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The truth is that the emigration was welcomed by the German authorities, and frequently occurred under a constantly increasing pressure. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy, thereby augmenting the traditionally received picture of Jewish emigration from Germany.

German and Jewish authorities worked closely together on this emigration. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. The accounts of Jews fleeing Germany in secret by night across some border are untenable. On the contrary, the German government was interested in getting rid of its Jews. It would have been senseless to prevent such an emigration.

INGRID WECKERT • JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE THIRD REICH

Ingrid Weckert

# Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich



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**Ingrid Weckert**



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## Introduction

Current historical writings dealing with matters related to the Third Reich paint a bleak picture. But such historiography has nothing to do with the depiction of actual historical events. This applies especially to writings that deal with the Jewish ethnic group. The emigration of Jews from Germany is an example of such historical distortion.

To this day there are still accounts of the Jewish emigration that depict it as some kind of clandestine operation – as if the Jews who wished to leave Germany had to sneak over the borders in defiance of the German authorities, leaving all their possessions and wealth behind. Or as if certain routes out of Germany were ‘inside knowledge’ not available to all Jews. In other accounts the emphasis is on Germany offering exit visas for a high price. There is no limit either to the inventive powers or to the stupidity of their authors.

The truth is that the emigration was welcomed by the German authorities, and frequently occurred under a constantly increasing pressure. The anti-Semitic legislation of the Third Reich is an undisputed fact in this emigration story. Likewise, the psychological pressure that Jews in Germany came to experience after 1933 is not trivialized here; it was often tragic for individuals and families. But this tragedy has already entered the public consciousness through countless publications, in radio and television programs. We needn’t recapitulate it here.



However, counter to numerous eyewitness or autobiographical accounts, the following needs to be insisted on: Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter.

The purpose of this work is to elucidate the emigration process in law and policy, thereby augmenting the traditionally received picture of Jewish emigration from Germany.

German and Jewish authorities worked closely together on this emigration. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. The accounts of Jews fleeing Germany in secret by night across some border are untenable. On the contrary, the German government was interested in getting rid of its Jews. It would have been senseless to prevent such an emigration.

## 1. The Jewish “Declaration of War”

After Adolf Hitler was elected Reich chancellor on January 30, 1933, and the subsequent assumption of power by the National Socialist party, the majority of Germany’s 500,000 Jews did not anticipate any significant change in their situation.

At most they expected temporary hindrances in one area or the other, but not exclusion from public life, let alone expulsion from Germany. Thus only politically motivated individuals packed their bags and resettled in a foreign country, most of them believing that sooner or later they would return to Germany.

On March 24, 1933, two months after the National Socialists took power, “*World Jewry*,” as it referred to itself, declared war on Germany.<sup>1</sup> As World Jewry did not have its own state, it used the power at its disposal, namely its influence on the world economy, to impose a world-wide boycott of Germany.

After this spectacular declaration, which appeared in the London *Daily Express*, it should have been obvious to World Jewry, and also to Jews living in Germany, that there would be consequences. No country in the world with any self-respect – and Germany at that time regarded itself quite

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<sup>1</sup> There was actually a whole series of such declarations of war, c.f. Hartmut Stern: *Jüdische Kriegserklärungen an Deutschland*.

favorably – can ignore such a challenge. And in fact the boycott hit Germany at its weakest point.

The economic situation was catastrophic. Over 6 million unemployed, countless bankrupt enterprises, a collapsed economic system posed for the new German government an almost insurmountable burden and seemingly insoluble tasks. On top of all that, the foreign boycott of its goods should have dealt Germany a death blow. That it did not, that on the contrary Germany's economy recovered with astounding rapidity, thereby setting an example for other countries, was due entirely to the genius of its leadership. This is confirmed not only by contemporary reports, but also by recent studies devoted to presenting the facts. Of these, the two chapters devoted to Germany's economic recovery in Rainer Zitelmann's *Hitler* are most instructive.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Rainer Zitelmann: *Hitler. Selbstverständnis eines Revolutionärs*, in particular Chapter IV and V.

## 2. Jews in Germany

One of the consequences that flowed from the antagonistic attitude of so-called World Jewry was the German government's endeavor to remove Jewish citizens, to encourage them to emigrate.

For the German Jews this was a tragic development: Regardless of the fact that "World Jewry" had declared war on Germany, for hundreds of thousands of them Germany was home. Most of them had lived in Germany for generations. At first emigration was not a feasible alternative, and for a long time many could not take that decisive step.

Among the German Jews there were numerous groups and sub-groups, representing a multitude of differing political opinions. Besides purely religious organizations, there flourished very diverse associations, often with opposing viewpoints on various questions.

The four largest Jewish organizations were:

The Central Union of German Citizens of Jewish Faith (CV), which was formed in 1893. Later the organization was renamed the Central Union of Jews in Germany. Membership numbered about 10,000. Its political voice was the *C.V.-Zeitung*.

The Zionist Union of Germany (ZVfD), founded in 1897, with up to 10,000 members. It published the *Jüdische Rundschau* (Jewish Review).

In 1925 this Zionist union split and the New Zionist Movement arose; they also called themselves the Revision-

ists or State Zionists. The name State Zionists indicated their desire for a Jewish state. The founder and leader of the Revisionists was Vladimir Jabotinsky. His deputy in Germany was Georg Kareski.

The Reich Federation of Jewish Soldiers (RjF) was founded in 1919 and had about 10,000 members. It published a newspaper, *Der Schild* (The Shield).

The Union of National German Jews (VNJ) was founded in 1921, and had about 10,000 members. Its newspaper was the *Nationaldeutsche Jude* (National German Jew).

In order to represent Jewish interests more effectively an umbrella organization was formed, the Reich Deputies of German Jews (RV). In 1939 it changed its name to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany. The VNJ, however, refused to join this umbrella organization.

In spite of these differences, two basic directions emerge: one in which Germanism was the top priority and Judaism was a religious matter; the other in which a consciousness of belonging to a separate, Jewish nation was combined with the Jewish religion. The second of these two groups comprised the Zionists, who were a minority among German Jews but in time became the most influential force.

The majority of Germany's Jews had been settled there for over a century. The Jewish Edict of 1812 eliminated all legal restrictions and gave Jews the same political rights as other Germans. They thus saw themselves as Germans, not aliens. In the first few years after 1933, this attachment to Germany led not only to declarations of support for their German fatherland and the National Socialist movement, but also to open antagonism toward the Zionists, who pressed for emigration with growing fervor.

At first even the Zionist *Jüdische Rundschau* of April 13, 1933, declared:

*“The German people must know that the historical ties of centuries cannot simply be severed.”*

A little later, on August 29, 1933, the same newspaper wrote:

*“We believe that the German Jews must find their place and their integration in this state, and we hope that it will occur in harmony with the basic principles of the new state.”*

Even after the ‘Nuremberg Laws’, on September 9, 1935, the *Jüdische Rundschau* wrote that it was now the task of Jews to develop their special status within the German people in a positive way.

Several quotations that document how closely Jewish citizens identified with Germany in those years follow below. This is not to suggest that the majority of Jews did not adopt an attitude of distrust or rejection of the National Socialist government. But there were other points of view as well, that are generally suppressed today.

