the Nordic region had to be postponed until a foothold was made in the mainland of Europe.<sup>379</sup> Dr. Josef Buhler, the official who represented the General Government, promised that Heydrich’s work “would have the support of the authorities of the Governor General.” He had only one request: “that the Jewish question in this area be solved as quickly as possible.”<sup>380</sup>

The record of Eichmann’s minutes showed that the conference determined the fate of 11 million European Jews and took all of ninety minutes. The Final Solution was implemented immediately.

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<sup>376</sup> Ibid.

<sup>377</sup> London Jewish Cultural Centre, *The Wannsee Conference*.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 5

### THE HOLOCAUST AND THE FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

Today I actually found time to organize a thought. I can't remember the last time I did this.

from Schindler's List.<sup>381</sup>

In the first six years of Hitler's reign, Jews were subjected to the Nuremburg Laws, the razing of synagogues during *Kristallnacht* ("Night of Broken Glass") and the forced resettlement into ghettos. It would have appeared that the Jews innocently sat back and let it all happen. Jews tried to emigrate to England, America, Canada, and other countries, but they found that the doors in these countries were closed to most of them. It seemed as though they were left to fend for themselves.

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<sup>381</sup> Zaillian, Steven (Screenplay), and Thomas (Book) Keneally. *Schindler's List*. DVD. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Produced by Universal Studios. Performed by Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley and Ralph Fiennes. MCA Universal Home Video, 1994.

The Nazis' ghetto program came from the Wannsee Conference. Most Jewish ghettos had been created by Nazi Germany between October 1939 and July 1942 in order to confine and segregate Poland's Jews for the purpose of persecution, terror, and exploitation.<sup>382</sup> Jews from smaller communities were moved into the ghettos of nearby towns and these large numbers of resulted in severe overcrowding, starvation, and disease due to the limited available space and resources.<sup>383</sup>

As I will address, the Jews living in the ghettos began to revolt, but how long was it before resistance actions began? Though meant to be only a temporary arrangement, the ghettos, under the governance of the *Judenrat* (Jewish Council), tried to keep some semblance of community, incorporating medical services, as well as religious, educational and cultural activities, but the Jews were exploited and tortured while struggling to survive.<sup>384</sup>

Yisrael Gutman writes that within most ghettos, a kind of permanence formed for the Jews by an everyday routine of life, and the Nazis succeeded in killing Jews with a method of murder without shedding any blood.<sup>385</sup> Many Jews believed that the majority of them would survive, and that they would eventually be able to live normal lives after the Nazi downfall.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> Michael Berenbaum, *The World Must Know*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2006, p. 114.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> "The War Against The Jews." *The Holocaust Chronicle*, 2009. Chicago, IL. Accessed January 12, 2014.

<sup>385</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 59.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

Over time many organizations within the ghetto communities in the Nazi system realized that they could not sit back and let the deportations and murders continue. Armed resistance of the Jews in many ghettos reinforced the Zionist ideal that “The New Jew” should fight back.<sup>387</sup> The ability to do so proved to be the judgment of one’s moral fiber.<sup>388</sup> These “New Jews” of the Holocaust era were having to deal with the reality that while many Jews walked passively to their deaths, they realized that a Jewish state was worth fighting for.<sup>389</sup>

Throughout the course of the Nazi regime, many young Jews came together to form unstructured resistance groups. Though generally ambivalent about their Judaism, they nonetheless created a rebellious milieu with some distinctly Jewish features.<sup>390</sup> Though the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto has become the most famous, many other ghettos revolted, as well. But in Warsaw there was a collective resistance that was planned and organized with organizational structure and clear leadership.<sup>391</sup>

The Nazi government established a system of detention facilities to confine those whom they defined as political, ideological, or racial opponents of the regime.<sup>392</sup> Within

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<sup>387</sup> Boaz Cohen, “Holocaust Heroics: Ghetto Fighters and Partisans in Israeli Sociology,” *Journal of Political and Military Society and History* 31, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 197. ProQuest.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid.

<sup>390</sup> Catherine Epstein, “Circles of Resistance: Jewish, Leftist, and Youth Dissidence in Nazi Germany,” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 29, no. 3 (Spring 2011): 133-135.

<sup>391</sup> Rachel L. Einwoner, “Identity Work and Collective Action in a Repressive Context: Jewish Resistance on the ‘Aryan Side’ of the Warsaw Ghetto,” *Social Problems* 53, no. 1 (February 2006): 38-56.

<sup>392</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Concentration Camps,” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, accessed October 6, 2013, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005474>.

just a few years, the camp system expanded to include concentration camps: labor camps, prisoner of war camps, transit camps and extermination camps.<sup>393</sup>

The first concentration camp was built to house political prisoners in 1933. The camp, named *Dachau*, was a few miles from the center of the Bavarian city of Munich. The Jewish prisoners in this early version of the camp were subjected to taunting, torture and humiliation, though in those days, the left-wing political prisoners from the previous government were believed to pose an immediate threat.<sup>394</sup> As the Camp System advanced, Dachau became the model from which all future camps were to be built.

British historian Laurence Rees, in his six-part BBC documentary series and companion book *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the Final Solution*, found that Nazis were not coerced, individually, to murder innocent people, but that it was a collective enterprise owned by thousands of people who made their own decisions with killing and disposing of the bodies on a scale never before seen in history.<sup>395</sup>

The Final Solution was a program of national policy with the goal to rid the continent of Europe of the peoples who conspired against Germany: the Jews and others. What Adolf Hitler and his followers did not expect was that the Jews were not going to go quietly into the night.

They never expected resistance and revolts from the Jews to come so often and so violently. They had come to believe their propaganda. The resistance was subtle and the revolt was organized and intense. The expected passivity of the Jews was absent, and

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<sup>393</sup> Ibid. See Appendix for map of the Nazi Concentration Camp system.

<sup>394</sup> Rees, "Auschwitz: The Nazis & the 'Final Solution,'" 30.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid., 20.

this expectation was another in a variety of strategies the Jews of the ghettos and the concentration camps used to fight for their survival.

### The Ghettos

The war began on September 1, 1939 when the German army marched into Poland. It is incorrect to believe that all Polish Jews were immediately enveloped by Nazi terrorism. The Soviet Union and Germany agreed to a non-aggression pact a few weeks earlier and furthermore agreed that they would divide the Polish territory. Russia managed the eastern section where the majority of Polish Jews lived, and many of the Jews who found themselves in the German section now fled to the Russian zone.<sup>396</sup>

The largest ghetto in Poland was in Warsaw, where more than 400,000 Jews were packed into an area of 1.3 square miles and had forty-three elementary schools, two high schools, and one vocational training facility, serving 63 percent of the ghettos school aged youngsters.<sup>397</sup> Other major ghettos were established in the cities of Łódź, Krakow, Bialystok, L'viv, Lublin, Vilna, Kovno, Czestochowa and Minsk. Most of the Jews of Western Europe, including the Channel Islands of Britain, were also deported to ghettos in the east.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 49.

<sup>397</sup> Heberer, Patricia. *Children During the Holocaust*. (Plymouth: AltaMira Press,) 2011.

<sup>398</sup> Linda Hunt, Dominic Sutherland, Martina Balazova, Detlef Siebert, Laurence Rees, Linda Ellerbee, Megan Callaway, Ian Kershaw, and Laurence Rees, *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*, London: BBC Video Ltd., 2005.

The ghetto was intended to purify the cities and make them Aryan: the Jewish population was to be expelled to the *Generalgouvernement* and the Polish population was to be reduced significantly and transformed into a slave labor force for Germany.<sup>399</sup>

Saul Friedlander examines in his book *The Years of Extinction: Nazi Germany and the Jews, Volume II* lives of Jews in the first years of the war had been painstakingly documented by the German government, while the policies and surveys of murder were only sketches.<sup>400</sup>

One of the towns that fell into the occupied German sector was that of Łódź.<sup>401</sup> It was the most isolated of all the ghettos because it was in a virtual “no-man’s-land” in central Poland.<sup>402</sup> Smuggling was to be nearly impossible, as was escape. Łódź was scheduled to become “German-ized” with all ethnic Poles, Jews and Gypsies removed from the region. Therefore, any contacts ghettoed Jews may have had with the Gentile residents would shortly become of little assistance.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> The *Generalgouvernement*, led by Hans Frank, was a separate administrative region of the Third Reich, which forced Jews over the age of 10 to wear white armbands with the Star of David on the upper left sleeve. The Yellow Star was not worn until September of 1941. Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 50. Ibid, 49.

<sup>400</sup> Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*, 41.

<sup>401</sup> Łódź formed the second largest Jewish community in prewar Poland, after Warsaw. It was annexed to Germany and renamed *Litzmannstadt*, after a German general, Karl Litzmann, who had captured the city during World War I. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. “Łódź.” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*. <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/?ModuleId=10005071>. Accessed on October 14, 2013.

<sup>402</sup> Doris L. Bergen, *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing, Inc.), e-book, 2009, 1928.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.



Hunting for Jews in the streets began on the first day of occupation, and a policy was adopted by the Germans to leave the Jews to their own fate with complete indifference and disregard to human life.<sup>404</sup> In his book, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, Yisrael Gutman asks a question regarding the fate of the Jews in Łódź: How did the Jews fight for their lives? His answer, (and my research offers a similar conclusion), is that some survived through disobedience, resistance groups, ignoring judgments and ingenious smuggling of necessary goods.<sup>405</sup>

The Łódź Ghetto was extraordinarily overcrowded. By 1940, nearly 230,000 people were crammed into 30,000 apartments.<sup>406</sup> Only 725 units had running water and most of the ghetto had electricity, though it was of little consequence since the Nazis forbade its use.<sup>407</sup>

Most of the ghettos were isolated from the outside world. The *Judenraten* was established to make the German laws and expectations clear and indisputable.<sup>408</sup> German-American political theorist Hannah Arendt, in her work *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963), wrote that the burden of responsibility for the elimination of the Jews of Europe fell solely on the shoulders of the various Judenrat

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<sup>404</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 51.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>406</sup> Bergen, *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 1928.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid.

