Little Eva always enjoyed it when she got to take the streetcar with mother to see her Aunt Emmy. Because they got on at the very first stop, she usually got a window seat like she preferred. "Remember that when older people get on, you have to stand up and offer them your seat," mother always reminded her.

Little Eva loved to stare out the window at the large houses and the strangers of the city. There was also plenty to see inside the streetcar: big posters with odd pictures. One poster had an image of a man carrying a bag on his back and peeking darkly over his shoulder. "What does that say?" asked Eva. Mutti read out loud: "Beware! Coal Thieves!"

Another poster showed a man staring straight out at the passengers from the poster with big, dark eyes, holding his huge index finger in front of his mouth. "And what does that one say?" asked little Eva. "Take a guess," answered Mutti. "Don't speak too loudly in the streetcar?" whispered Eva. The lady sitting next to Mutti grinned and enlightened little Eva: "It says, 'Shhh. The enemy is listening in!'" "What enemy?" asked Eva, but no one answered.

One day as she was on her way to Aunt Emmy's birthday party, the streetcar was packed with passengers. An older woman got on at the train station, and little Eva got up right away to make room for her. At that moment the man who was sitting across from her grabbed Eva's arm and pushed her back down into the seat. He barked at her, "You don't have to get up for that pack of Jews. You're a German girl!"

Before little Eva understood what was going on, her mother pulled her to her feet again and declared loudly and clearly, "The child will stay standing." She nodded to the woman kindly and gestured her to the seat. It was suddenly very quiet in the streetcar. Most of the passengers looked out of the windows and acted as if there was something important to see outside.

The elderly woman stood pale and indecisively. She didn't sit down; the seat remained unoccupied. Little Eva examined her more closely. She had a dark brown headscarf tied around her hair and wore a thin gray coat. A big yellow cloth star was sewed to her chest.

It wasn't until they had gotten off that little Eva dared to ask, "Why did that woman have a yellow star on her coat?" Mutti just stared straight ahead while she walked and said in a flat voice: "Hitler ordered that. All the Jews have to wear such a star on their clothes."

"But why?"
"Because he can’t stand them, the Jews."

Eva thought the star looked pretty. "I’d like to have a star like that too, Mutti."

"Be happy that you’re no Jew, my child." Mutti looked as if she was about to cry. Little Eva thought to herself, "Oh, not that" and was happy when they arrived at Aunt Emmy’s.

**Air Raid Shelter (1943)**
(pages 41-44 of original)

Little Eva resisted, swung with her fists, flailed with her legs, and kicked with her feet, until at last Mutti’s voice filtered through to her: “Child, wake up – please, wake up. We have to go to the cellar." Every night the same routine, the same torture: the sirens wailed pitilessly, but they couldn’t pierce little Eva’s dreams. Only mother’s desperate attempts to dress her and to wake her up at the same time pulled her slowly out of her deep slumber, as if she were weighted down with lead. Pliantly she allowed a small backpack with emergency rations to be strapped onto her back. It always stood packed and ready next to her bed, filled with a sealed packet of cookies, milk powder, a small bottle of water, soap, toothpaste, bandages, and a change of underwear. On top of the backpack sat Pummelchen, the stuffed doll that accompanied her everywhere. Eva shuffled down the stairs mechanically, holding Mutti’s hand, then crossed the courtyard into the dimly illuminated air raid shelter of the HANOMAG factory. The Degenhardts and the Niebolds were already there, as were the Knackstorsfs, the Maschmanns, and many others. Each family had its own little area. Little Eva could have fallen right back asleep on a cot, but by now she was wide awake as a result of the strange situation, the awful dank smell, the noise of the other children, the conversations of the adults, and Aunt Lena’s shrill laugh. She played hide-and-seek with Erika, Wolfgang, and the kids from the first block of houses in the labyrinthine passages between the concrete pillars. There were no lights in the back of the shelter. Wolfgang had “organized” a flashlight from his sister, pressed it under his chin, and hung an old sheet over his head. He looked like a ghost. In this get-up he crept silently up to Gerda and Hette, who were kissing behind a pillar. “Boo-ooh” he cried loudly, causing the two to run away screaming. They were intercepted by Air Raid Warden Knackstorf, who severely warned them, “You’re not here to play, but to support the Führer in his heroic struggle against the enemies…”

“Ach, let it be, Herbert,” interrupted his wife, who pulled him next to her onto the bench and plied him with a sausage sandwich.