The first article of the constitution of Union of National German Jews (VNJ) states:<sup>3</sup>

*“The VNJ is an organization of Germans of Jewish ancestry who publicly declare that they feel their heritage is the German spirit and German culture, so that they can only feel and think as Germans.”*

Dr. Max Naumann, the chairman of the VNJ, had published numerous essays about the Jewish question a decade earlier, in 1920 and 1924, i.e., long before the rise of National Socialism. He took the following position in these

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<sup>3</sup> Ref. in Herrmann, p. 74.

writings: He differentiates between “*German Jews*” and “*foreign Jews*”, stating:

*“The German Jews belong to the German people, the foreign Jews scattered to the winds are a people without a country – even the English Palestine is not their country and will never be their country.”*

He defines the foreign Jews as a group marked by:

*“the fanatical attachment to backwardness [...] through the madness of being a community of the chosen and a problem for others.”*

He considers the Zionists to be among “*foreign Jews*”. Here again, he chooses between two groups. The “*honest and upright thinking Zionists*” are those who recognize their difference and are prepared to live in Germany as foreigners, if need be under legal constraints as aliens. But those who neither belong to the “*German Jews*” nor to the conscious Zionists, are:<sup>4</sup>

*“the remainder that deserves to perish. It is better that a few rootless perish than that hundreds of thousands of people who know where they belong, perish – our German people must not perish.”*

It is possible to claim that this was one man’s opinion, but Dr. Naumann was re-elected chairman of the Union of National German Jews year after year. That would not have been possible had the Union sought to distance itself from Dr. Naumann’s views. So it is fair to assume that there was a group of Jews who shared this extreme view of their Jewishness.

As noted above, the Union of National German Jews refused to join the organization that comprised the other

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<sup>4</sup> Ref. Hermann, p. 30.

major Jewish groups. Its members felt so German that they saw no need to join a Jewish umbrella organization.

Even more radical was the attitude of a German national youth group, the Black Banner. It dissolved itself in 1934 after a number of its members left Judaism in order, as the official declaration states, to demonstrate “*complete separation from Judaism in every form.*”<sup>5</sup>

These national German Jews expressed a number of positive opinions on Germanism and National Socialism as well.

In 1931 the magazine *Der Nationaldeutsche Jude* posed the question: “*Can Jews Be National Socialists?*,” and the answer was a unanimous yes. In its January 1931 issue, the magazine wrote:

*“Did not we Jews shed our blood on the battlefields for Germany? Was not a Jew the president of the first German Parliament in the Paulskirche?<sup>[6]</sup> Was not the founder of the conservative party a Jew? Whom do the parties thank for having adopted the rallying cry for a united Fatherland, their creation and their organization? The Jews! Who was the first precisely and clearly to formulate the demands that today are the main points of the National Socialist Program? A Jew – Walter Rathenau.”*

In May 1933, after Hitler assumed power, the same magazine wrote in a special edition:

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<sup>5</sup> Herrmann, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> This is an error. The president of the first German parliament in the Frankfurt Paulskirche was Heinrich Freiherr von Gagern. He belonged to an old aristocratic family from Rügen which goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Most probably the writer of this article mixed up Gagern with Martin Eduard von Simson, a converted Jew, who in 1871 was the first president of the Reichstag.



*“The Germany of the future is faced with completely new tasks, which can only be solved by a nation renewed at its foundation. To create this nation in the form of a national community that has never before existed in Germany’s history, is the major and, if properly undertaken, truly liberating task of the national leader.”*

In 1934 VNJ’s Dr. Max Naumann declared:<sup>7</sup>

*“We have placed the well-being of the German peoples and the Fatherland, to which we feel inextricably linked, above our own well-being. That is why we welcomed the January 1933 national uprising, this in spite of the hardships it brought for us, but we saw in it the only means with which to overcome the damage wrought by un-German elements during those 14 tragic years.”*

An orthodox rabbi from Ansbach wrote in the same year:<sup>8</sup>

*“I reject the teachings of Marxism from a Jewish viewpoint and profess National Socialism, naturally without its anti-Semitic components. Without this anti-Semitism National Socialism would find its most devoted adherents amongst the orthodox Jews.”*

As stated earlier, these views were not that of the Jewish majority, but they were expressed in the media – an attitude, by the way, that the National Socialists did not appreciate. They did not want any support for their ideas from Jewish citizens; they wanted the Jews to disappear from Germany.

The National Socialist attitude corresponded in principle to the Zionist position. They wished to establish a na-

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<sup>7</sup> Ref. Hermann, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Ref. Hartmann, p. 3.

tional Judaism and thus opposed any inner Jewish attachment to anything German. But they approved of National Socialism because they shared its basic tenet: devotion to one's own people and state.

In December 1935 George Kareski, the chairman of the German State Zionists, was interviewed on the Nuremberg Laws by Goebbels's magazine *Der Angriff*. His views on how various questions arising from the legislation had been dealt with were quite positive. Kareski said that the Nuremberg Laws fulfilled old Jewish demands. For example, the separation of German and Jewish nationality, the establishment of schools for Jewish students only, nurturing and supporting a specific Jewish culture, and above all the state prohibition of mixed marriages, which in any case Jewish law did not permit.<sup>9</sup>

The Kareski interview aroused controversy in Jewish circles, but Kareski received support from orthodox Jews and more so from Zionist groups.

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<sup>9</sup> *Der Angriff*, December 23, 1935. The text is reproduced in Udo Walendy: "Aspekte jüdischen Lebens im Dritten Reich" Part 1, *Historische Tatsachen*, No. 61, Vlotho 1993, pp. 17f.



### 3. Emigration

For the Zionists the only viable future was in their own country, the former Palestine. But even for them it was unimaginable that all Jews would leave Germany. They wanted to win over the younger Jews for emigration so that they could do the heavy work in Palestine. In order to bring this about they realized that working together with the National Socialists was the only alternative for their organizations. And that is what happened. Over the following years an ever closer positive relationship with the National Socialists developed among those Jews who wished to immigrate to Palestine.

German institutions were desirous of concluding the emigration as quickly as possible. As noted earlier, the Jewish groups and organizations realized the necessity of emigration only gradually.

There were three Jewish emigration agencies which had in part operated in Berlin since the beginning of the century.

The *Hilfsverein für deutsche Juden* was responsible for emigration to all parts of the world except Palestine. It maintained agents in foreign countries who investigated the possibilities of immigration and settlement, i.e., accommodating German Jews and establishing contact with local Jewish organizations, thereby making it easier for the immigrants to settle down.

The Palestine Office (*Palästinaamt*) concerned itself with the “*Aliyah*” – literally: ascending – meaning the ascent to Jerusalem, synonymous for immigration to Palestine. Its ‘clients’ were above all young Jews who were suitable for the hard physical labor that settlement in Palestine brought with it.

A third institution was the Main Office for Jewish Migration Welfare (*Hauptstelle für jüdische Wanderfürsorge*). Initially this agency concerned itself with Jews who were traveling in Germany. Later this organization concerned itself with caring for and resettling non-German Jews.<sup>10</sup>

The National Socialist government attempted to promote the emigration of its unwanted Jewish citizens. Two principal agreements were used by the state to regulate emigration: the “*Haavara*” and the “*Rublee-Wohlthat*.” The Haavara Agreement was in force from 1933 until 1941 and concerned emigration to Palestine. This agreement is now regularly mentioned in the relevant literature. In 1972 the former director of the Haavara Agreement, Werner Feilchenfeld, self-published a brochure which has obviously not been read by most people who write about the Haavara; otherwise they might not write so much nonsense about it.

The Rublee-Wohlthat agreement, on the other hand, generally falls under the historical blackout.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> This relief organization was founded in 1901, and in 1904 it established its migration section. In 1917 the headquarters for Jewish Travelers Aid was established; the *Palästinaamt der Zionistischen Vereinigung für Deutschland* was established during the 1920s.

<sup>11</sup> The original English text has been published only in: I. Weckert, *Flashpoint* (Feuerzeichen), pp. 145–148. A German translation is found in *Feuerzeichen*, pp. 275–281.

It covered the majority of emigrating Jews, all those who did not go to Palestine, but to other European countries or overseas countries. That was about two-thirds of all migrants. Unfortunately this agreement operated for only eight months; then war broke out and regulated emigration came to a stop. We note this point here because it makes clear the intentions of the German government, which were far removed from the 'extermination of the Jews'.