<sup>408</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 53.

leaders.<sup>409</sup> This chapter will contend that the Jewish leadership had a limited but not entirely insignificant influence on the course of decisions taken by national authorities.<sup>410</sup>

Some in the Judenrat hierarchy had become drunk with power, and one such man was Mordecai Chaim Rumkowski from the ghetto in Łódź. He adopted a policy of discipline, meticulous adherence to the rules, and placed a tight seal around the ghetto. Not all Judenrat leaders were as brutal as Rumkowski.<sup>411</sup> Adam Czerniakow, who headed the Warsaw Ghetto, chose to commit suicide rather than assist the Nazis with deportations of the Jews in the ghetto.<sup>412</sup>

Between 1939 and 1941, over half a million Polish Jews died in ghettos and labor camps during this phase of the Final Solution.<sup>413</sup> At this point, the ghettos were not a formal and structured place to facilitate mass killing, though it was deadly enough a place to kill hundreds of thousands of Jews of any age.<sup>414</sup> The ghettos satisfied a useful psychological and “educational” function in the Nazi order: ghettos rapidly became the showplace of Jewish misery and destruction, offering the Germans opportunities to propagandize them through newsreel films that exploited the established feelings toward the Jews.<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*, 42.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>411</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 53.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>413</sup> Bergen, Doris, L. *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 1904.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*, 135.

To counter the exclusion of Jews from the outside world, many clandestine organizations were established. Workshop workers invented clever schemes to convert waste and raw materials into tools and other materials that could be used to barter for food.<sup>416</sup> Germans handed out food vouchers to the entire population. Germans were given rations of 2,613 calories a day, while the Jews were given 188 calories per day.<sup>417</sup>

By 1942, the youth underground movement expanded and developed cells throughout the occupied Poland.<sup>418</sup> Messengers, mostly girls, disguised themselves as Poles became the only link between the besieged and isolated Jewish centers.<sup>419</sup>

Smuggling, particularly in Warsaw, went on day and night, over rooftops and through basements, walls and barbed wire that surrounded the ghetto.<sup>420</sup> Women and children became professional smugglers.

Some Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto were able to escape into the non-Jewish Warsaw. To many, this, too, was an act of resistance. It is well known that there was not a single day without some form of smuggling in the Warsaw Ghetto.<sup>421</sup> Many were killed, but the unsung heroes of this style of resistance were the young children who risked their lives to feed their younger starving siblings.<sup>422</sup>

Chiam Kaplan, resident of the Warsaw Ghetto in August 1942, in his now famous diary, noted that “in the daytime, when the sun is shining, the ghetto groans. But at night

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<sup>416</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>417</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 55.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

everyone is dancing even though his stomach is empty. Quiet, discreet evening music accompanies the dancing. It is almost a *mitzvah* to dance. The more one dances, the more it is a sign of his belief in the ‘eternity of Israel’/ Every dance is a protest against our oppressors.”<sup>423</sup>

Notwithstanding their circumstances, spontaneous movements developed in many of the ghettos to help those who were in the most need. Mutual aid and social service organizations grew out of established commissions. Furthermore, Jews in Warsaw and other ghettos managed to set up theatre companies, prayer groups and orchestras which provided means of spiritual resistance.<sup>424</sup> Rabbi Alexander Zusia Friedman organized an underground network of religious schools, including “a Yesodei HaTorah school for boys, a Bais Yaakov school for girls, a school for elementary Jewish instruction, and three institutions for advanced Jewish studies.”<sup>425</sup> In September of 1941, the Nazis permitted the opening of primary schools, but elementary as well as high school and university-level schools had been secretly opened a year earlier.<sup>426</sup>

The armed Jewish resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto stemmed from the efforts of two resistance organizations: the Jewish Fighting Organization (*Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa*, or ŻOB), a coalition of members of various political organizations including left-wing Zionists and socialists, and the Jewish Military Union (*Żydowski Związek*

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<sup>423</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 130.

<sup>424</sup> “912 days of the Warsaw Ghetto,” Streaming Video/YouTube, (The Jewish Historical Institute, TPS Film Studio 2012), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfbWsjeePKg>.

<sup>425</sup> Hillel Seidman, “Alexander Zusia Friedman,” in *Wellsprings of Torah: An Anthology of Biblical Commentaries*, Vol. 1. Nison L. Alpert, ed. The Judaica Press, Inc., 1974, pp. xii–xxiii.

<sup>426</sup> “912 days of the Warsaw Ghetto,” Streaming Video/YouTube.

*Wojskowy*, or *ŻZW*), a right-wing faction.<sup>427</sup> It was only after the ghetto residents realized that they had little chance of survival that they began to call for resistance.<sup>428</sup> In the early years of the ghetto, Warsaw's Jews were not aware that they would ultimately be targeted for liquidation to death camps; instead, they believed that they would simply be made to endure the torturous existence of the German occupation, and would be liberated by some other army.<sup>429</sup>

The ghetto residents saw no need to resist; it was seen as too costly and could intensify the severe treatment they were already experiencing by the Nazis.<sup>430</sup> As time went on, the situation became more dire. By May 30, 1941, an estimated 50 percent of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto were dying of starvation, with 5,500 deaths in July, 1941 alone, compared with only 454 deaths among Warsaw Jews in May, 1938.<sup>431</sup>

Warsaw's Jews remained hopeful: hopeful that the Germans would lose the war and that they would be rescued. Returning to his diary, Chaim Kaplan describes the Jews' faith that the Nazis would eventually lose the war. On June 7, 1942, Kaplan wrote:

The Nazi sword rests against our throats, wreaking havoc amongst us. But we were always a nation bound by hope—and so we shall remain. The English radio, whose listeners endanger their lives, strengthens our hope. Every word gives us courage; every small detail that points to any military weakness is carried through the length and breadth of the ghetto as though on eagles' wings, with even children talking about it. When the news doesn't tell us what we want to hear, we

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<sup>427</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*.

<sup>428</sup> Rachel L. Einwohner, "Leadership, Authority, and Collective Action: Jewish Resistance in the Ghettos of Warsaw and Vilna," *American Behavioral Scientist* 50, no. 10 (June 2007): 1313.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Rachel L. Einwohner, "Opportunity, Honor and Action in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943," *American Journal of Sociology* 109, no. 3 (November 2003): 658.

twist and turn it until it seems full of hints, clues, and secrets that support our views. A stubborn people!<sup>432</sup>

With these beliefs, a revolt was seen as unnecessary. The optimistic thoughts from the Jews kept their hopes alive. They clung to life with the further belief that it was nearly impossible to liquidate a ghetto that contained 500,000 people. Yisrael Gutman points out that the Jews in the Vilna Ghetto, and Jews of all ghettos, were not given information of what was planned for their future. Their fate was a mystery, and with this, resistance did not seem to be a good choice.<sup>433</sup> In order for collective resistance to emerge, then, Jews' perception of their situation had to change. The only remedy to their potential murder was armed resistance, and it came as a shock to the Germans in the summer of 1942.<sup>434</sup>

The deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto began on July 22, 1942. By September 12, the Nazis had already sent 265,000 Jews to the gas chambers at the Treblinka Concentration Camp, with 11,580 sent to work camps while there had already been 10,000 deaths within the Warsaw Ghetto.<sup>435</sup>

After the so-called, "great deportation," the ŻOB knew it was time to revolt.<sup>436</sup> The Jews were led by Mordechai Anielewicz and were bound by a death pact.<sup>437</sup> Anielewicz was the twenty-four-year-old ŻOB commander of the Ghetto.<sup>438</sup> He was outraged with the collaborators who joined the Ghetto Police, as well as those Jews who

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<sup>432</sup> Ibid., 659.

<sup>433</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 100. Ibid., 101.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>435</sup> Linda Jacobs Altman, *The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: Striking a Blow Against the Nazis*, (Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow, 2011), e-book, 49.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>437</sup> Dan Kurzman, , (New York: Putnam, 1976), II.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid, 1.

chose to spy for the Nazis with the false hope of saving their lives. Anielewicz believed that publicly executing high-profile collaborating Jewish ghetto leaders would send a clear message to those in the ghetto.<sup>439</sup>

Anielewicz was able to enlist members of Jewish youth groups and found that he had the ability to convince the reluctant to join in the fight. He reinforced the reality that since only 35,000 Jews remained in the ghetto, they could not allow the same result for them as the Jews from other ghettos. It was agreed that this was a life-or-death struggle.<sup>440</sup>

There was another problem with these plans, and this came from within the ghetto; the Orthodox believed resistance was a sin, since it would kill a greater number of Jews who may not die if not for this act of suicidal heroics.<sup>441</sup> The conservative Zionists believed that the Germans would not dare exterminate the Jews in the heart of Europe.<sup>442</sup>

The ŻOB had posted announcements to inform and incite the ghetto community. One such announcement, which was dated January, 1943, stated:

TO THE JEWISH MASSES IN THE GHETTO

On January 22, 1943, it will be six months since the deportation from Warsaw began. All of us remember well the terrible days in which 300,000 of our brothers and sisters were deported and brutally murdered in the death-camp of Treblinka. During the past six months, we have been living in constant, mortal fear, never knowing what the coming day would bring. Today, we must understand that the Hitlerite murderers have allowed us to live only because they want to exploit our labor to the last drop of blood and sweat, to the last breath. We are slaves and when slaves no longer bring profit, they are killed. Each one of us must realize this and each one of us must remember this constantly.

JEWISH MASSES! The hour is drawing near. You must be prepared to offer resistance and not let yourselves be slaughtered like sheep. *No Jew must enter a*

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<sup>439</sup> Altman, *The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: Striking a Blow Against the Nazis*, 52.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

*boxcar. People unable to resist actively should offer passive resistance, that means, hide themselves.*

We have received information from Lemberg (L'viv) that Jewish police—unassisted— carried out a deportation of 3000 Jews there. In Warsaw, this will not take place anymore

Our motto must be: EVERYBODY SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DIE LIKE A HUMAN BEING. (Emphasis original)<sup>443</sup>

These announcements not only demanded revenge on the Jewish-run ghetto police, but also demonstrated to the ghetto community, as well as the Nazis, the ŻOB's capabilities.<sup>444</sup>

The most famous ghetto revolt took place in Warsaw. On the January 18, 1943, the Nazis surprised the Jews with another round of deportations. This became the first test for the rebellious Jewish groups. Ten percent of the ghetto population was removed during the early September deportations, and now, only 35,000 Jews remained in the Ghetto, albeit illegally.<sup>445</sup> But, now, plans for a great uprising in April began to take shape.

