

Protocol of Conference

I. The following took part in the conference on the final solution (Endlösung) of the Jewish question held on January 20, 1942, in Berlin, Am Großen Wannsee No. 56-58:

Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and Reich Office Director Dr. Leibbrandt	Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories
State Secretary Dr. Stuckart	Reich Ministry of the Interior
State Secretary Neumann	Office of Plenipotentiary for the Four Year Plan
State Secretary Dr. Freisler	Reich Ministry of Justice
State Secretary Dr. Bühler	Office of the Governor General
Undersecretary of State Luther	Foreign Office
SS-Oberführer Klopfer	Party Chancellery
Permanent Secretary Kritzingen	Reich Chancellery

SS-Gruppenführer Hofmann	Race and Settlement Main Office
SS-Gruppenführer Müller	Reich Security Main Office
SS-Obersturmbannführer Eichmann	
SS-Oberführer Dr. Schöngarth, Commander in Chief of Security Police and the Security Service in the Government-General	Security Police and SD
SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange, Commander of Security Police and Security Service for the District General of Latvia acting as deputy of the Commander in Chief of Security Police and the SD for the Reichskommissariat Ostland	Security Police and SD

II. The meeting opened with the announcement by the Chief of the Security Police and the SD, SS-Obergruppenführer H e y d r i c h , of his appointment by the Reich Marshal as Plenipotentiary for the Preparation of the Final Solution of the European Jewish Question. He noted that this Conference had been called in order to obtain clarity on questions of principle. The Reich Marshal's request for a draft plan concerning the organizational, practical and economic aspects of the final solution of the European Jewish question required prior joint consideration by all central agencies directly involved in these questions, with a view to maintaining parallel policy lines.

Responsibility for the handing of the final solution of the Jewish question, he said, would lie centrally with the Reichsführer SS and the Chief of the German Police (Chief of the Security Police and the SD), without regard to geographic boundaries.

The Chief of the Security Police and the SD then gave a brief review of the struggle conducted up to now against this foe. The most important elements are:

- a) Forcing the Jews out of the various areas of life (Lebensgebiete) of the German people,
- b) Forcing the Jews out of the living space (Lebensraum) of the German people.

In pursuit of these aims, the accelerated emigration of the Jews from the area of the Reich, as the only possible provisional solution, was pressed forward and carried out according to plan.

On instructions by the Reich Marshal, a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration was set up in January 1939, and its direction entrusted to the Chief of the Security Police and the SD. Its tasks were, in particular:

- a) To take all measures for the preparation of increased emigration of the Jews;
- b) To direct the flow of emigration;
- c) To speed up emigration in individual cases.

The aim of this task was to cleanse the German living space of Jews in a legal manner.

The disadvantages engendered by such forced pressing of emigration were clear to all the authorities. But in the absence of other possible solutions, they had to be accepted for the time being.

In the period that followed, the handing of emigration was not a German problem alone, but one with which the authorities of the countries of destination or immigration also had to deal. Financial difficulties - such as increases ordered by the various foreign governments in the sums of money that immigrants were required to have and in landing fees - as well as Lack of berths on ships and continually tightening restrictions or bans on immigration, hampered emigration efforts very greatly. Despite these difficulties a total of approximately 537,000 Jews were caused to emigrate between the [Nazi] assumption of power and up to October 31, 1941.

These consisted of the following:

from 30.1.1933 from the Altreich (Germany before 1938)	approx. 360.000
from 15.3.1938 from the Ostmark (Austria)	approx. 147.000
from 15.3.1939 from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	approx. 30.000.

The financing of the emigration was carried out by the Jews or Jewish political organizations themselves. To prevent the remaining behind of proletarianized Jews, the principle was observed that wealthy Jews must finance the emigration of he Jews without means; to this end, a special assessment or migration levy, in accordance with wealth owned, was imposed, the proceeds being used to meet the financial obligations of the emigration of destitute Jews.

In addition to the funds raised in German marks, foreign currency was needed for the monies which emigrants were required to show on arrival abroad and for landing fees. To conserve the German holdings of foreign currency, Jewish financial institutions abroad were persuaded by Jewish organizations in this country to make themselves responsible for finding the required sums in foreign currency. A total of about \$9,500,000 was provided by these foreign Jews as gifts up to October 30, 1941.

In the meantime, in view of the dangers of emigration in wartime, and the possibilities in the East, the Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police has forbidden the emigration of Jews.

III. Emigration has now been replaced by evacuation of the Jews to the East, as a further possible solution, with the appropriate prior authorization by the Führer.

However, this operation should be regarded only as a provisional option; but it is already supplying practical experience of great significance in view of the coming final solution of the Jewish question.