## 4. Haavara

In February 1933 Palestinian representatives of the citrus-growing company Hanotea Ltd. approached the German government to explore ways of realizing their mutual interests: for the Germans, the emigration of Jews; for the Jewish Palestinians, the immigration of Jews. The Jewish side attempted to get advantageous emigration conditions that would benefit Palestine. The German authorities accepted the Jewish proposals, and in May 1933 the first accords on economic policy were signed. These formed the basis of the Haavara Agreement. The word Haavara (Haavara, with emphasis on the last syllable) is Hebrew for ‘transfer’, i.e., to transport/transfer, in this case the transfer of wealth and goods. It is by this Hebrew name that the agreement became known in German files.<sup>12</sup>

The Haavara provided for the following arrangement: Jews who wished to migrate to Palestine could deposit their money into one or more accounts of Jewish banks in Germany. They could make such deposits even if they remained in Germany in the foreseeable future, i.e., even if they had merely the intention of emigrating from Germany. They could then use this money for the benefit of any Jew-

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<sup>12</sup> Circular 54/33 of the Reich Economic Ministry of August 28, 1933, Political Archive of Foreign Affairs (PA/AA), special W, Financial planning 16, vol 2. The text of the Haavara Agreement is reproduced in: Weckert, I, *Feuerzeichen*, pp. 219 f.



ish settlers already in Palestine, or they could invest the money in Palestine. They were also able to pay their medical insurance out of this money, up to ten years in advance. German Jews thereby received rights that German Reich citizens did not enjoy. Feilchenfeld wrote:<sup>13</sup>

*“Preparations for a home in Palestine for those still in Germany were a breakthrough as regards the currency controls prohibition that applied to Germans investing overseas.”*

A traveler’s credit agreement, in cooperation with a travel agency in Tel Aviv, was built into the Haavara Agreement; it enabled prospective German Jews to journey to Palestine to find out what opportunities the country offered. They paid their expenses in Reichsmarks, and in Palestine received vouchers for all incurred costs. This as well was an exceptional provision: Due to strict foreign currency regulations, it was almost impossible for Germans to travel outside of Germany. The tours organized by the KdF (Kraft durch Freude) [Strength through Joy, an organization which offered affordable cruises to German workers and their families—ed.] were settled by clearances.)

Once ready to emigrate, individuals received from their German bank, according to the exchange value, the minimum amount of foreign currency needed, 1000 Palestine pounds (the value of the Palestine pound was equal to that of the English pound sterling).

The Israeli historian Avraham Barkai has stressed that, given the prevailing foreign currency regulations, this allocation of foreign currency exclusively to emigrating Jewish citizens was a marked exception.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Feilchenfeld, p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> *Vom Boycott zur “Entjudung,”* p. 63.

Upon entering Palestine, the Jews from Germany had to show their money. A study of some years ago interpreted the 1000 pounds required for entry as payment for an entry visa.<sup>15</sup> This is complete nonsense. The money was theirs, and they were only required to present it in order to demonstrate that they were able to support themselves and to create a new life so as not to burden the Jewish community in Palestine.

The rest of their money remained at their disposal in their Haavara account. Upon migrating they could take their complete household with them, including machines and instruments needed for establishing themselves in their professions. All German citizens who decided to emigrate from Germany had to pay a “Reich flight tax” (*Reichsfluchtsteuer*), something the Jews who left Germany under Haavara did not.

The Haavara accounts also paid for goods imported from Germany by Palestinian traders and merchants. In Palestine the immigrants received the equivalent in homes, land, citrus orchards, or the full amount in cash. A supplementary agreement enabled merchants from Egypt, Syria and Iraq to finance imports from Germany through Haavara.<sup>16</sup>

Additional rules and loopholes benefited the immigrant Jews from Germany in Palestine, among them that all

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<sup>15</sup> Kroh, *David Kämpft*, p. 24. This work is full of inaccuracies and distortions. The entire treatment of emigration is full of false assertions; e.g., p. 28: “*The National Socialists made their expulsion pay,*” or, immigrants to Palestine had to pay the Reich flight tax and exchange currency at a fantastic rate. Both are untrue.

<sup>16</sup> Feilchenfeld, pp. 54f.

social security and pension payments could be transferred without deductions.<sup>17</sup>

Jews living in Palestine could also make payments to friends in Germany through Haavara:<sup>18</sup>

*“The sponsor paid the equivalent value in Palestinian currency at a discount rate to the Haavara in favor of the recipient in Germany. The recipient of such support then received the equivalent in Reichsmarks through the Paltreu<sup>19</sup> in Berlin. This system of a clearing house in private hands for payments of benefits to Germany developed in 1937 into a world-wide organization. Its task was to organize the relief payments from all over the world, and to use the accumulated foreign currency for the transfer of Jewish capital to Palestine.”*

Another form of clearing is recounted by adviser to the Reichsbank Walther Utermöhle, former director of the center for currency control in the Reich Ministry of Economics:<sup>20</sup>

*“This enabled a clearing between emigrating Jews and [...] from overseas returning Germans. For example, if a German could not sell his house or business [because of the boycott in a foreign country] but found a Jew in Germany who had similar assets, then permission to exchange was given where neither side made an unfair gain.”*

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 49

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 61f.

<sup>19</sup> The “Paltreu” was a kind of sister organization of the Haavara. Its task was to enable the transfer of assets beyond the limits imposed on the Haavara. Both Haavara and Paltreu were controlled by Jews.

<sup>20</sup> Letter in *Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung*, December 16, 1977.

Besides the official regulations that applied to the Jews, there was a number of cases that were regulated through the Haavara to benefit of the emigrants.

The Haavara was beneficial to those Jews unable to raise the one thousand pounds required in order to go to Palestine. The Haavara enabled them to obtain loans repayable years later.<sup>21</sup> For these individuals the normal transfer fees were reduced by 50 percent, thereby enabling every Jew in Germany who desired to go to Palestine to emigrate.

Insofar as the basic tenor of the Haavara Agreement reflected the German government's encouragement for Jews to emigrate, it also encouraged some Germans to actions that verged on the illegal. Rolf Vogel, the former Jewish journalist and publisher of the *Deutschlandberichte*, which aimed at promoting German-Jewish understanding, reports the following:<sup>22</sup>

*“Numerous individual actions of support were not legal, especially in cases where Jews did not wish to go to Palestine and could not be helped in any other way. It so happened that Jews sold their businesses and then lost their proceeds because they could not transfer them. To prevent this loss, government officials offered Jewish proprietors not emigration, but rather the opportunity to represent their own business overseas. By receiving high commissions and the proceeds from sales as representatives of their own firms, Jewish businessmen got back most of their lost money.*

*Another transfer trick, also conducted with the knowledge and good will of the foreign currency bureaucrats, was the transfer of money through the courts: A*

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<sup>21</sup> Adler-Rudel, pp. 102f.

<sup>22</sup> Vogel, *Ein Stempel hat gefehlt*, pp. 48f.

*person left at the court an envelope marked 'My last will.' The person then migrated, and after a few months would make a request to the local judiciary to have his envelope containing money and shares forwarded on to him from Germany.*

*Money could be transferred just as smoothly by an advertisement in the paper. For example, a Jew in Zurich would place an advertisement in the Völkischer Beobachter: 'Representative required'. He would then have someone in Germany send envelopes filled with money or shares to the Völkischer Beobachter, which then collected and forwarded them on to Zurich."*

In some respects the Haavara assisted in developing German exports, though this was not a primary factor, despite what one reads occasionally today.<sup>23</sup>

Altogether one should not exaggerate the consequences of the agreement for the German economy. The consumption of goods by a community of 200,000 to 300,000 people – and the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine) was no larger than that – which was also limited to certain goods, was not in a position to lend a country of sixty million any essential export help. Furthermore, there was no foreign currency flow to be gained by selling to Palestine; payment was in German money from the Haavara accounts. Even Feilchenfeld stressed that the export activity of the Haavara offered no significant advantage for Germany, because "*Haavara brought Germany no gains in foreign exchange for.*" (p. 29).