As Passover approached that April, the Jews in the ghetto bristled with excitement. They would celebrate their ancestors' salvation, all the while understanding the destruction of their contemporaries.<sup>446</sup> The goal of the ŻOB was to wear down their enemy with continuous guerrilla-style attacks; this plan was based on the ŻOB's belief

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<sup>443</sup> Einwohner, "Leadership, Authority, and Collective Action: Jewish Resistance in the Ghettos of Warsaw and Vilna.," 1316.

<sup>444</sup> Kurzman, *The Bravest Battle: The Twenty-Eight Days of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, 273.

<sup>445</sup> Gutman, *Fighting Among the Ruins: The Story of Jewish Heroism During World War II*, 111.

<sup>446</sup> Kurzman, *The Bravest Battle: The Twenty-Eight Days of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, 184.



that the web of streets, alleys and buildings of the ghetto would confuse and frustrate the Germans enough that they would eventually give up when their energy and ammunition ran out.<sup>447</sup>

Unfortunately, these plans were doomed to fail from the start. The Germans were not going to run out of ammunition and they were not going to tire, but what Mordechai Anielewicz was hoping for was the spread of revolt through out Warsaw in defense of the Ghetto Jews.<sup>448</sup> He believed ever since the news of the German invasion of Russia in 1941 that a revolt would succeed as long as they could hold on until they were relieved by the Red Army.<sup>449</sup> Furthermore, the resistance groups believed that they would get help and support from the Polish resistance groups outside the ghetto, but were ultimately ignored. In her book *On Both Sides of the Wall*, Vladka Meed, a member of the Warsaw Ghetto underground, described the lack of support from the Polish resistance, writing:

We knew that the Polish underground had secret caches of weapons. Mikolai was in touch with the leaders of the Polish underground, “They keep making promises!” he told me again and again. We are urged to be patient. (...) Often, we wondered why, in spite of our willingness to pay generously, the underground refused to help us. However, our contacts with the Poles were tenuous and often came to grief; many times we were sold out.<sup>450</sup>

The ŻOB needed outside assistance, and with a lack of support from the Polish resistance movement, the Ghetto’s underground movement was utterly unprepared to fight.

Besides the uprising at Warsaw, which is quite well known, other uprisings occurred. The Jews knew that such uprisings would not stop the deportation and that only a handful of fighters would succeed in escaping to join the partisans, some Jews made the

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<sup>447</sup> Ibid, 193.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>450</sup> Vladka Meed, *On Both Sides of the Wall: Memoirs from the Warsaw Ghetto*, (New York: United States Holocaust Library, 1972), 94-109.

decision to resist anyway.<sup>451</sup> Inhabitants in the ghettos of Vilna, Mir, Lachva (Lachwa), Kremenets, Bialystok, Czestochowa, Nesvizh, Sosnowiec and Tarnow, among others, resisted with force when the Germans began to deport and liquidate the ghetto populations.<sup>452</sup>

### Concentration Camps

The most infamous concentration camps are Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Treblinka and Dachau, but what is not commonly known is that each of the main camps had subcamps, there were nearly 900 in total.<sup>453</sup> When the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum set out to document all of the camps, they discovered that there were 20,000 throughout Europe.<sup>454</sup>

After the Wannsee Conference, it was decided that the camp in the small Polish town of Oswiecim would be converted to a killing center. Auschwitz, as the Germans called it, had convenient rail lines that were distant and secure enough from the front.<sup>455</sup> With an abundance of Soviet prisoners of war on hand, Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer of the Schutzstaffel, in September, 1941, ordered trials known as the “14f13” program.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Jewish Uprisings in Ghettos and Camps, 1941–1944: Resistance in the Ghettos,” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, Accessed October 14, 2013, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/?ModuleId=10005407>.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

<sup>453</sup> “How Many Concentration Camps?,” *Washington Post*, June 4, 2009.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid.

<sup>455</sup> Rees, *Auschwitz: The Nazis & the “Final Solution”* Loc 3109.

<sup>456</sup> The “14f13” was the bureaucratic designation given to the new mass extermination program that began in September of 1941. It used officials and doctors from the T4 euthanasia program to supervise the implementation. Israel Gutman and

The newly built Birkenau and Aushwitz II tested the gassing effects on Soviet POWs, then on a further trial of local Jews in March, 1942.<sup>457</sup> The trial tested the effectiveness and efficiency of the “selection” of newly-arrived Jews from the train ramp to the gas chambers.<sup>458</sup> Zyklon B (prussic acid) was readily available and was determined to be the preferred gas agent.

These new killing centers became the zenith of an industrialized system of mass killing.<sup>459</sup> By the end of the war, the gas chambers of the killing centers, known as Death Camps, claimed the lives of three million Jews and tens of thousands of other prisoners.<sup>460</sup>

The three most notorious revolts happened at Polish camps: Sobibor, Treblinka and Auschwitz. Like those who revolted in the ghettos, Jews in the the camps did not wish to become martyrs and die without a fight. Similar to the ghettos, the camps had kindergartens, schools, a Jewish hierarchy, a police force and religious groups who studied Torah and Talmud. But, under the most adverse conditions, Jewish prisoners succeeded in initiating resistance and uprisings.<sup>461</sup>

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Michael Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, (Bloomington: Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. by Indiana University Press, 1994), 302.

<sup>457</sup> Rees, *Auschwitz: The Nazis & the “Final Solution,”* Loc 3109.

<sup>458</sup> “Selection” was the term used when Nazi doctors (most famously Dr. Mengele at Auschwitz) and SS staff determined whether newly arrived Jews were fit or unfit for forced labor. Those determined to be unfit were sent immediately to the gas chambers. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Concentration Camps” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, accessed October 6, 2013, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005474>.

<sup>459</sup> Rees, *Auschwitz: The Nazis & the “Final Solution,”* Loc 3132.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid.

<sup>461</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Concentration Camps,” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*.

When the Jews were selected for the gas chambers, they were led to an anteroom where they were instructed to remove their clothing and to leave all their possessions while, they were led into a room marked with the words, “Zum Baden” (to the Baths).<sup>462</sup>

After the prisoners were taken into the gas chambers, The Sonderkommando entered the anteroom and removed all the clothing and luggage left back and brought it to a warehouse known to the prisoners as “Canada.”<sup>463</sup> Working there was a position valued by the prisoners, and the majority of the workforce were women who were permitted to wear their hair long. The prisoners were given food and water and it was one of the only places within the camp system where the prisoners were not beaten.

Heinrich Himmler had ordered the removal of dental gold (*Zahngold*) from the teeth of executed prisoners on September 23, 1940.<sup>464</sup> This was in response to a dissertation written by Victor Scholz earlier in 1940 entitled, “On the Possibilities of Recycling Gold from the Mouths of the Dead.”<sup>465</sup> Though strictly against SS rules, the workers often managed to steal extra food and other precious belongings from the items they sorted.<sup>466</sup> Often, these items were later sold for other necessities or given to those more desperate than they were.

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<sup>462</sup> Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, 162.

<sup>463</sup> The *Sonderkommando* were Jewish prisoners who worked in the death camps’ crematoria and disposed of the belongings and the bodies of those murdered in the gas chambers. The name “Canada” was adopted due to the wealth and riches that the warehouse held and was believed to be similar to the wealth of the country of the same name.

<sup>464</sup> Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, 258.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid.

<sup>466</sup> Hunt, Sutherland, Balazova, Siebert, Rees, Ellerbee, Callaway, Kershaw, and Rees, *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*.

One of the leading examples of Jewish resistance in the history of the Holocaust occurred on August 2, 1943, when nearly 1,000 Jewish prisoners participated in a revolt at the Treblinka death camp. They seized weapons such as picks, axes, and some firearms stolen from the camp armory and set fire to the camp.<sup>467</sup>

Samuel Rajzman was one of the very few survivors of Treblinka. He escaped and gave his account before the American House Committee on Foreign Affairs in 1945.<sup>468</sup>

The camp of Treblinka occupied a clearing 1 mile square, surrounded by woods and situated about a mile and a half from the railway station of Treblinka, on the line Malkinia-Siedlece. Beginning in May 1942 every day, with only brief interruptions, trains bringing Jews to Treblinka arrived from all over Poland, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Bulgaria, and Greece. On the average, 3 to 4 trains of 60 cars arrived every day; each car containing 80 to 150 people. The whole station was camouflaged in the most cunning fashion. Thus, the large barracks adjoining the platform, which served as the main storehouse for the stolen clothes, was covered with timetables of trains that allegedly came to Treblinka Station.<sup>469</sup>

Rajzman continued to describe the horrors of the prisoners at Treblinka:

The methods of execution were the following: (1) lashing to death while cold water was constantly poured on the victim; (2) hanging on gallows by the feet; (3) tearing to pieces by dogs; (4) the mildest form of death, yearned for by everyone shooting.

For drinking water during work, smoking a cigarette, improper saluting, and similar offenses, the penalties were from fifty to one hundred lashes on the bare body, but usually the worker was finished after fifty lashes, and if several pails of water did not bring him to, he was thrown on the fire.<sup>470</sup>

As a result of starvation and living in cold barracks during the winter of 1942-43, an epidemic of typhus broke out. A special office was set up, called the

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<sup>467</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Concentration Camps," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*.

<sup>468</sup> Uprising in Treblinka in U.S. Congress. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Punishment of war criminals, 120-125. 79th Cong., 1st sess. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1945. There is no better source to explain the Treblinka revolt than a first-hand account.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid.

*Krankenstube* (sickroom). But when a worker with a temperature of 102 reported to the physician and the physician recommended that he be put to bed in the *Krankenstube*, there appeared Unterscharfurer [*sic*] Mieta [*sic*], whose specialty and favorite pastime was the “selection” of workers. Five minutes later the patient was taken to the “infirmary” where he was cured by a bullet.<sup>471</sup>

In the early months of 1943, Jewish prisoners at Treblinka had had enough. It was time to end this horror and to avenge, at least to some extent, the millions of innocent people executed.<sup>472</sup> They devised a plan to get ammunition from the camp’s arsenal. Luck favored them because, within a few days, one of the Jewish locksmiths was ordered to repair the lock on the malfunctioning armory door.<sup>473</sup>

On August 2, 1943, the revolt began. The group set fire to the camp, then, once they heard gun shots, they threw hand grenades they took from the armory into the fires that they set.<sup>474</sup>

The flames devoured all the storerooms for clothes and shoes. Of the 700 workers on the camp grounds, only 150 to 200 succeeded in escaping; the others perished in the camp as well as over 20 Germans. Of the 150 to 200 who managed to escape, only 12 are still alive; the others were later murdered by the German hangmen.<sup>475</sup>

The revolt at the Sobibor camp was one of the only successful acts for the Jews during the war. The prisoners by 1943 knew what was intended for them. They knew that Jews all over Europe were being murdered systematically, and these prisoners at

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<sup>471</sup> Ibid.