“Run back up to the apartment and put the potatoes on the stove,” Papa told Gerda, when there was an air raid alarm around lunchtime. “I have an important meeting later that I can’t miss.” Gerda ran out of the shelter before Knackstorf could stop her. She had hardly left the shelter when a massive bomb exploded close by. The lights flickered and then went out altogether. Mama and Papa waited anxiously for Gerda to return. Finally she hammered on the heavy steel door. Knackstorf let
her in through a narrow gap while yelling at her, but Papa took her in his arms and vowed never to be so foolish again.

At night it could actually be quite in the air raid shelter, as long as she didn’t have to go to school the next day. When the alarm sounded late, the next day’s first lessons were cancelled. But when the sirens screamed night after night, because the enemy bomber squadrons were closing in on Hanover and especially the HANOMAG works, they all sat on the hard shelter benches still and silent, scared and fatigued. The concussions of exploding bombs came closer, and everyone hoped that their own buildings would be spared. Every time they had left the shelter following the all clear signal, the first thing they had to do was to clean the broken glass, since the concussions of the bombs broke every window. Once it was particularly bad. The beds were covered with glass shards, and the little vase that Eva had received from Aunt Emmy lay on the floor in pieces. The curtains hung in tatters. Grime and destruction were everywhere. Little Eva went to the window and yelled, “Why does someone keep breaking my things? Who has the right to do this? What did I do to them?”

Gerda yanked her away from the window and tapped her finger on her forehead. “Just look over there!” Houses were burning around the neighborhood. The air was thick with smoke, and the sky was fire red.

*The Yanks are coming!* (1945)  
(pages 96-99 of original)

Suddenly they were there, the victors. American troops rolled through Hanover in their tanks and military vehicles and tossed chocolate to the children. Little Eva stood with other kids along Wallenstein Street in the suburb of Ricklingen and waved.

“Don’t take that stuff. I’m sure they’ve poisoned it,” warned neighbor Kniepig, but no one paid any attention to him. “The war is over,” called little Eva, and in no time all the other kids in the street were screaming, “The war is over! The war is over!” They hopped around and giddily greeted the “Amis,” who were laughing and waving, well fed and tanned atop their vehicles.

But suddenly all the children fell silent. They gawked and stared in amazement, and some ran anxiously into the doorways. On the jeep that was just passing by sat a Neger, a “negro;” the first real-life black person they had ever seen. Like the others, he grinned, too, showing his gleaming white teeth. Eva recalled a caricature on the front page of the *Stürmer* (a racist Nazi newspaper) that depicted just such a black man with a powerful set of teeth in the process of devouring children.

She wanted to run into the house to get Mutti. At the entrance stoop, she was blocked by Gerda, who was pouting. Gerda had just returned from her year of service and she wanted to be in the street with everyone else.

Mutti called from the stairwell: “Why won’t you get it through your skull? The lads are starved for women, especially for seventeen-year-old women. They’ll
drag you into their car and devour you in a flash!” Little Eva was taken aback. Then what the Stürmer wrote must be correct: “Negro, Negro, cannibal.”

The CARE Package (1947)
(pages 133-136 of original)

“Finally they remembered us, too!” said Mutti happily, placing the package in the middle of the table. Everyone in the apartment house has already received one, a CARE package.” Eva knew what that meant. She was, after all, learning English in school now. “To care for = to have concern for, to attend to.”

Now the Americans were thinking about the suffering Germans. “Great – let’s see what they sent us.” The parcel was fairly large yet light. When one shook it, the contents sounded soft. Oma carefully untied the packing twine and rolled it into a ball; it could be useful. Gerda, Eva’s older sister, was allowed to open it.

She let out a squeal of happiness as she pulled out a pink slip. There followed a purple bra, two pairs of men’s socks of different sizes, two thick, colorful pot holders, an egg timer, and a crumpled pack of chewing gum. That was it.

Everyone stood around the table in silent shock. “But I had been so much looking forward to some chocolate,” complained Eva. “There was some in everyone else’s packages, said Mutti animatedly, “and some coffee and cacao, too. The Degenhardts got a huge bag of milk powder in theirs – even though they work in a dairy shop.” Gerda’s excitement had given way to disappointment as well; the slip, it turned out, was too small for her.

“Apparently someone just cleared out a drawer somewhere,” was Papa’s sole laconic commentary. But maybe we soon won’t have any need for a CARE package,” he said with a knowing smile.