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<sup>23</sup> E.g. F. Nicosia, *Hitler und der Zionismus*, p. 83 writes:

*"The fear of a German decline in goods on the international market, and thus the Middle East market, influenced the German government in its decision to sign the Haavara Transfer Agreement with the Zionist representatives in summer 1933."*

For Palestine the Haavara brought untold advantages. In the brochure published by Feilchenfeld, Dr. Ludwig Pinner, a former member of Haavara Society, is tireless in singing the praises of the agreement:<sup>24</sup>

*“Until the beginning of the 1930s Palestine was an agricultural country with a primitive level of development.”*

It was only the immigrants from Germany that

*“altered the economic structure and the social composition of the ‘Yishuv’ and contributed significantly to its development. Under their influence and participation industrial output doubled, technology modernized, and slowly the choice and quality of manufactured goods reached a European standard.”* (p. 107)

*“The activity of the German Jews as industrialists and investors was decisive for the development of the ‘Yishuv’ out of its pre-industrial and pre-capitalist stage.”* (p. 102)

*“[Their influence] on the development of Jewish Palestine was found not only in the economic and social sphere; it was also marked in the cultural, scientific and artistic spheres. The modernization of hospitals, made possible by the Transfer, made Palestine one of the most renowned medical centers.”* (p. 106)

*“The commitment of these people in research and teaching institutions, in business and administration, in public life and in the defense organizations was immeasurably important for the preparation of the ‘Yishuv’ for the fateful task that stood before them.”* (p. 108)

The money of the ‘capitalists,’ who thanks to the Haavara could practically migrate to Palestine unhindered,

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<sup>24</sup> Feilchenfeld, pages as indicated.

also made migration to Palestine possible for workers. Dr. Georg Landauer, the director of the German section of the Jewish Agency and a member of the board of directors of the Haavara, stated in an interview with the *Jüdische Rundschau* of February 18, 1936:

*“Palestine as a developing country can absorb new immigrants looking for work proportionate to the inflowing capital and entrepreneurial spirit that creates new jobs.”*

But there was the fear that wealthy Jews would go elsewhere with their capital and that only poor Jews would come to Palestine. Landauer warned:

*“It is not possible to have worker immigrants without the immigration of employers.”*

## 4.1. Opposition to the Haavara

### 4.1.1. ...on the Jewish side

Although the Haavara Agreement was advantageous for both the Jews and for Palestine, opposition to it was significant. The behind-the-scenes battles are described in detail by Edwin Black in his book *The Transfer Agreement*. The fact that there was an agreement between the Third Reich and the Zionists to the advantage of Israel seems to him incomprehensible and unpardonable, and he accuses the Jewish agencies involved of “*Nazi collaboration*”. Black’s attitude is all the more inexplicable because he is convinced that all Jews who remained in Germany became victims of the ‘Holocaust’.

Jewish organizations around the world complained of their own people’s violation of the boycott against Ger-

many. The welfare of the German Jews who migrated to Palestine meant little to them; they regarded the betrayal of general Jewish interests as far more important.

There were problems in Palestine as well. The Haavara's monopoly on importing German goods aroused envy among Palestinian traders, who saw their own existence threatened. This was especially the case with nascent Jewish industries in Palestine, which strove to sell their own goods and revolted against the cheaper and better quality products from Germany. The Haavara finally had to yield to the demands of the Jewish entrepreneurs in Palestine, and stopped importing certain goods, thus guaranteeing the protection of "Tozeret Haaretz" (products made in Israel). Enterprising businessmen exploited this discrepancy to their own advantage. There were cases in which an enterprise obtained a factory through Haavara, then used the "Tozeret Haaretz" protection for its own manufactured goods. As a result the demand for imported goods and the transfer of money on the Haavara accounts declined.<sup>25</sup>

On November 12, 1935 the *Jüdische Rundschau* bemoaned this lack of solidarity with the immigrant Jews from Germany:

*"The transfer question is of financial importance for the emigration of Jews from Germany to Palestine, as well as for the transfer of money into the Jewish funds. Without this capital transfer it is almost impossible to emigrate in style [...] That this matter regularly comes up in public discussion in Palestine may be due partly to a lack of knowledge of the real factors, and partly due to those who wish to eliminate the competition that Haavara generates out of economic or other motives."*

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<sup>25</sup> Feichenfeld, p. 54.



#### 4.1.2. ...on the German side

The Haavara Agreement was also not universally welcomed by Germans. It was of course quite a burden on the German foreign exchange market, and there were also political disadvantages. The German consul general in Jerusalem, Hans Döhle, emphasized in a March 22, 1937, study that through the Haavara Agreement the German government had “*subordinated all considerations that are decisive in advancing German interests in other countries*” to the “*facilitation of Jewish emigration from Germany and the settlement of immigrant Jews in Palestine.*” The strengthening of the Jewish economy “*that we made possible through facilitating the transplanting of German-Jewish industrial firms to Palestine*” necessarily worked against Germany on the world market. Döhle stressed that “*the opposition of the Palestinian Jews to Germanism is manifested at every opportunity.*”<sup>26</sup>

Great Britain felt itself disadvantaged in its Palestinian mandate by the import of German goods and began to attack Germany in its press. According to Döhle’s study, the negative balance of the Haavara Agreement was as follows:

1. Through export of goods with no foreign currency inflow.
2. Building up the Jewish economy builds anti-German Jewish influence in Palestine.
3. Direction of German imports to Palestine through the Jewish Agency without regard for German mercantile interests.

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<sup>26</sup> In: Vogel, pp. 110f.

4. Anger among the local Arab and German businessmen, who can only trade with Germany through the Jewish Agency.
5. Anger of the British Mandatory administration, threatened by the German competition.

If one recalls that Döhle witnessed anti-German incidents and was aware how much the country owed to German immigrants, his skeptical assessment was not unjustified. Palestine was like the animal that bites the hand that feeds it. The hostility of the Jews toward Germany expressed itself on many different levels. For example, during a Purim procession<sup>27</sup> Germany was depicted as a poisonous green fire-breathing dragon covered with swastikas, and a

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<sup>27</sup> Purim: The biblical book of Esther relates a historically unverifiable tale. Esther, the Jewish wife of the Persian king, discovers a plan to exterminate the Jews of Persia, to be carried out by Haman, a court official. The Persian king, Artaxerxes, is not opposed to this plan. Esther formulates a plan to save her people. On the occasion of a banquet, Esther seduces Haman and is then found by the king in a compromising situation. She informs the king that Haman has raped her. Now the king's anger turns against Haman, who is hanged. Esther succeeds in convincing the king to give the Jews free rein against their opponents.

*"In all provinces of King Artaxerxes the Jews came together in the cities and attacked all those who had planned the downfall of the Jews. No one could stand against them; all peoples feared them."* (Est. 9.2)

The Bible reports that in just two days 75,000 people were murdered by the Jews. As already stated, history offers no foundation for this. According to one theology textbook (Preuss/Berger, *Bibelkunde*, p. 118):

*"Judaism found in the book of Esther a narrative of wish-fulfillment, of things lacking in the Jews' actual circumstances."*

In memory of this pogrom of revenge (Why revenge? Nothing had happened to the Jews!), the Purim festival arose and is celebrated to this day in February/March as a joyous occasion in a carnival atmosphere.

placard demanded “*Tozeret Haaretz*” protection and a boycott of German goods.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of it all, Adolf Hitler decided repeatedly that emigration of Jews was to be supported with all means and that a suspension of the Haavara Agreement was out of the question.