<sup>472</sup> Uprising in Treblinka in U.S. Congress. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Punishment of war criminals, 120-125. 79th Cong., 1st sess. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1945.

<sup>473</sup> Ibid.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid.

<sup>475</sup> Ibid.

Sobibor were not willing to face the same fate. Soviet Jewish prisoners of war, from Minsk, were brought to the camp in late September.<sup>476</sup>

With the assistance from the camp's resistance groups, the soldiers organized a plan to kill the guards, take the trucks and escape into the deep woods that camouflaged the camp from the outside world. On October 14, 1943, the revolt began and three SS guards were killed, one who was burned alive by the prisoners in the oven of Crematorium II, and 250 *Sonderkommando* were killed.<sup>477</sup> Nearly 300 prisoners managed to escape by cutting through the electrified perimeter wire and maneuvering through the minefield surrounding the camp.

One of the most terrifying accounts of the life of a Jewish prisoner at Auschwitz-Birkenau was expressed in the 2009 autobiography of Shlomo Venezia, *Inside the Gas Chambers: Eight Months in the Sonderkommando of Auschwitz*. As with the Jews living in the ghettos, day-to-day normality settled in for Venezia and others in the *Sonderkommando*. Venezia recalls that the SS guards were rarely in the crematoria; the majority of the supervision was handled by the Kapos.<sup>478</sup> Bribery was a tool prisoners used to gain favor with SS guards and with some of the stricter Kapos. This was a very

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<sup>476</sup> Arad, Yitzhak. "Escape Under Fire: The Sobibor Uprising." *auschwitz.dk*. Yad Vashem Archives. 2011, accessed November 1, 2013. <http://www.auschwitz.dk/Sobibor/uprising.htm>.

<sup>477</sup> Rees, Laurence. *Auschwitz: A New History*. 257.

<sup>478</sup> Kapos were prisoners given the responsibility to handle the forced labor and administrative supervision within the concentration camps.

useful practice when prisoners needed to gain access to other prisoners that were involved with resistance organizations.<sup>479</sup>

For months, young Jewish women had been smuggling small amounts of gunpowder from the Weichsel-Union-Metallwerke, a munitions factory within the Auschwitz complex, to men and women in the camp's resistance movement. Under constant guard, the women in the factory took small amounts of the gunpowder, wrapped it in bits of cloth or paper, hid it on their bodies, and then passed it along the smuggling chain. The gunpowder was then passed to co-conspirators in the Sonderkommando. Using this gunpowder, the leaders of the Sonderkommando planned to destroy the gas chambers and crematoria, and launch the uprising.<sup>480</sup> Fearing that the German guards would expose the plot, only experienced prisoners would be told of the plot, and the kapos worked with extreme care.<sup>481</sup>

October 7, 1944 was the scheduled day for the revolt at Crematorium IV. The last few trains transporting the Jews from Hungary were scheduled to arrive. With this final transport, the Sonderkommando realized that their work, and then lives, were coming to an end. They knew they would no longer be of any use to the SS and that they were probably going to be the last to be gassed.

The plan was to wait for the selection to begin. They would attack the unsuspecting guards, who had become rather lazy with their supervision of the Sonderkommando, kill them and push through the gates and escape through the wire

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<sup>479</sup> Shlomo Venezia, *Inside the Gas Chambers: Eight Months in the Sonderkommando of Auschwitz*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2009), 97.

<sup>480</sup> "Auschwitz Revolt (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), Ushmm.org. accessed November 22, 2013.

<sup>481</sup> Ibid., 114.



fence.<sup>482</sup> But, as Venezia recalled, the train stood on the ramp with no one disembarking.<sup>483</sup>

Venezia waited for his signal for two hours, only to find out their revolt was abandoned. The following day they found out that the Sonderkommando from Crematorium IV revolted earlier than was expected. The men from Crematorium IV set fire to mattresses and tried to burn the building to the ground. They managed to kill three Germans and ran from the building trying to escape.<sup>484</sup> The Germans managed to stop the revolt and executed almost all of the prisoners involved in the rebellion.<sup>485</sup> The four women who assisted with the funneling of money from the Sonderkommando and the Polish resistance were executed on January 5, 1945. “Be strong and be brave,” were the last words Roza Robota said as she was executed.<sup>486</sup>

It could be said that these revolts were too little, too late, but they proved that the resistance forces and subsequent revolts did help to slow down, if not immediately stop, the execution of thousands of additional prisoners. Camps like Sobibor and Treblinka were closed within months of their revolts and Auschwitz had been ordered to be destroyed by the Nazi command in January, 1945. The last of the SS guards to leave

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<sup>482</sup> Ibid.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>485</sup> “Auschwitz Revolt (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), Ushmm.org. accessed November 22, 2013. After the revolt, Shlomo Venezia was ordered to help dismantle Crematorium II in October of 1944, then the following February was ordered to join the now famous 22-hour “Death March,” which occurred when the SS began evacuating Auschwitz as the Russian Army was approaching.

<sup>486</sup> *American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. The Revolt at Auschwitz-Birkenau: October 7, 1944*, 2013, accessed November 2, 2013, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Holocaust/aurevolt.html>.

Auschwitz occurred on the January 21 and 22, leaving the remaining prisoners to fend for themselves.<sup>487</sup>

The Soviet Red Army arrived at Auschwitz on January 27, 1945. Seven thousand prisoners were liberated from the Main Camp, Birkenau, and Monowitz, while five hundred additional prisoners in Auschwitz sub-camps were freed within a few days.<sup>488</sup>

By the beginning of 1945, the Allied forces were clearly winning the war, but the locations of the camps were inland from the two fronts. Though the Red Army discovered Majdanek on July 23, 1944, the American Army first discovered and liberated Buchenwald on April 11, 1945, and the British liberated Bergen-Belsen four days later.

In the end, nearly six million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust, with nearly the same number of Communists, trade unionists, Socialists, Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet citizens and prisoners of war and homosexuals falling victim to the Nazi horror.<sup>489</sup> Without the revolts, even more would have perished. Without the willingness and bravery of the Jewish resistance fighters in the camps, as well as many outside guerilla-partisan organizations outside the camps who assisted, untold additional numbers surely would have fallen victim.

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<sup>487</sup> Ibid.

<sup>488</sup> Strzelecki, Andrzej, "Liberation," Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu., 1999, accessed November 10, 2013, [http://en.auschwitz.org/h/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=15&limit=1&limitstart=2](http://en.auschwitz.org/h/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=15&limit=1&limitstart=2) (accessed November 10, 2013).

<sup>489</sup> Holocaust Museum Houston, Education: FAQs Page, 2013, accessed November 10, 2013, [http://www.hmh.org/ed\\_faqs.shtml#3](http://www.hmh.org/ed_faqs.shtml#3).

## Chapter 6

### CONCLUSION

In his excellent study of the Jews and the Holocaust, Robert S. Wistrich wrote that the central mystery at the heart of the Holocaust is the worldview that Jews were the source of all evils – especially pacifism, democracy, internationalism and Marxism – and were identified with the fragmentation of civilization and the loosening of morality.<sup>490</sup> Hitler's genocidal, racist ideology, the redemption (Erlösung) of the Germans, was dependent upon the success of the Final Solution.<sup>491</sup>

There has been a long, and inaccurate, history of the myth of the Pacifist Jew. Passivity and Jews, especially during the years between the world wars, became a growing issue, to the surprise and confusion of the Jews of Europe.

This dissertation presented an individual case study of Sam Dreben, "The Fighting Jew." Dreben was a Ukrainian immigrant to America, and was involved in numerous American wars including the Spanish-American War, the Punitive Expedition and the First World War. In between wars, Sam was unable to find work at which he was successful, so he became a soldier of fortune.

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<sup>490</sup> Wistrich, *Hitler and the Holocaust*, 12-13.

<sup>491</sup> Ibid.

Fighting, successfully and heroically, with rebel forces in Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras and Mexico, Dreben became a folk hero and a highly respected soldier. His reputation always preceded him. Pancho Villa in Mexico made Sam his personal aide and later Sam became one of the few noncommissioned officers to lead an attack in the First World War. Sam earned the Distinguished Service Cross, but also the highest medals of valor from France and Belgium. Upon Sam's sudden death, famous writer Damon Runyon honored Dreben with a poem in which he was given the moniker of "The Fighting Jew." American commander General John J. Pershing considered Sam one of the bravest men to ever serve.<sup>492</sup>

During the First World War, Jews fought bravely on both sides and served with distinction. Once the Armistice went into effect, Germany's economy began to decline, and they turned their blame toward European Jewry. According to Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, the Jews' most ingenious trick was that they flew the Jewish "ship-of-state under the flag of Religion and, thus, recurring tolerance which Aryans are always ready to grant."<sup>493</sup>

What, then, explains the Nazis' decision to exterminate the Jews of Europe? As the National Socialists came to power in 1933, Hitler publicly proclaimed that the Treaty of Versailles was dead. Hitler strongly believed that they were stabbed in the back by an international Jewish conspiracy. This conspiracy theory runs contrary to the anti-Semitic belief that Jews were pacifists, since pacifists would not have any interest in influencing and pushing a war agenda through funding the effort to destroy Germany.

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<sup>492</sup> O'Reilly, *The Fighting Jew: Wildcat Sam Dreben's Story at Last By His Old Pal Tex O'Reilly*.

<sup>493</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 337.

Once the Weimar Republic ended and the Nazis' "Third Reich" came to power, new and dangerous changes to governmental and scientific bureaucracy that legitimated the hatred of Jews and other "lesser" races rose to a horrific level. With Hitler's ideal of a Utopia of a "Master Race," Germany implemented plans that would develop under the unconcerned eyes of the rest of the world. Hitler and his government went on to develop the largest and most involved system of mass genocide the world has ever seen.