In the course of this final solution of the European Jewish question approximately 11 million Jews may be taken into consideration, distributed over the individual countries as follows:

Country	Number
A. Altreich	131.800
Ostmark	43.700
Eastern Territories	420.000
Government-General	2.284.000
Bialystok	400.000
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	74.200
Estonia - free of Jews - Latvia	3.500
Lithuania	34.000
Belgium	43.000
Denmark	5.600
France / Occupied territory	165.000
Unoccupied territory	700.000
Greece	69.600
Netherlands	160.800
Norway	1.300
B. Bulgaria	48.000
England	330.000
Finland	2.300
Ireland	4.000
Italy, including Sardinia	58.000
Albania	200
Croatia	40.000
Portugal	3.000
Rumania, including Bessarabia	342.000
8.000	
Sweden	18.000
Switzerland	10.000
Serbia	88.000
Slovakia	6.000
Spain	55.500
Turkey (European part)	742.800
Hungary	5.000.000
USSR	
Ukraine	2.994.684
Byelorussia, with- out Bialystok	446.484
Total: over	11.000.000

As far as the figures for Jews of the various foreign countries are concerned, the numbers given include only Jews by religion (Glaubensjuden), since the definition of Jews according to racial principles is in part still lacking there. Owing to the prevailing attitudes and concepts, the handling of this problem in the individual countries will encounter certain difficulties, especially in Hungary and Rumania. For instance, in Rumania the Jew can still obtain, for money, documents officially certifying that he holds foreign citizenship.

The influence of the Jews in all spheres of Life in the USSR is well known. There are about 5 million Jews in European Russia, and barely another 250.000 in Asiatic Russia

The distribution of Jews according to occupation in the European area of the USSR was roughly as follows:

Agriculture	9.1%
Urban workers	14.8%
Trade	20.0%
State employees	23.4%
Professions - medicine, press, theater, etc.	32.7%

Under appropriate direction the Jews are to be utilized for work in the East in an expedient manner in the course of the final solution. In large (labor) columns, with the sexes separated, Jews capable of work will be moved into these areas as they build roads, during which a large proportion will no doubt drop out through natural reduction.

The remnant that eventually remains will require suitable treatment; because it will without doubt represent the most [physically] resistant part, it consists of a natural selection that could, on its release, become the germcell of a new Jewish revival. (Witness the experience of history.)

Europe is to be combed through from West to East in the course of the practical implementation of the final solution. The area of the Reich, including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, will have to be handled in advance, if only because of the housing problem and other sociopolitical needs.

The evacuated Jews will first be taken, group by group, to so-called transit ghettos, in order to be transported further east from there.

An important precondition, SS-Obergruppenführer H e y d r i c h noted further, for the carrying out of the evacuation in general is the precise determination of the groups of persons involved.

It is intended not to evacuate Jews over 65 years old, but to place them in an old-age ghetto Theresienstadt is being considered.

In addition to these age groups - about 30% of the 280,000 Jews who were present in the Altreich and the Ostmark on October 31, 1941, were over 65 years old - Jews with severe war injuries and Jews with war decorations (Iron Cross, First Class) will be admitted to the Jewish old-age ghetto. This suitable solution will eliminate at one blow the many applications for exceptions.

The start of the individual major evacuation Aktionen will depend largely on military developments. With regard to the handling of the final solution in the European areas occupied by us and under our influence, it was proposed that the officials dealing with this subject in the Foreign Ministry should confer with the appropriate experts in the Security Police and the SD.

In Slovakia and Croatia the matter is no longer too difficult, as the most essential, central problems in this respect have already been brought to a solution there. In Rumania the government has in the meantime also appointed a Plenipotentiary for Jewish Affairs. In order to settle the problem in Hungary, it will be necessary in the near future to impose an adviser for Jewish questions on the Hungarian Government.

With regard to setting in motion preparations for the settling of the problem in Italy, SS-Obergruppenführer H e y d r i c h considers liaison with the Police Chief in these matters would be in place.

In occupied and unoccupied France the registration of the Jews for evacuation will, in all probability, be carried out without great difficulties.

On this point, Undersecretary of State L u t h e r stated that far-reaching treatment of this problem would meet with difficulties in some countries, such as the Nordic States, and that it was therefore advisable to postpone action in these countries for the present. In view of the small number of Jews involved there, the postponement will in any case not occasion any significant curtailment.

On the other hand, the Foreign Ministry foresees no great difficulties for the south-east and west of Europe.

SS-Gruppenführer H o f m a n n intends to send a specialist from the Main Office for Race and Settlement to Hungary for general orientation when the subject is taken in hand there by the Chief of the Security Police and the SD. It was decided that this specialist from the Race and Settlement Main Office, who is not to take an active part, will temporarily be designated officially as Assistant to the Police Attaché.

IV. In the implementation of the plan for the final solution, the Nuremberg Laws are to form the basis, as it were; a precondition for the total clearing up of the problem will also require solutions for the question of mixed marriages and Mischlinge.

The Chief of the Security Police and the SD then discussed the following points, theoretically for the time being, in connection with a letter from the Chief of the Reich Chancellery:

1) Treatment of first-degree Mischlinge

First-degree Mischlinge are in the same position as Jews with respect to the final solution of the Jewish question.