The transfer of assets through the Haavara remained possible even after the war began, through neutral countries. These connections broke down only after December 1941, following America’s entry into the war.

Winding up the Haavara in Germany was entrusted to two Jewish banks, Warburg in Hamburg and Wassermann in Berlin. At the end of the war there was still Haavara money in the accounts, which had been frozen by the German government as enemy funds; after 1945 the money were paid out in full to the owners.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Mildenstein in: *Der Angriff*, November 1, 1934.

<sup>29</sup> Feilchenfeld, p. 71.

## 5. Emigration and the SS

Besides the Reich Economic Ministry, it was paradoxically the SS and its agencies that supported and encouraged the emigration of the Jews.

The SS took it upon itself to influence German Jewish policy from the very beginning. It suggested mass emigration but warned against putting pressure on those Jews who felt German first, then Jewish. In those Jews it was necessary first to awaken a Jewish consciousness and a Jewish self-image. This was to take place through Jewish cultural<sup>30</sup> organizations. Only a Jew who had become conscious of his identity would be prepared to leave Germany and to immigrate to a future Jewish homeland.<sup>31</sup>

It was under such auspices that the SS and Gestapo conducted all supportive and protective measures involving Jewish institutions. As strange as it may sound, it was to the Gestapo to which many Jews turned whenever a German bureaucracy disadvantaged them or if they needed some other form of help.

For example, when during the so-called Kristallnacht in November 1938 the Jewish Emigration Center on Ber-

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<sup>30</sup> It is surely a paradox for those who have derived their historical knowledge from the media, wherein the SS is depicted as a murderous Third Reich gang, with chief responsibility for the Jewish 'Holocaust'.

<sup>31</sup> Reichsführer SS, Chef des Sicherheitsamtes: Lagebericht Mai/Juni 1934, Die Judenfrage; quoted in: Nicosia, p. 106.

lin's Meinekestrasse was damaged, it was the SS that sent a team to clean up and to ensure that the office would be functioning again as soon as possible.<sup>32</sup>

Leopold Edler von Mildenstein, who later headed the Jewish section of the SS, published a kind of propaganda tract for migration to Palestine as early as 1934. In that year Mildenstein traveled to Palestine and remained there for half a year. His travelogue titled "*Ein Nazi fährt nach Palästina*" (A Nazi travels to Palestine) was serialized in Goebbels's magazine *Der Angriff* (Sept. 26 to Oct. 9, 1934). The report is lively, vividly written, and offers an interesting picture of conditions in the British mandate and of the political currents that prevailed in Palestine in the early 1930s. It is still quite readable today. Mildenstein used the pseudonym "*Lim*" – the first three letters of his name, read from right to left as in Hebrew.

The SS and Gestapo participated in establishing and financing the re-training camps which in the meantime had been established by Zionist organizations all over Germany. In these camps young Jews were to learn agricultural and trade professions to prepare them for the completely different life of Palestine. In part the SS even provided the land on which such camps could be established. Nicosia reproduces a map from August 1936 on which are marked 40 such establishments all across the Reich, from the farthest north (Flensburg and Gut Lobitten, Königsberg/East Prussia) to Gut Winkelhof in the south, near the Swiss border (see illustration).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Nicosia, p. 244.

<sup>33</sup> Nicosia, *Third Reich ...*, p. 217. Only in the original English edition. In the German translation there is only a blank page. Nicosia cites as his source a document from the National Archive, USA: NA T-175/411, 2935451.



*Jewish Reeducation Camps of the Hechaluz  
in Germany as of August 1936*

Such re-training camps were established even in Austria, the former Ostmark, after its annexation. Adolf Eichmann, the director of the Vienna “*Hauptamt für jüdische Auswanderung*” (Main Office for Jewish Emigration) actively supported this program. Later, in concert with the Mossad, he vigorously supported illegal Jewish emigration. Occasionally, SS units escorted Jewish emigration groups across the border, and ensured that they crossed unhindered. Hannah Arendt was of the opinion that Eichmann’s comment before the Jerusalem Tribunal in 1960 – that he had saved hundreds of thousands of Jewish lives by such meas-

ures – was factual, even though it was met with scornful laughter in court.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Arendt, p. 90; Kimche, pp. 17, 30. There is no evidence to support Kimche's contention that emigrating Jews had to pay to get out. This appears to be the sort of imaginary assertion, without which it is not possible for Jews to write books that deal honestly with contentious topics.

## 6. The Rublee-Wohlthat Agreement

The Haavara Agreement specifically dealt with migration to Palestine. The second state-regulated process was the Rublee-Wohlthat agreement, which concerned itself with immigration to other countries, the goal of the majority of emigrating Jews. Just as did Palestine, other countries also required proof of the immigrant's financial independence, which caused considerable problems for Germany. The German Reichsbank was forced to provide large amounts of already scarce foreign currency for this emigration. Many countries refused to accept Jewish immigrants as well.

This topic was addressed at the international refugee conference in the summer of 1938 at the French health resort Evian-les-Bains at Lake Geneva. Representatives from 32 countries met there at the Hotel Royal from July 6–15 to discuss how German Jews could be helped. All the conference participants were united: They condemned the prevailing anti-Semitism in Germany, they were most empathetic toward the poor Jews who had been expelled from their homes, they agreed with resolutions that places must be found where the Jews could be accommodated – but every single speaker emphasized that unfortunately his country was not in a position to help by taking in a larger number of immigrants.

The only result to come out of the conference was the establishment of an “Intergovernmental Committee” based



in London. Its president was a lawyer from New York, George Rublee.

From the outset Rublee tried to establish contact with the German government. This endeavor, which was supported by the German ambassador in London, Herbert von Dirksen, and the director of the political section of the Foreign Ministry, Ernst Woermann, was successfully sabotaged for months on end by the state secretary in the Foreign Ministry, Ernst von Weizsäcker, father of postwar German President Richard von Weizsäcker.

Weizsäcker let Rublee be advised that he should not hope for any kind of cooperation from the German side. He repeatedly rejected any attempts from other diplomats to put Rublee in contact with German authorities. He even forbade the German embassy in London to respond in any way to Rublee's attempts to make contact, or so much as to mention them in Berlin. He inquired of the British chargé d'affaires in Berlin whether Rublee was Aryan. When Rublee wanted to travel to Berlin of his own accord, Weizsäcker bluntly rejected his request because to his mind it was of no value.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Compare with Weizsäcker's own account: in ADAP, Serie D, Bd. V.:

*"27.7.1938: The American Ambassador spoke with me today [...] on whether we might not in any way support the Evian Committee [...]. I said he need not be hopeful about it."* (Doc. 641, p. 754).

*"18.10.1938: The British Ambassador delivered to me the attached memorandum, which the intergovernmental committee [...] is dealing with. In this memorandum – as during the past two months – it is suggested that the London-based director of the committee, the American Rublee, and his colleague Mr Pell, come to Berlin and begin talks [...]. I advised the Ambassador – as I did last summer – that a trip by Mr. Rublee to Germany is, according to my personal view, of no value."* (Doc. 645, p. 758.)

Finally Hitler learned of Weizsäcker's unauthorized conduct and immediately summoned Reichsbank president von Schacht to his office. He authorized Schacht to work out a financial plan that would enable Germany's remaining Jews to emigrate. Schacht developed a proposal, and in mid-December 1938 Hitler dispatched him to London for a discussion with Rublee and other individuals.