Richard Evans' impressive three-part study on the complete life of the Third Reich offers a timeline of how the Nazis developed their plan for racial cleansing and mass murder. Sociologist Gustav Iccheiser, in 1946, wrote an essay called, "The Jews and Anti-Semitism," exploring the relationship between the Jews and anti-Semitism in Germany as it related to Social Darwinism, eugenics and pacifism. His thesis argued that Darwinists and eugenicists believed certain perceived facts and avoided the truth by simply accepting things for the way they seemed to be.<sup>494</sup> Some Social Darwinists believed that the key to progress was the elimination of the "lower races," and then argued that racial extermination, even if carried out by bloody means, would provide humanity with moral improvement.<sup>495</sup>

The Evian Conference, in 1938, organized by the United States, was in response to worldwide Jewish fears of the rapid developing of Jewish harassment in Germany and Austria. The failure of the conference was perceived by the Germans as a green light to continue their policies of Jewish persecution. On November 8, 1938 Kristallnacht was the first pogrom against the Jews.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>494</sup> Iccheiser, "The Jews and Anti-Semitism," 93.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

Yale Professor John Merriman comments that Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* was prominently displayed in the windows of bookstores on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan upon its release, and *Time* Magazine made Hitler Man of the Year in 1938. There should not have been any reason for surprise that the Nazis were going to harm the Jews.<sup>497</sup> The international Jewish community continually lobbied the world's leaders to intervene in the German programs, but to no avail. Though the Zionist organizations in Europe did not believe the programs would continue, a large population of Jews believed that once the Nazis managed their power, the anti-Semitic hyperbole would end.<sup>498</sup>

The greatest fear among the Jews in occupied Europe was realized when they were ordered into ghettos in 1939. It was during this time that the Jews realized they needed to fight for their survival. Jewish law approves and encourages Jews to fight for their lives, for their homes and for their religion. This "Just War" theory of Jewish law could not hold truer than in the ghettos.

Many examples of nonviolent resistance occurred in the ghettos: smuggling in food, studying Torah, dancing and singing. Once the deportations of the Jews to concentration camps began, their hopelessness and need for survival took a more drastic turn. Resistance groups began to smuggle in weapons from outside groups, and fighting street to street against the Germans took place, most notably at the ghettos of Vilna, Łódź and Warsaw. Though the uprisings did not stop the deportations or close the ghettos, it did show the Germans that the Jews were not going to be lambs led to the slaughter.

By 1941, Nazi concentration camps became the most complex and monstrous factories of death in world history. The first and only example of mechanized killing

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<sup>497</sup> Merriman, "Fascism"

<sup>498</sup> Iccheiser, "The Jews and Anti-Semitism," 93.

took place all over Europe, from France to Poland. The Nazis organized systems of execution from transportation to selection to gas chamber to cremation. Those healthy enough to work, usually a minority of new arrivals, were selected, those who were not, usually the elderly and very young were taken to their death.<sup>499</sup>

By late 1943 and 1944, resistance groups formed within the many camps. As remembered in his memoir, Shlomo Venezia, a member of the Auschwitz Sonderkommando, involved himself in the Crematorium revolt at Auschwitz. Many say that these revolts were too little, too late, but it proved that the resistance forces and subsequent revolts did deliver a slowdown, if not immediate stoppage, of the execution of thousands of additional prisoners. Camps like those of Sobibor and Treblinka were closed within months of their revolts, and Auschwitz had been ordered destroyed by the Nazi high command in January 1945.<sup>500</sup>

The present study concludes with the evidence that some Jews have fought for their survival and dignity all through history. After the end of the Second World War, Jews were given what they always wanted: their religious homeland. Not since the Diaspora in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE did the Jews have a home to which to return in Palestine. On May 15, 1948, after the British ended their occupation of Palestine, the Jewish state of Israel was established.

The state of Israel is yet another example of how the myth of passivity of the Jews is not true. Israel continually fights for their survival in a land where religious and political enemies have them surrounded. The term “Never Again” reigns true in

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<sup>499</sup> Berenbaum, Michael; Yisrael Gutman (1998). *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press.) 31.

<sup>500</sup> Venezia, *Inside the Gas Chambers: Eight Months in the Sonderkommando of Auschwitz*, 187.

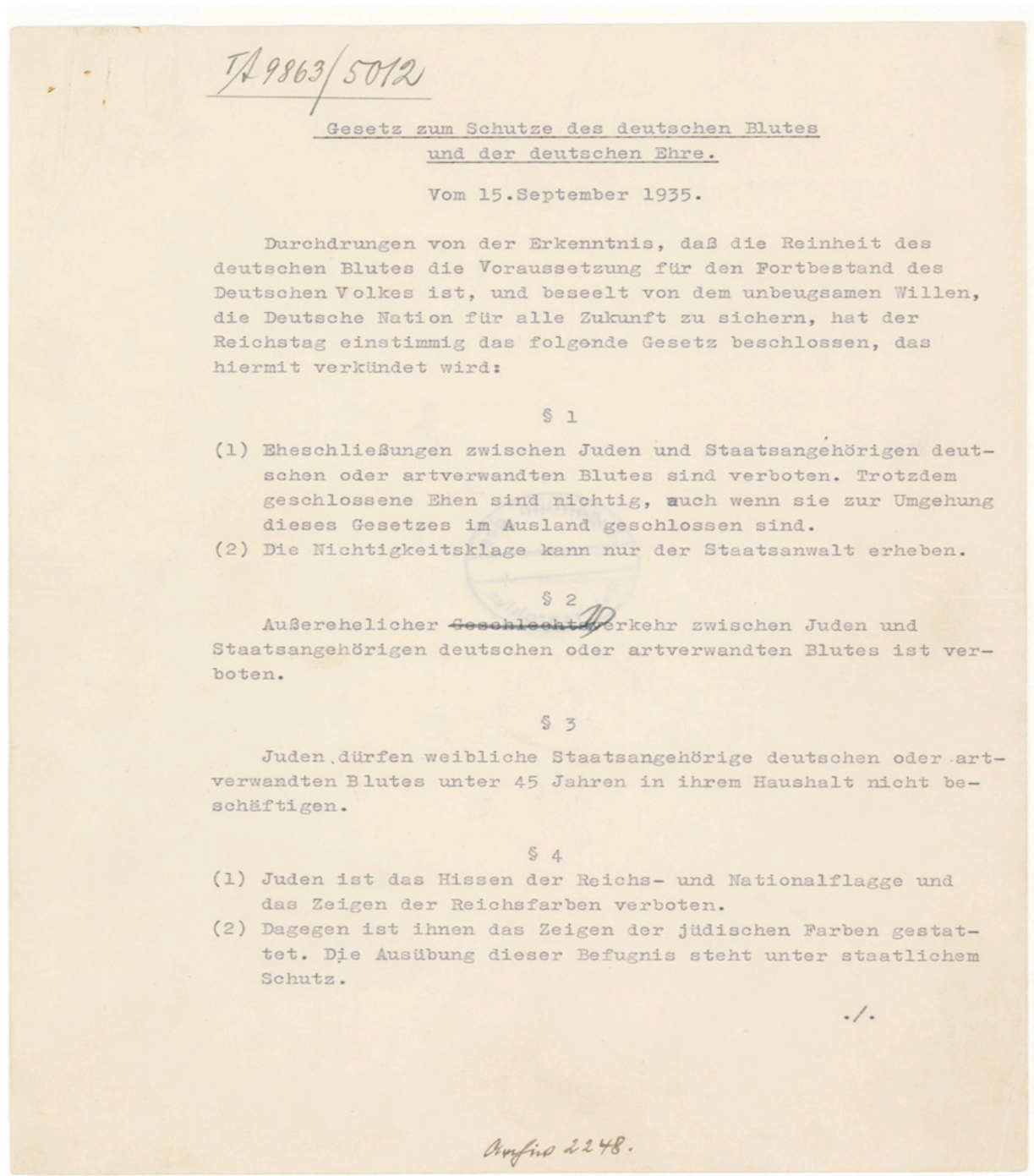
Jerusalem today. Israel resists any threat to their land and their people. Those who might believe that Jews are pacifists only need to turn their attention to Israel for proof that Jews are not going put their future in anyone else's hands.