The following will be exempt from this treatment:

- a) First-degree Mischlinge married to persons of German blood, from whose marriages there are children (second-degree Mischlinge). Such second-degree Mischlinge are essentially in the same position as Germans.
- b) First-degree Mischlinge for whom up to now exceptions were granted in some (vital) area by the highest authorities of the Party and the State. Each individual case must be re-examined, and it is not excluded that the new decision will again be in favor of the Mischlinge.

The grounds for granting an exception must always, as a matter of principle, be the deserts of the Mischling himself. (Not the merits of the parent or spouse of German blood.)

The first-degree Mischling exempted from evacuation will be sterilized in order to obviate progeny and to settle the Mischling problem for good. Sterilization is voluntary, but it is the condition for remaining in the Reich. The sterilized Mischling is subsequently free of all restrictive regulations to which he was previously subject.

2. Treatment of second-degree Mischlinge

Second-degree Mischlinge are on principle classed with persons of German blood, with the exception of the following cases, in which the second-degree Mischlinge are considered equivalent to Jews:

- a) Descent of the second-degree Mischling from a bastard marriage (both spouses being Mischlinge).
- b) Racially especially unfavorable appearance of the second-degree Mischling, which will class him with the Jews on external grounds alone.
- c) Especially bad police and political rating of the second-degree Mischling, indicating that he feels and behaves as a Jew.

Even in these cases exceptions are not to be made if the second-degree Mischling is married to a person of German blood.

3) Marriages between full Jews and persons of German blood

Here it must be decided from case to case whether the Jewish spouse should be evacuated or whether he or she should be sent to an old-age ghetto in consideration of the effect of the measure on the German relatives of the mixed couple.

4) Marriages between first-degree Mischlinge and persons of German blood

a) Without children

If there are no children of the marriage, the first-degree Mischling is evacuated or sent to an old-age ghetto. (The same treatment as in marriages between full Jews and persons of German blood, para. 3.)

b) With children

If there are children of the marriage (second-degree Mischlinge), they will be evacuated or sent to a ghetto, together with the first-degree Mischlinge, if they are considered equivalent to Jews. Where such children are considered equivalent to persons of German blood (the rule), they and also the first-degree Mischling are to be exempted from evacuation.

5) Marriages between first-degree Mischlinge and first-degree Mischlinge or Jews

In such marriages all parties (including children) are treated as Jews and therefore evacuated or sent to an old-age ghetto.

6) Marriages between first-degree Mischlinge and second-degree Mischlinge

Both partners to the marriage, regardless of whether or not there are children, are evacuated or sent to an old-age ghetto, since children of such marriages commonly are seen to have a stronger admixture of Jewish blood than the second-degree Jewish Mischlinge.

SS-Gruppenführer H o f m a n n is of the opinion that extensive use must be made of sterilization,

as the Mischling, given the choice of evacuation or sterilization, would prefer to accept sterilization.

Secretary of State Dr. S t u c k a r t noted that in this form the practical aspects of the possible solutions proposed above for the settling of the problems of mixed marriages and Mischlinge would entail endless administrative work. In order to take the biological realities into account, at any rate, Secretary of State Dr. S t u c k a r t proposed a move in the direction of compulsory sterilization.

To simplify the problem of the Mischlinge further possibilities should be considered, with the aim that the Legislator should rule something like: "These marriages are dissolved."

As to the question of the effect of the evacuation of the Jews on the economy, Secretary of State N e u m a n n stated that Jews employed in essential war industries could not be evacuated for the present, as long as no replacements were available.

SS-Obergruppenführer H e y d r i c h pointed out that those Jews would not be evacuated in any case, in accordance with the directives approved by him for the implementation of the current evacuation Aktion.

Secretary of State Dr. B ü h l e r put on record that the Government-General would welcome it if the final solution of this problem was begun in the Government-General, as, on the one hand, the question of transport there played no major role and considerations

of labor supply would not hinder the course of this Aktion. Jews must be removed as fast as possible from the Government-General, because it was there in particular that the Jew as carrier of epidemics spelled a great danger, and, at the same time, he caused constant disorder in the economic structure of the country by his continuous black-market dealings. Furthermore, of the approximately 2 1/2 million Jews under consideration, the majority were in any case unfit for work.

Secretary of State Dr. B ü h l e r further states that the solution of the Jewish question in the Government-General was primarily the responsibility of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD and that his work would have the support of the authorities of the Government-General. He had only one request: that the Jewish question in this area be solved as quickly as possible.

In conclusion, there was a discussion of the various possible forms which the solution might take, and here both Guiltier Dr. M e y e r and Secretary of State Dr. B ü h l e r were of the opinion that certain preparatory work for the final solution should be carried out locally in the area concerned, but that, in doing so, alarm among the population must be avoided.

The conference concluded with the request of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD to the participants at the conference to give him the necessary support in carrying out the tasks of the [final] solution.