After the war Schacht described this so as to suggest that the plan and the trip to England had been his idea, which he had had to convince Hitler to adopt. Contemporary documents prove otherwise. After his return from London, an article written on his initiative appeared in the *Berliner Zeitung* of December 19, 1938:

*"Schacht Discussion in London, the Purpose of the Trip."*

The Foreign Ministry was annoyed at this and Weizsäcker was given the task of getting an explanation from Schacht. This occurred in a telephone conversation on December 20, 1938, about which Weizsäcker wrote a memo.<sup>36</sup> It states that Weizsäcker had asked Schacht whether he had received an order from the Führer, and whether he, Schacht, had initiated the newspaper report:

*"President Schacht unhesitatingly admitted that the article came from him. It concerned a command from the Führer, which he, the president, had executed within the prescribed framework in London. The Führer re-*

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*"7.11.1938: The British chargé d'affaires asked me again today in matters Rublee. I explained to him, [...] 'the matter needs time. [...] I asked in what percentage was Rublee Aryan [...]"*  
(Doc. 648, p. 761)

C.f. with documents 646, 647, 662. Further rejections from Weizsäcker and the AA are cited in Vogel, pp. 180–228.

<sup>36</sup> ADAP Series D, Bd. V, pp. 768f, Doc. 655.

*quests a report after return. He, Schacht, has now made an appointment to report to the Führer within the next two days, and then will also call upon the Reich minister [Ribbentrop] to give a report. He will not comment further on the matter until he has reported to the Führer .”*

Schacht's later recall of his activities at this stage of his career was obviously influenced by subsequent historical events. His version and what the documents reveal are quite different.

In any case, in 1938 the Schacht Plan was adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee as a basis for discussion. In January 1939 Rublee was invited to Berlin independently of the Foreign Ministry. There he discussed matters first with Schacht, then with Göring's ministerial director Helmut Wohlthat. Within four weeks the Rublee-Wohlthat agreement had been reached.

The basic idea of the agreement was: By establishing trust funds which would comprise 25 percent of the wealth belonging to Jews in Germany, Jewish emigration would be financed through foreign loans. Each emigrant would, in addition to receiving the requisite amount of cash for entry (“Vorzeigegeld”), receive a minimum amount of capital necessary to establish oneself. About 150,000 able-bodied Jews were marked for emigration, and their next of kin were to follow later. The Intergovernmental Committee would concern itself with which countries Jews could migrate to. All Jews over 45 were to be able to remain in Germany and be protected from discrimination. Residential and work restrictions for these Jews were to be lifted.

The text of the memorandum on the Rublee-Wohlthat Agreement was an official contract. Rublee wrote it up after his return to London, and sent it to Wohlthat. Weizsäcker

hesitated to sign it,<sup>37</sup> because the Foreign Ministry had not been involved in the negotiations – something he himself had prevented.

Therefore it was Hermann Göring who presented the text to Adolf Hitler, who wholeheartedly assented to it. For his part, Rublee passed the text to the Intergovernmental Committee, made up of the representatives of 30 countries. The committee gave Rublee the task of informing Wohlthat that these countries had taken note of the agreement with interest, and that they would do everything to facilitate the emigration of Jews from Germany on its basis.

In practice this support proved less than promised, but that was not the fault of the agreement or of its German initiators.

After successfully concluding the negotiations, the 72-year-old Rublee resigned from his post as director of the Intergovernmental Committee.

In England a finance company was founded with start-up capital of one million dollars. In the United States, Jewish bankers pledged to raise enough capital to guarantee the realization of every settlement project. The new director of the Intergovernmental Committee, Sir Herbert Emerson, was convinced that the emigration of Jews had been secured and that it would be completed in three to five years time.<sup>38</sup>

In January 1939 the Reich Center for Jewish Emigration was founded in Berlin. Its work was based on the Rublee-Wohlthat agreement. It cooperated closely with the Reich Jewish Association in order to simplify the emigration process.

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<sup>37</sup> “*Signing of Agreement with Mr. Rublee is out of the question,*” ADAP Series D, Bd. 5, Doc.662.

<sup>38</sup> Vogel, pp. 252f.

The process began slowly, because most countries refused to take in Jewish immigrants. But at least the Rublee-Wohlthat agreement had removed the financial barriers. Of this period, Rublee later wrote:<sup>39</sup>

*“The Germans fulfilled all their obligations [...] In the months between my departure from Germany and the outbreak of war few, if any, Jewish persecutions occurred in Germany. Some left, and the rest had it easier in Germany. I received quite a number of letters from Germany wherein [...] Jews [...] thanked me for what I had done for them.”*

With the outbreak of war hopes of finding countries to which to emigrate diminished. The Royal Navy blocked the previously used sea routes, and Palestine was practically closed to immigration because the British had severely tightened the requirements for entry.

Emigration routes then went overland, for example through Greece and Turkey. On 18 and 21 June 1940 the *Jüdische Nachrichtenblatt* revealed an adventurous route: “*Via Yokohama to America.*” A map showed the new travel routes: Berlin – Warsaw – Moscow – Chita – Shanghai – Yokohama – San Francisco/Los Angeles. From there on either in easterly direction to Chicago – New York, or south to Mexico – Panama – Santiago de Chile. The German government offered Jews with valid visas a route through occupied France to Spain and Portugal, from where they could then travel to their destination by ship.<sup>40</sup>

That Jewish emigration continued even after the war began was principally due to, first, the international connections of the Jews, and second, to the assistance of the Ger-

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<sup>39</sup> Cited in: Vogel, pp. 238f.

<sup>40</sup> *Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt*, December 10, 1940.

man bureaucracies, and finally, to an organization that was later to play a completely different role, the *Mossad le Aliyah Bet*.



## 7. The Mossad le Aliyah Bet

*Mossad le Aliyah Bet* literally means ‘Office for the Second Immigration’, which referred to the illegal immigration to Palestine. It was out of this organization that later the Israeli secret service, Mossad, developed. Jews from Palestine founded it in Paris in 1937 in response to Britain’s Palestine policies. The British were then issuing only a limited number of immigration certificates to Palestine – fewer, in any case, than the number of Jews seeking entry.

The British classed prospective immigrants according to wealth, profession, and class; the certificates were distributed in these individual categories, in numbers that reflected the desirability of immigration from each categories. Anyone who did not fit into a category considered essential by the mandatory administration would not be granted a visa.

The following immigration categories were valid from 1932 to 1945:

Category A: Persons with their own capital:

A1: Capitalists possessing £P1000 (Palestine pounds)

A2: Professionals with £P500, so long as the economic situation warranted their immigration.

A3: Craftsmen with at least £P 250.



A4: Pensioners with a minimum income of £P4 per month.<sup>41</sup>

A5: Persons with work skills scarce in Palestine, with a minimum capital of £P500.

Category B: Persons with a secure income:

B1: Orphans under 16 years of age whose keep was guaranteed by public bodies.

B2: Clergymen.

B3: Students and pupils whose keep was guaranteed until their entry into the work force.

Category C: Work certificates for workers between 18 and 35 years. The number of these certificates was audited by the Palestinian authority twice a year.

Category D: This category was reserved for wives, children and parents of Jews living in Palestine, as long as the residents could show that they were able to support their relatives.

Finally, there was the category “*Jugendaliya*” (Youth Aliyah) for youths between the ages of 15 and 17 years.<sup>42</sup>

Jewish leaders were understandably furious at Jews being categorized on the basis of their economic value. The Palestinian Mandate entrusted to Britain on July 24, 1922, called for the British to support and to simplify Jewish immigration, while safeguarding the rights of other peoples in the country. Hence from the inception of the restrictive measures, the Zionists attempted to find ways around them,

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<sup>41</sup> This minimal sum indicates the purchasing power the £P had at that time.

<sup>42</sup> From: *Philo-Atlas*, pp. 141–144, quoted in: Eckert, *Emigration*, p. 143.

and to send Jewish transports to Palestine illegally, in the eyes of the British.