## Appendix

Figure 1: Nuremberg Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor

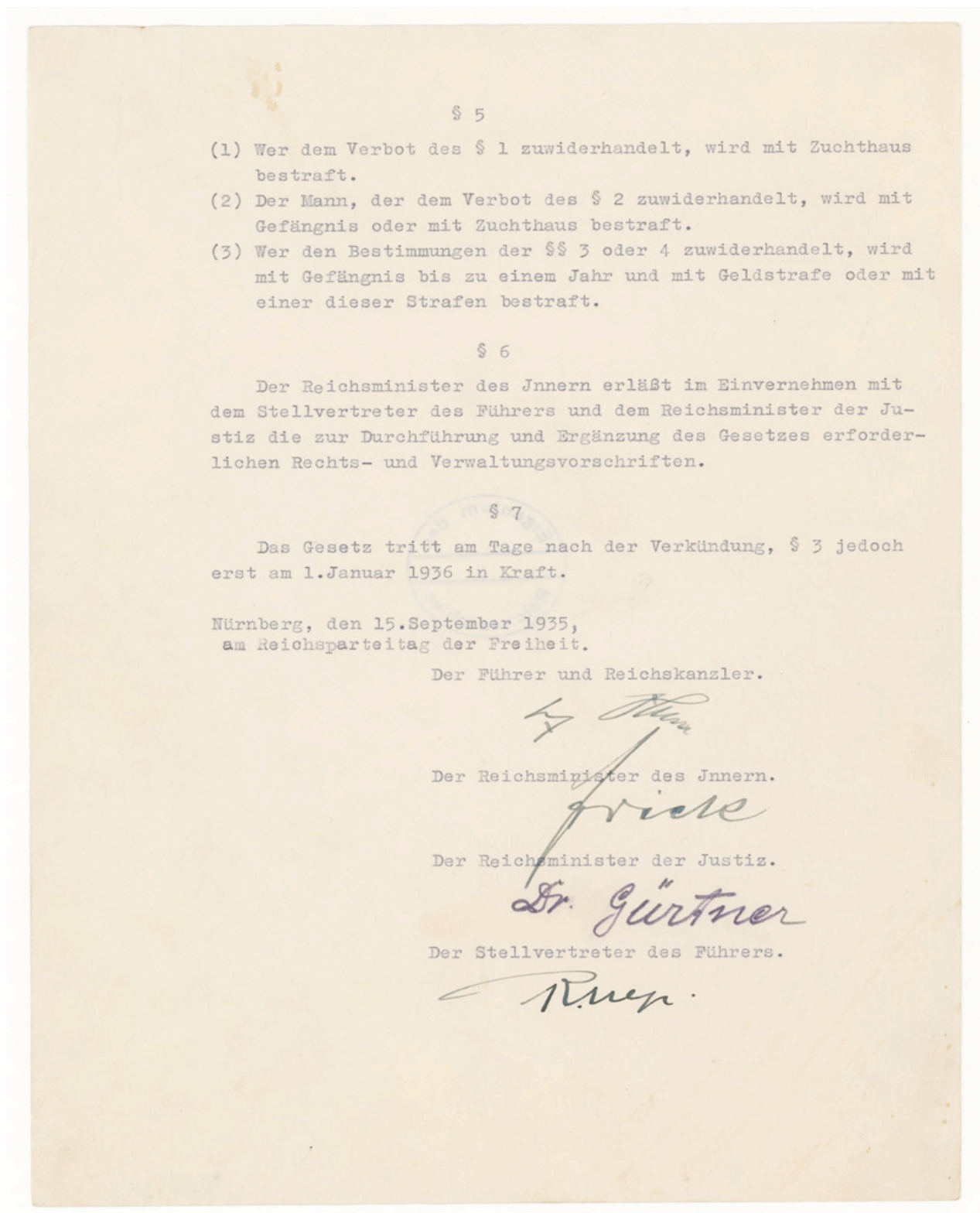
September 15, 1935



Source: National Archives

Figure 1: Nuremberg Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor

September 15, 1935



Source: National Archives

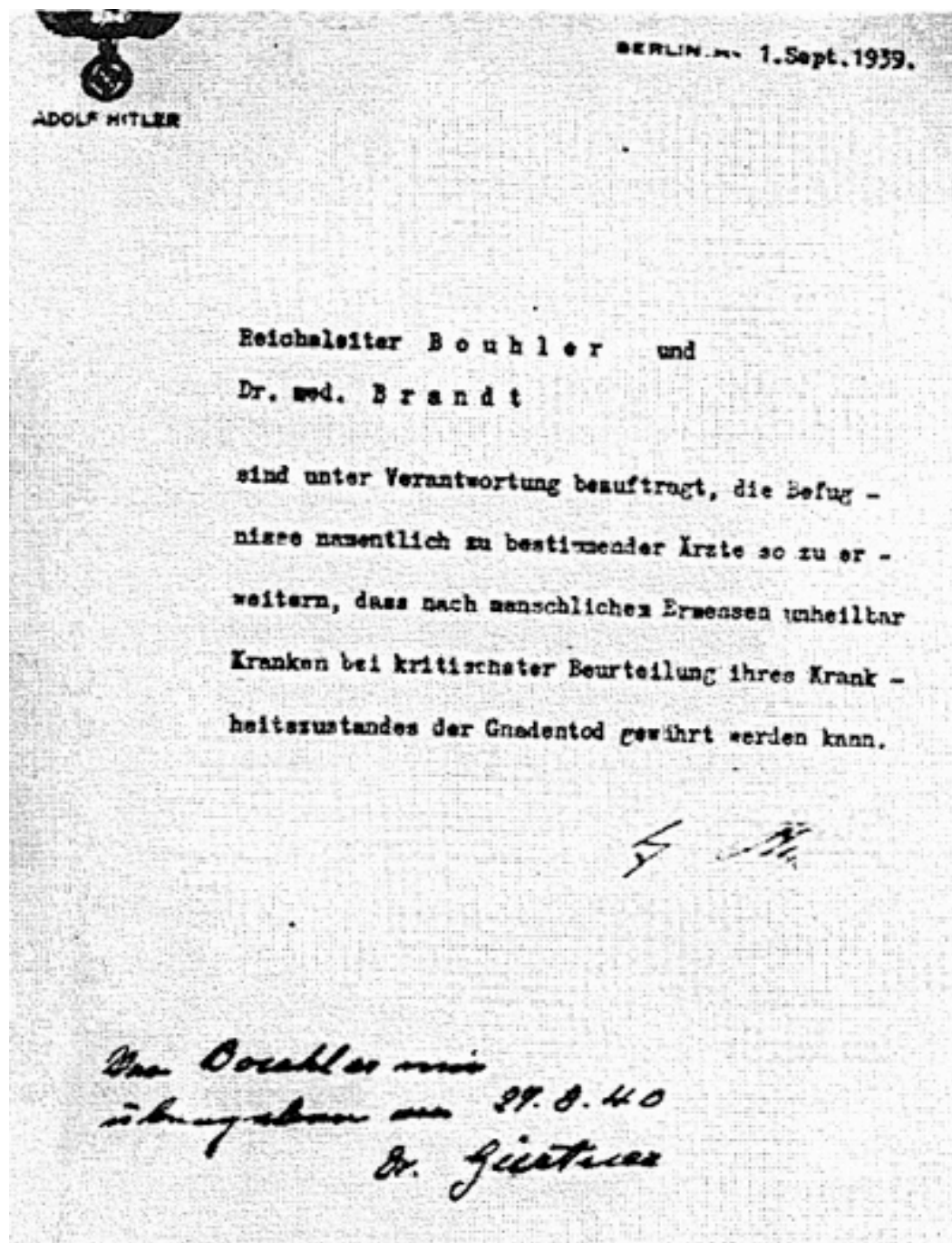


Figure 2: Photograph of Sam Dreben, Circa 1922



Source: University of Texas, El Paso Archives

Figure 3: Signed Letter by Hitler Authorizing Euthanasia Killings (backdated to September 1, 1939)



Source of English translation: Signed Letter by Hitler Authorizing Euthanasia Killings (backdated to September 1, 1939). In United States Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Volume 3. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946; Document 630-PS, p. 451. (English translation attributed to Nuremberg staff.)

Source of original German document: Auftrag Hitlers an Reichsleiter Bouhler und Dr. Brandt: Bestimmte Ärzte sind zu ermächtigen, den Gnadentod an Unheilbaren zu vollziehen (zurückdatiert auf den 1. September 1939) (Beweisstück US-342). In Internationaler Militärgerichtshof Nürnberg, Der Nürnberger Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vom 14. November 1945 bis 1. Oktober 1946: Urkunden und anderes Beweismaterial. Published in Nuremberg 1947. Munich: Delphin Verlag, 1989. Volume XXVI:

**Figure 4:**

**A) Memo from Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long, to State Department Officials dated June 26, 1940, outlining effective ways to obstruct the granting of U.S. visas.**

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**June 26, 1940.**

**A-B - Mr. Berle  
PA/D Mr. Dunn**

Attached is a memorandum from Mr. Warren. I discussed the matter with him on the basis of this memorandum. There are two possibilities and I will discuss each category briefly.

**Non-immigrants**

Their entry into the United States can be made to depend upon prior authorization by the Department. This would mean that the consuls would be divested of discretion and that all requests for nonimmigrant visas (temporary visitor and transit visas) be passed upon here. It is quite feasible and can be done instantly. It will permit the Department to effectively control the immigration of persons in this category and private instructions can be given the Visa Division as to nationalities which should not be admitted as well as to individuals who are to be excluded.

This must be done for universal application and could not be done as regards Germany, for instance, or Russia, for instance, or any other one government because it would first, invite retaliation and second, would probably be a violation of some of our treaty arrangements. The retaliation clause is in connection with Germany because it could mean the closing of our offices in almost all of Europe.

**Immigrants**

We can delay and effectively stop for a temporary period of indefinite length the number of immigrants into the United States. We could do this by simply advising our consuls, to put every obstacle in the way and to require additional evidence and to resort to various administrative devices which would postpone and postpone and postpone the granting of the visas. However, this could only be temporary. In order to make it more definite It would have to be done by suspension of the rules under the law by the issuance of a proclamation of emergency--which I take it we are not yet ready to proclaim.

**Summing Up**

We can effectively control non-immigrants by prohibiting the issuance of visas unless the consent of the Department to obtained in advance for universal application.

We can temporarily prevent the number of immigrants from certain localities such as Cuba, Mexico and other places of origin of German intending immigrants by simply raising administrative obstacles.

The Department will be prepared to take these two steps immediately upon the decision but emphasis must be placed on the fact that discrimination must not be practiced and with the additional thought that in case a suspension of the regulations should be proclaimed under the need of an emergency, it would be universally applicable and would affect refugees from England.

The Canadian situation and travel across that border we can handle through an exception to the general rule and so advise our consuls In Canada.

**B) U.S. State Department receives information from Switzerland regarding the Nazi plan to murder the Jews of Europe.**

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**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

MEC

This telegram must be closely paraphrased  
before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

FROM

Bern

Dated August 11, 1942

Rec'd 2:35 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington

3697, August 11, 3 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Gerhardt M. Riegner Secretary World Jewish Congress Geneva called on Vice Consul Elting Geneva Saturday eighth greatly agitated and requested following quoted message be transmitted for information American and other Allied Governments and be notified in Department's discretion to Dr Stephen Wise New York City:

"Informer reported to have close connections with highest German authorities who has previously generally reliable reports says that in Fuehrer's [sic] headquarters plan under consideration to exterminate at one blow this fall three and half to four millions Jews following deportation from countries occupied, controlled by Germany and concentration in east. Method execution undecided but prussic acid has been considered. Information transmitted with reservation as exactitude cannot be ascertained."

Confidential Legation

CONFIDENTIAL Legation note: Legation has no information which would tend to confirm this report which is however forwarded in accordance with Riegner's wishes. In conversation with Elting Riegner drew attention to recently reported Jewish deportations eastward from occupied France, protectorate and probably elsewhere. The report has earmarks of war rumor inspired by fear and what is commonly understood to be the actually miserable condition of these refugees who face decimation as result physical maltreatment persecution and scarcely endurable privations malnutrition and disease.



HARRISON

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AMERICAN CONSULATE  
Geneva, Switzerland, August 10, 1942

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Transmitting Memorandum of Conversation with Secretary of Jewish Congress, Geneva, concerning Report that Germans are Considering Wholesale Extermination of Jews.

THE HONORABLE SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

Sir:

At the suggestion of the Legation at Bern, I have the honor to enclose a copy of a memorandum in the above entitled matter.

I desire to reiterate my belief in the utter seriousness of my informant.

Respectfully yours,

Howard Elting, Jr.  
American Vice Consul

Enclosure:  
Copy of memorandum, as stated.

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**MEMORANDUM**

Subject: Conversation with Mr. Gerhart M. RIEGNER, Secretary of World Jewish Congress

This morning Mr. Gerhart M. RIEGNER, Secretary of the World Jewish Congress in

Geneva, called in great agitation. He stated that he had just received a report from a German business man of considerable prominence, who is said to have excellent political and military connections in Germany and from whom reliable and important political information has been obtained on two previous occasions, to the effect that there has been and is being considered in Hitler's headquarters a plan to exterminate all Jews from Germany and German controlled areas in Europe after they have been concentrated in the east (presumably Poland). The number involved is said to be between three-and-a-half and four millions and the object is to permanently settle the Jewish question in Europe. The mass execution if decided upon would allegedly take place this fall.

Riegner stated that according to his informant the use of prussic acid was mentioned as a means of accomplishing the executions. When I mentioned that this report seemed fantastic to me, Riegner said that it struck him in the same way but that from the fact that mass deportation had been taking place since July 16 as confirmed by reports received by him from Paris, Holland, Berlin, Vienna, and Prague it was always conceivable that such a diabolical plan was actually being considered by Hitler as a corollary.

According to Riegner, 14,000 Jews have already been deported from occupied France and 10,000 more are to be handed over from occupied France in the course of the next few days. Similarly from German sources 56,000 Jews have already been deported from the Protectorate together with unspecified numbers from Germany and other occupied countries.

Riegner said this report was so serious and alarming that he felt it his duty to make the following requests: (1) that the American and other Allied Governments be informed with regard thereto at once; (2) that they be asked to try by every means to obtain confirmation or denial; (3) that Dr. Stephen Wise, the president of his organization, be informed of the report.

I told Riegner that the information would be passed on to the Legation at once but that I was not in a position to inform him as to what action, if any, the Legation might take. He hoped that he might be informed in due course that the information had been transmitted to Washington.

For what it is worth, my personal opinion is that Riegner is a serious and balanced individual and that he would never have come to the Consulate with the above report if he had not had confidence in his informant's reliability and if he did not seriously consider that the report might well contain an element of truth. Again it is my opinion that the report should be passed on to the Department for what it is worth.

There is attached a draft of a telegram prepared by Riegner giving in his own words a telegraphic summary of his statements to me.

Howard Elting, Jr.  
American Vice Consul

American Consulate  
Geneva, Switzerland

**C) Cable from London to Rabbi Stephen Wise regarding the "Final Solution."**

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C Aug 28-42

1. LINYL LIVERPOOL 123 1/64 25 NLT
  2. STEPHEN WISE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS NEW YORK
  3. HAVE RECEIVED THROUGH FOREIGN OFFICE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM RIEGNER GENEVA STOP (RECEIVED ALARMING REPORT THAT IN FUHRERS HEADQUARTERS PLAN DISCUSSED AND UNDER CONSIDERATION ALL JEWS IN COUNTRIES OCCUPIED OR CONTROLLED GERMANY NUMBERING 3-1/2 TO 4 MILLION SHOULD AFTER DEPORTATION AND CONCENTRATION IN EAST AT ONE BLOW EXTERMINATED TO RESOLVE ONCE FOR ALL JEWISH QUESTION IN EUROPE. STOP ACTION REPORTED PLANNED FOR AUTUMN METHODS UNDER DISCUSSION INCLUDING PRUSSIC ACID STOP WE TRANSMIT INFORMATION WITH ALL NECESSARY RESERVATION AS EXACTITUDE CANNOT BE CONFIRMED STOP INFORMANT STATED TO HAVE CLOSE CONNECTIONS WITH HIGHEST GERMAN AUTHORITIES AND HIS REPORTS GENERALLY RELIABLE STOP INFORM AND CONSULT NEW YORK STOP FOREIGN OFFICE HAS NO INFORMATION BEARING ON OR CONFIRMING STORY
  4. SAMUEL SILVERMAN
  5. MM REFERRED ADSE: B5057 SNDR & TEXT NSL
  7. WU
- 1200 CNY 89035 AG

**D) Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles tells Rabbi Stephen Wise he has information confirming that the Nazis plan to kill all of Europe's Jews.**

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During September and October, [the World Jewish Congress representative in Geneva, Gerhart] Riegner continued to receive first-hand reports from countries all over Europe that the plan for mass extermination was being rapidly implemented. All these reports he transmitted to the State Department through Leland Harrison, American minister in Berne. In November, four sworn statements reached the State Department through Harrison, fully substantiating Riegner's reports. Mr Welles telegraphed that I come at once to the State Department...

In the office of Mr. Welles, we took our places and I shall never forget the quiet but deeply moving way in which he turned to us and said, every word etching itself into my heart, "Gentlemen, I hold in my hands documents which have come to me from our legation in Berne. I regret to tell you, Dr. Wise, that these confirm and justify your deepest fears." He handed me the original documents from Berne which confirmed our dreadful apprehensions. The documents' red seals suggested the blood of my people pouring forth in rivers. Mr. Welles added, "For reasons you will understand, I cannot give these to the press, but there is no reason why you should not. It might even help if you did.

From: "The Challenging Years: The Autobiography of Stephen Wise"; G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1949.

**E) The State Department sends a memo to the American legation in Bern, on February 10, 1943, stating that in the future they not transmit reports to private citizens, since they "circumvent neutral countries' censorship."**

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#### **PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT**

TO: American Legation, Bern  
FROM: Secretary of State, No. 354  
DATE: February 10, 1943

Your 482, January 21

In the future we would suggest that you do not accept reports submitted to you to be transmitted to private persons in the United States unless such action is advisable because of extraordinary circumstances. Such private messages circumvent neutral countries' censorship and it is felt that by sending them we risk the possibility that steps would necessarily be taken by the neutral countries to curtail or forbid our means of communication for confidential official matter.

HULL  
(SW)

**F) Entry from Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long's diary in which he notes that President Roosevelt supports his policy of encouraging consulates to "postpone and postpone and postpone" the granting of visas.**

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October 3, 1940

So when I saw him [FDR] this morning the whole subject of immigration, visas, safety of the United States, procedures to be followed; and all that sort of thing was on the table. I found that he was 100% in accord with my ideas. He said that when Myron Taylor, [the President's personal representative to the Vatican], had returned from Europe recently the only thing which they discussed outside of Vatican matters was the visa and refugee situation and the manner in which our Consulates were being deprived of a certain amount of discretion by the rulings of the Department...The President expressed himself as in entire accord with the policy which would exclude persons about whom there was any suspicion that they would be inimical too the welfare of the United States no matter who had vouchsafed for them and irrespective of their financial or other standing. I left him with the satisfactory thought that he was wholeheartedly in support of the policy which would resolve in favor of the United States any doubts about admissibility of any individual.

From: "The War Diary of Breckinridge Long"; ed. Fred L. Israel; University of Nebraska Press, 1966.

**G) Memorandum of Conversation by Mr. Harry L. Hopkins, Special Assistant to President Roosevelt regarding a meeting with Anthony Eden March 27, 1943**

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March 27, 1943.

Subject: Eden Visit--Conference with the President, Anthony Eden, Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles, Viscount Halifax, Mr. Wm. Strang

Hull raised the question of the 60 or 70 thousand Jews that are in Bulgaria and are threatened with extermination unless we could get them out and, very urgently, pressed Eden for an answer to the problem. Eden replied that the whole problem of the Jews in Europe is very difficult and that we should move very cautiously about offering to take all Jews out of a country like Bulgaria. If we do that, then the Jews of the world will be wanting us to make similar offers in Poland and

Germany. Hitler might well take us up on any such offer and there, simply are not enough ships and means of transportation in the world to handle them.

Eden said that the British were ready to take about 60 thousand more Jews to Palestine but the problem of transportation, even from Bulgaria to Palestine is extremely difficult. Furthermore, any such mass movement as that would be very dangerous to security because the Germans would be sure to attempt to put a number of their agents in the group. They have been pretty successful with this technique, both in getting their agents into North and South America.

Eden said that the forthcoming conferences in Bermuda on the whole refugee problem must come to grips with this difficult situation.

Eden said he hoped that on our side we would not make too expansive promises which could not be delivered because of lack of shipping.

There was a general discussion about the organization of the United Nations after the war. The President and Welles were very emphatic that the United States could not be a member of any independent regional body such as a European Council; they felt that all the United Nations should be members of one body for the purposes of recommending policy; that this body should be world-wide in scope.

2. That there would be under this body regional councils with similar advisory powers made up of the nations geographically located in the regions; but, finally, that, the real decisions should be made by the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China, who would be the powers for many years to come that would have to police the world.

The President was very insistent with Eden that China should be a member, altho it was clear to me that Eden still was not convinced of the wisdom of the procedure. The President feels that China, in any serious conflict of policy with Russia, would undoubtedly line up on our side.

I said that Churchill's speech in which he advocated a purely European Council of Nations, had a very unfortunate effect over here. Eden said he was sure Churchill had not meant to exclude the United States and that he rather felt that Churchill spoke on the spur of the moment and that he, Eden, agreed that the United Nations should be organized on a global basis.

The whole idea of the trusteeship of mandated islands, etc. was discussed and the President and Eden seemed to be much closer together than they were at the beginning of their conferences on this policy.

The President made it clear that he did not want a commitment made in advance that all those colonies in the Far East should go back to the countries which owned or controlled them prior to the war. He specifically mentioned Timor, Portugal, Indo-China and France. He suggested that all the specific problems which Mr. Eden had raised in his visit here be referred to the State Department and they asked to start exploratory discussions with the British or with any other country in regard to all of them.

I said I thought it would have a, very bad effect, both in England and the United States, if the world got the impression that the United States and England were, together, planning the future of the world without consulting anyone else. Eden agreed to this and said the British were conducting direct conferences on matters that concerned them and Russia and lie assumed we would do the same thing.