On May 17, 1939, the British published a new White Paper, which tightened the immigration regulations anew.

In reaction to these events, in 1937 the Mossad began to establish offices in all the European countries, and sought immediate contact with agencies in Berlin, in particular with the SS and the Gestapo. Thus began a lively collaboration between the Gestapo and the Mossad.

As befitted their attitude towards Jewish emigration, the SS and the Gestapo were helpful towards the Mossad agents in many ways. In December 1938 Himmler ordered that Jewish prisoners in concentration camps who desired to emigrate should be released.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, Mossad agents were permitted to enter the camps to recruit Jews willing to go to Palestine in illegal migration ships. Nothing stood in the way of the release of such inmates. Kimche writes:

*“Since he [Pino, the Mossad delegate] guaranteed the Gestapo that he would provide for their immediate emigration, Pino was in a position to get a large number of young Jews out of the concentration camps. A signed form from him sufficed to effect their release.”* (p. 30)

Since direct travel to Palestine was illegal, the emigrants needed visas from other countries, for example, from immigration authorities in ports that the ships would stop at on the way to Palestine. The Gestapo became involved in this as well as in the chartering of suitable ships, even covering part of the costs. In 1939 a number of ships arrived in

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<sup>43</sup> *“The Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police has lifted restrictions on Jews who intend to emigrate.”* Circular of December 8, 1938, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BA), R58/276, Bl. 165. A number of similar orders can be found in further volumes of documents as late as 1942.

Palestine, bringing thousands of illegal immigrants to the country.<sup>44</sup>

The cooperation between the Mossad and the Gestapo did not end with the outbreak of the war; indeed, it grew even stronger. Emigration papers were often made out for other countries, and the emigrants instructed not to reveal anything about their final destination. Without such help from the SS and the Gestapo and without the silent acquiescence of the German authorities, the Mossad could not have done its work.

In the summer of 1939, an operation was planned that would have to shipped 10,000 Jews from German ports in a single convoy to Palestine. Before the ships could sail, however, war broke out and the English blocked the Channel.

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<sup>44</sup> More details are offered in Kimche's book, though it contains some factual errors. Interesting details are also found in the essay by Ball-Kaduri, who, like Kimche, is not always accurate.

## 8. Irgun Proposals

Two years later, in summer 1941, the 1939 plan was revisited by Abraham Stern, one of the leaders of the Irgun, the Jewish anti-British resistance and freedom organization.<sup>45</sup> He offered to help the Germans in their battle against England, and suggested that Germany immediately begin to ship out 10,000 Jews in return.<sup>46</sup> He was of the opinion that the German ships could break through the English blockade and bring the Jews to Palestine. Once they had arrived there, the English would not be able return them.

Whether this suggestion ever reached the right address is questionable, because the agents sent out by Stern were later imprisoned in Syria. In any case, Berlin had to regard breaking the blockade hopeless. A convoy of ships full of civilians, especially women and children, had little chance of reaching Palestine unscathed. The German government could not assume responsibility for such an enterprise.

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<sup>45</sup> The full name reads: "*Irgun Zevai Leumi*" = national military organization. Since September 1940 Abraham Stern had dissociated himself from the "Irgun" and established his own group, "Lechi" ("*Lochamei Cherut Israel*" = fighters for Israel's freedom). But in the first few months after the separation, he continued to use the former name because he saw himself as the legitimate representative of the Irgun.

<sup>46</sup> Katz, pp. 85f.

This was Stern's second attempt at establishing contact with the German government. Half a year earlier, in January 1941, Irgun had offered in a letter to fight for Germany against England,<sup>47</sup> in particular through sabotage and spying in Palestine. In return they demanded "that the [...] national aspirations of the Israeli freedom movement be recognized by the German Reich," and the establishment of a Jewish brigade:<sup>48</sup>

*"[...]military training and organization of Jewish manpower in Europe, under the leadership and command of the NMO, in military units that would play a combat role in the conquest of Palestine, should that become a front."*

This letter was obviously sent at the same time that two of Stern's agents arrived to see Werner Otto von Hentig in Beirut. Hentig was an advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; at the beginning of 1941 he was on an official visit to what was then the French mandate of Lebanon. The conversation must have been similar in content to the letter, because Hentig wrote:

*"In Beirut I took up residence in the 'Hotel Monopol.' [...] The most extraordinary delegation came from Palestine itself. The leader, a handsome young officer type, offered to work together with the National Socialists against their own people, especially the orthodox Zionists, if Hitler would agree to an independent Jewish Palestine."* (p. 338f.)

*"I could only respond to the Jewish delegation that the offer of cooperation and the conditions stated could*

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<sup>47</sup> According to Brenner, p. 267, it was Stern who authorized the communication.

<sup>48</sup> For the full text of this historic document, see Appendix.

*never be accepted out of consideration for our Arab friends and our general principles.”* (p. 399)

The Irgun letter, written in German, arrived safely in Germany,<sup>49</sup> but whether a German reaction followed cannot be ascertained from the files.

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<sup>49</sup> A copy of this letter is found in the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bonn (PA/AA), Nr. E 234152-234158.



## 9. Conclusion

The illegal immigration to Palestine continued even after the war ended, until the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, because the British kept Palestine's borders closed to Jews. In the decade from 1938 to 1948, over a hundred thousand Jews migrated to Palestine illegally.<sup>50</sup>

The total number of Jews who left Germany (and Austria) after 1933 cannot be ascertained statistically, because there was no counting at the point of departure or at the point of arrival. Estimates vary from 100,000 and 537,000, a discrepancy that reflects the unreliability of those figures.<sup>51</sup>

In actual fact, all figures – with one exception – remain guesswork, and refer to different groups and times. There are no reliable figures that embrace Jewish emigration as a whole. Some authors construe it as confined to emigration from Germany within its pre-1938 borders. Others add Austria to their calculations. Some wish to focus exclusively on the years from 1933 to 1939, although it is clear that emigration continued after outbreak of war, and that illegal emigration to Palestine accelerated in 1938.

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<sup>50</sup> Nicosia, p. 245.

<sup>51</sup> Rosenstock attempts to shed some light on this confusion by focusing on the imponderables, to make clear that all figures must remain suppositions.



There is only one figure that derives from an official German source that, however, is rejected by all establishment authors because it seems too high. Interestingly, this figure appears in a document that is otherwise highly regarded, thanks to its use in proving the German plan for “*Jewish extermination*”: the “*Wannsee Protocol*.” All information in this document is judged credible and convincing, except for its emigration statistics.

On page 4 of the Protocol the following figures are given:

*“from the assumption of power until the October 31, 1941, deadline, altogether around 537,000 Jews emigrated.”*

*“From January 30, 1933, from the old Reich, about 360,000*

*From March 15, 1938, from the Ostmark (Austria), about 147, 000*

*From March 15, 1939, from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, about 30,000.”*

We shall not question the authenticity of the Protocols here, nor comment on the significance of the meeting at the Wannsee villa, which has recently received a different interpretation. What is important here is to point out once again the tendency of establishment historiography arbitrarily to designate certain parts of a document as authentic, while rejecting other portions as inauthentic. As for our investigation, we stand by our statement that exact emigration figures are not available.

About a quarter to a third of the emigrants went to Palestine, a third to European countries and the rest overseas, especially to North and South America.

The Haavara, as stated at the beginning, is occasionally mentioned in specialized publications, but seldom in

the public media. The Rublee-Wohlthat agreement is practically unknown. Most Germans are certainly well informed about the ‘Holocaust’, but have scarcely heard of the emigration plan that enabled the large majority of German Jews to depart unmolested. This is apparently one of the “*truths undesirable for national pedagogy*,” as Walter Hofer once formulated it.

The historian’s task will always be to swim against the stream and to help discover truths with which to bring the past into clear focus.