*H[ARRY] L. H[OPKINS]*

Figure 5:

Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases (July 14, 1933)

<h1>Reichsgesetzblatt</h1> <p>Teil I</p>		
1933	Ausgegeben zu Berlin, den 25. Juli 1933	Nr. 86
<p><b>Inhalt:</b> Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses. Vom 14. Juli 1933 ..... S. 529          Dritte Verordnung zur Durchführung des Gesetzes über die Denkschriftbewirtschaftung. Vom 20. Juli 1933 ..... S. 531          Verordnung über die Errichtung einer vollständigen Hilfssanität. Vom 22. Juli 1933 ..... S. 531          Verordnung über Zellübertragungen und Kastrationsverfahren. Vom 24. Juli 1933 ..... S. 533          Verordnung zur Durchführung des Gesetzes über die Aufhebung der im Kampf für die nationale Erhebung erlittenen Dienststrafen und sonstigen Maßregelungen. Vom 25. Juli 1933 ..... S. 535</p>		
<p><b>Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses.</b>          Vom 14. Juli 1933.</p> <p>Die Reichsregierung hat das folgende Gesetz beschlossen, das hiermit verkündet wird:</p>		
<p><b>§ 1</b></p> <p>(1) Wer erbkrank ist, kann durch ärztliches Eingreifen unfruchtbar gemacht (sterilisiert) werden, wenn nach den Erfahrungen der ärztlichen Wissenschaft mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit zu erwarten ist, daß sein Nachkommen an schweren körperlichen oder geistigen Erbchäden leiden werden.</p> <p>(2) Erbkrank im Sinne dieses Gesetzes ist, wer an einer der folgenden Krankheiten leidet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. angeborenem Schwachsinn,</li> <li>2. Schizophrenie,</li> <li>3. jekulärem (manisch-depressivem) Irresein,</li> <li>4. erblicher Hellsucht,</li> <li>5. erblichem Weistanz (Huntingtonsche Chorea),</li> <li>6. erblicher Blindheit,</li> <li>7. erblicher Lausheit,</li> <li>8. schwerer erblicher körperlicher Mißbildung.</li> </ol> <p>(3) Ferner kann unfruchtbar gemacht werden, wer an (schwerem) Alkoholismus leidet.</p>		
<p><b>§ 2</b></p> <p>(1) Antragberechtigt ist derjenige, der unfruchtbar gemacht werden soll. Ist dieser geschäftsunfähig oder wegen Geisteskrankheit entmündigt oder hat er das achtzehnte Lebensjahr noch nicht vollendet, so ist der gesetzliche Vertreter antragsberechtigt; er bedarf dazu der Genehmigung des Vormundschaftsgerichts. In den übrigen Fällen beschränkter Geschäftsfähigkeit bedarf der Antrag der Zustimmung des gesetzlichen Vertreters. Hat ein Volljähriger einen Pfleger für seine Person erhalten, so ist dessen Zustimmung erforderlich.</p>		
<p>(2) Dem Antrag ist eine Bescheinigung eines für das Deutsche Reich approbierten Arztes beizufügen, daß der Antragsbegründende über das Wesen und die Folgen der Kastrationsmaßnahme aufgeklärt worden ist.</p> <p>(3) Der Antrag kann zurückgenommen werden.</p>		
<p><b>§ 3</b></p> <p>Der Antragsbegründende kann auch beantragen</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. der beamtete Arzt,</li> <li>2. für die Inassen einer Kranken-, Heil- oder Pflegeanstalt oder einer Strafanstalt der Anstaltsleiter.</li> </ol>		
<p><b>§ 4</b></p> <p>Der Antrag ist schriftlich oder zur Niederschrift der Geschäftsstelle des Erbgesundheitsgerichts zu stellen. Die dem Antrag zu Grunde liegenden Tatsachen sind durch ein ärztliches Gutachten oder auf andere Weise glaubhaft zu machen. Die Geschäftsstelle hat dem beamteten Arzt von dem Antrag Kenntnis zu geben.</p>		
<p><b>§ 5</b></p> <p>Zuständig für die Entscheidung ist das Erbgesundheitsgericht, in dessen Bezirk der Antragsbegründende seinen allgemeinen Gerichtsstand hat.</p>		
<p><b>§ 6</b></p> <p>(1) Das Erbgesundheitsgericht ist einem Amtsgericht anzuschließen. Es besteht aus einem Vorsitzenden als Vorsitzenden, einem beamteten Arzt und einem weiteren für das Deutsche Reich approbierten Arzt, der mit der Erbgesundheitslehre besonders vertraut ist. Für jedes Mitglied ist ein Vertreter zu bestellen.</p> <p>(2) Als Vorsitzender ist auszuscheiden, wer über einen Antrag auf Vormundschaftsgerichtliche Genehmigung nach § 2 Abs. 1 entschieden hat. Hat ein beamteter Arzt den Antrag gestellt, so kann er bei der Entscheidung nicht mitwirken.</p>		

Source: Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg




[http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/sixcms/detail.php?template=hp\\_artikel&id=9338&id2=8455&sprache=de](http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/sixcms/detail.php?template=hp_artikel&id=9338&id2=8455&sprache=de)  
 (Viewed January 12, 2014)












Figure 6:

ATTENDEES OF THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE <sup>1</sup>  
JANUARY 20, 1942

<i><b>Name</b></i>	<i><b>Photo</b></i>	<i><b>Title</b></i>	<i><b>Organisation</b></i>
<i>SS-Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich</i>		<i>Chief of the RSHA Deputy Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia Presiding</i>	<i>Schutzstaffel (SS)</i>
<i>Dr. Josef Bühler</i>		<i>State Secretary</i>	<i>General Government of Poland</i>

<p><i>SS-Obersturmbannführer (Lieutenant Colonel) Adolf Eichmann</i></p>		<p><i>Head of Referat IV B4 of the Gestapo Recording secretary</i></p>	<p><i>Gestapo, RSHA, Schutzstaffel</i></p>
<p><i>Dr. Roland Freisler</i></p>		<p><i>State Secretary</i></p>	<p><i>Reich Ministry of Justice</i></p>
<p><i>SS-Gruppenführer Otto Hofmann</i></p>		<p><i>Head of the SS Race and Settlement Main Office (RuSHA)</i></p>	<p><i>Schutzstaffel (SS)</i></p>

SS-Oberführer Dr. Gerhard Klopfer		Permanent Secretary	Nazi Party Chancellery
Friedrich Wilhelm Kritzinger		Permanent Secretary	Reich Chancellery
SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Rudolf Lange		Commander of the <i>Sicherheitspolizei</i> (Security Police; SiPo) and the SD for the General-District Latvia Deputy of the Commander of the SiPo and the SD for the Reichskommissariat Ostland Head of <i>Einsatzkommando 2</i>	SiPo and SD, RSHA, <i>Schutzstaffel</i>
Dr. Georg Leibbrandt		<i>Reichsamtleiter</i> (Reich Head Office)	Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories
Martin Luther		Under Secretary	Reich Foreign Ministry

Dr. Alfred Meyer		<i>Gauleiter</i> (Regional Party Leader) State Secretary and Deputy Reich Minister	Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories
SS-Gruppenführer Heinrich Müller		Chief of Amt IV (Gestapo)	Reich Main Security Office (RSHA), <i>Schutzstaffel</i>
Erich Neumann		State Secretary	Office of the Plenipotentiary for the Four Year Plan
SS-Oberführer Dr. Karl Eberhard Schöngarth		Commander of the SiPo and the SD in the General Government	SiPo and SD, RSHA, <i>Schutzstaffel</i>
Dr. Wilhelm Stuckart		State Secretary	Reich Interior Ministry

<sup>1</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "The Wannsee Conference," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*. <http://www.ushmm.org/learn/timeline-of-events/1942-1945/wannsee-conference>. Accessed on September 2, 2013.  
Formatting table: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wannsee\\_Conference#CITEREFRoseman2002](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wannsee_Conference#CITEREFRoseman2002)

Land	Zahl
<b>A. Altreich</b> Ostmark 131.800 Ostgebiete 43.700 Generalgouvernement 420.000 Bialystok 2.284.000 Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren 400.000 Estland - judenfrei - 74.200 Lettland 3.500 Litauen 34.000 Belgien 43.000 Dänemark 5.600 Frankreich / Besetztes Gebiet 165.000 Unbesetztes Gebiet 700.000 Griechenland 69.600 Niederlande 160.800 Norwegen 1.300	
<b>B. Bulgarien</b> 48.000 England 330.000 Finnland 2.300 Irland 4.000 Italien einschl. Sardinien 58.000 Albanien 200 Kroatien 40.000 Portugal 3.000 Rumänien einschl. Bessarabien 542.000 Schweden 8.000 Schweiz 18.000 Serbien 10.000 Slowakei 88.000 Spanien 6.000 Türkei (europ. Teil) 55.500 Ungarn 742.800 UdSSR 5.000.000 Ukraine 2.994.604 Weißrussland aus- schl. Bialystok 446.484	
Zusammen: Über	11.000.000

**List A**

Old Germany	131,800
Austria	43,700
East Territories	420,000
Poland	2,284,000
Bialystok	400,000
Czechoslovakia	74,200
Estonia	-
Latvia	3,500
Lithuania	34,000
Belgium	43,000
Denmark	5,600
France (occupied)	165,000
France (unoccupied)	700,000
Greece	69,600
Nederland	160,800
Norway	1,300

**List B**

Bulgaria	48,000
England	330,000
Finland	2,300
Ireland	4,000
Italy	58,000
Croatia	40,000
Portugal	3,000
Romania	342,000
Sweden	8,000
Switzerland	18,000
Serbian	10,000
Slovakia	88,000
Spain	6,000
Turkey	55,500
Hungary	742,000
USSR	5,000,000
Total	11,0000,000

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Figure 7:

Map of the Holocaust in Europe during World War II, 1939-1945. This map shows all German Nazi extermination camps (or *death camps*), most major concentration camps, labor camps, prison camps, ghettos, major deportation routes and major massacre sites.



Source: United States Holocaust Museum & Dennis Nilsson [CC-BY-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>)] (Viewed February 2, 2014)

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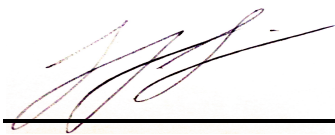
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Signature