## Appendix

### Irgun's Offer to Cooperate

The main thrust of the National Military Organization (NMO) in Palestine's (Irgun Zevai Leumi) proposal for solving the Jewish question in Europe, and for actively participating on Germany's side in the war.

*"Germany's leading National Socialist statesmen have in comments and speeches more than once emphasized that a New Order in Europe requires a radical solution of the Jewish question through evacuation ('Judenreines Europa')."*

*The evacuation of the Jewish masses from Europe is a prerequisite for solving the Jewish question, which is possible only by resettling these masses in the homeland of the Jewish people, Palestine, and by establishing the Jewish State in its historic boundaries.*

*To solve the Jewish problem in this way and once and for all to liberate the Jewish people is the aim of the political activity and the ongoing struggle of the Israeli freedom movement, the National Military Organization in Palestine (Irgun Zevai Leumi).*

*The NMO, which knows full well the good will of the Reich government and its authorities toward Zionist*

*activity in Germany and toward Zionist emigration plans, is of the opinion that*

*1. a commonality of interest could exist between the interests of a new order in Europe according to the German concept, and the true national aspirations of the Jewish people as they are embodied by the NMO;*

*2. cooperation between the new Germany and a renewed folkish-national Jewry would be possible; and*

*3. the establishment of the historic Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, bound by treaty with the German Reich, would be in the interest of maintaining and strengthening the Germany's future position as a power in the Near East.*

*Proceeding from these considerations, the NMO in Palestine, under the condition that the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Israeli freedom movement be recognized by the German Reich, offers to actively take part in the war on Germany's side.*

*This offer by the NMO, which could include activity in the military, political and information fields in Palestine and, after certain organizational preparations, outside Palestine, would be linked with the military training and organization of Jewish manpower in Europe, under the leadership and command of the NMO, in military units that would play a combat role in the conquest of Palestine, should that become a front.*

*The indirect participation of the Israeli freedom movement in the New Order in Europe, already in the preparatory stage, in connection with a positive-radical solution of the European Jewish problem in the sense of the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Jewish*

*people, would extraordinarily strengthen the moral basis of the New Order in the eyes of all humanity.*<sup>[52]</sup>

*The cooperation of the Israeli Freedom Movement would be in line with the last speech given by Chancellor Mr Hitler, that he would employ any combination and coalition in order to isolate and beat England.”*

## A Brief Overview of the Origins, Nature and Activity of the NMO in Palestine

The NMO arose in part out of the Jewish self-defense force in Palestine and the Revisionist movement (New Zionist Organization), with which the NMO remained in a loose union facilitated by Vladimir Jabotinsky until his death.

The pro-English attitude of the revisionist organization in Palestine made a renewal of the union impossible, and resulted in a split in the fall of that year.

The aim of the NMO is to establish the Jewish state within its historic borders.

In contrast to all other Zionist movements, the NMO rejects infiltration of the colony as the only means of achieving occupation and gradual settlement of the Fatherland, and proclaims as its motto that struggle and sacrifice

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<sup>52</sup> This rather complicated sentence, put in clearer language, states: German Jewish politics, i.e., the expulsion of Jews from Germany, is possibly immoral in the eyes of the world. It would gain moral justification if through this expulsion a Jewish state came into being. The results justify the means, or: What isn't permitted for the Germans is welcome support for Jewish nationalists in their battle, and so justified.

are the only true means by which to conquer and liberate Palestine.

Through its militant character and its anti-English attitude, and because of the constant persecution of the English administration, the NMO was forced to conduct its political activities and the military training of its members in secret.

The NMO, whose terrorist activity had already begun in the fall of 1936, gained prominence in the summer of 1939, after the English White Book was published, through its intensified terrorist attacks and sabotage of English property. At that time virtually the press of virtually the entire world reported and discussed this activity, as well as the [NMO's] daily clandestine radio broadcasts. Until the outbreak of war, the NMO maintained independent political offices in Warsaw, Paris, London, Geneva, and New York.

The Warsaw office was mainly concerned with the military organization and training of the national Zionist youth. It was in close contact with the Jewish masses, which, especially in Poland, enthusiastically followed the NMO's struggle in Palestine and supported it in every way possible. Two newspapers published by the NMO appeared in Warsaw: *Die Tat* and *Jerozalima wseljona*.

The Warsaw office also maintained close contact with the pre-war Polish government and with military circles that regarded the aims of the NMO with interest and favor. Hence, in 1939, groups of NMO members traveled from Palestine to Poland, where they were quartered in barracks and their military training perfected under Polish officers.

Negotiations between the NMO and the Polish government in Warsaw aimed at actualizing and concretizing their assistance were terminated due to the outbreak of the war. Documentation of this will be easy to find in the archives of the pre-war Polish government.

In its worldview and structure the NMO is closely related to the European totalitarian movements.

The ruthless defense measures of the English administration, the Arabs, and the Jewish socialists have at no time sufficed to weaken or to paralyze the NMO's fighting ability.





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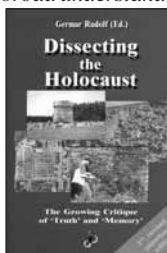


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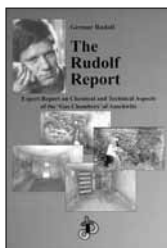


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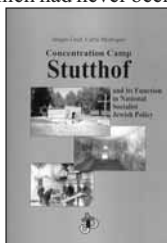
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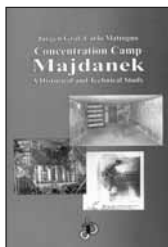
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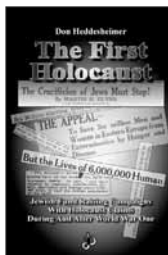


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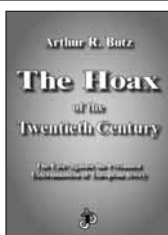


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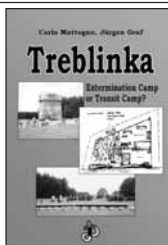


## C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*

Holocaust historians alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland, between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were alleged to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, poison gases of both fast acting and slow acting varieties, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, diesel exhaust fumes, etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multistoried buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka’s true identity: it was a transit camp.

Even longtime Revisionism buffs will find a lot that is new in this book, while Graf’s animated style guarantees a pleasant reading experience. The original testimony of witnesses enlivens the reader, as does the skill with which the authors expose the absurdities of Holocaust historiography.

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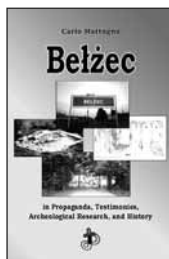


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Witnesses report that at least 600,000, if not as many as three million Jews were murdered in the Belżec camp, located in eastern Poland, between 1941 and 1942. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: diesel gas chambers; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers. According to witnesses, the corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving any traces.

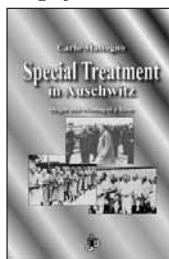
For those who know the stories about Treblinka, this all sounds too familiar. The author therefore restricted this study to the aspects, which are different and new compared to Treblinka, but otherwise refers the reader to his Treblinka book. The development of the official image portrait of Belżec is explained and subjected to a thorough critique. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed in the late 1990s in Belżec, the results of which are explained and critically reviewed. These findings, together with the absurd claims by ‘witnesses,’ refute the thesis of an extermination camp.



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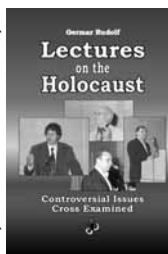


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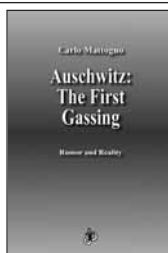
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