That evening the children could hear Mama’s and Papa’s voices from behind the closed door of the bedroom until long after midnight. At first it sounded like they were arguing, but in the end they were speaking long and calmly. Did that have something to do with Papa’s hint about something?

At lunch the following day (there was always potatoes with sauce, or sauce with potatoes, and they counted themselves lucky when the potatoes didn’t have the disgusting sweet taste from having been frozen), Papa asked conversationally, “What would you do if you got a whole Ox in cans?” “Gross!” responded Eva, “with all the bones and all that?” “No, only the meat of course,” laughed Papa.

Gerda got suspicious. “And what would you have to do to get that?” “An intelligent question,” answered Papa. “I would only have to sign a little piece of paper.” “So why don’t you do it?” Gerda wanted to know.

Now Mutti jumped in: “Because the man who is offering him an Ox would like to get a contract with HANOMAG where you father works, but there is a waiting list and it’s not his turn.” “Oh, and Papa is in charge of the waiting list!?” Gerda was in top form today. If only she said such bright things in school, thought Mutti.

“Then I assume that we’re going to continue to eat this grub instead of canned ox,” concluded older brother Gerd as he stacked the empty plates. The
others also got up from the table. Eva had followed the discussion with a measure of fascination.

Never Again War! [1956]  
(pages 177-179 of original)

Mutti, Papa, Aunt Emmy, Uncle Rudy, Dieter, and Eva were sitting around the radio and anxiously following the debate in the German Bundestag (parliament) concerning the introduction of general military conscription. "Oh, it's a foregone conclusion," said Aunt Emmy with resignation. "The remilitarization has been running full speed for six years now." "I was hoping that it would at least remain a volunteer army," said Papa. "Absolutely no German soldiers!" snapped Mutti with disgust. "They have already brought enough misery to the world."

Then everyone fell silent and listened to Fritz Erler from the SPD¹ as he urgently warned against the danger of a new German military power. Instead, Erler called for a democratically supported defense policy within a NATO framework. He spoke with such conviction that it brought tears to Eva's eyes. "There should never be another war," she sighed. "If only they would at least include the right to conscientious objection in the law," said Dieter after the radio had been switched off. "You are too old to be conscripted anyway," interjected Uncle Rudy before he and Aunt Emmy left.

On Karen's twenty-first birthday, her parents threw a party. Many young men old enough to be conscripted were standing around the living room and, like Eva, were drinking a cocktail for the first time. "This grape tastes odd," Eva blurted out. "That grape, my child, is an olive," whispered Karen's father. After pumpernickel snacks, the young couples played dance games with balloons and a broomstick, squeezed tightly into the small room. Then Karen's father showed an old, jittery film that he had taken with his own camera: scenes of fighter planes at an air show. Eva was dumbfounded. She watched the young men, who, faces flush with concentration, analyzed and commented on the various types of planes. Even Dieter seemed to be in thrall. Eva insisted on leaving the party.

On the way home, Dieter asked hesitantly, "What's wrong?" "You have to ask?" Eva countered. "After you stared with such fascination at that murderous hardware? If that's the way it is, I've had enough. I don't want to marry a closet militarist." Dieter tried to defend himself: "It was just technical interest." "Oh yeah?

¹ The Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) was the main opposition party in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) from 1949 to 1967, when coalitions dominated by the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU), led by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, formed the governing majority. Fritz Erler was a leading member of the SPD from Pforzheim. His opposition to the Nazis led to his dismissal from the civil service position in 1938 and his arrest a tear later. He spent the war years in Nazi prisons and camps, especially Dachau.
Have you forgotten what we swore to each other recently after seeing *The Man Outside*?²

"Please believe me," he said. "I am for peace, just like you are."

*A Letter (1960)*
(pages 209-212 of original)

April 1960

Dear Hilde,

I hope your foot is better. I was so sad that you could not be with us, but it really would have been too strenuous for you. My legs are still sore from the "77 kilometers for peace." I wrote a report for the newspaper, but they took Lothar's instead because mine was apparently too emotional. But I will send you mine now, which I have edited somewhat.

On Easter Sunday, about fifty people gathered at Waterloo Column to take part in the march from Hanover to Bergen-Hohne. The oldest was the 77-year-old professor Katharina Petersen, and the youngest was a 12-year-old named Hans. Seven women marched with us for all three days: a bookkeeper [Kontoristin], a theologian, two students, and three teachers. The men included an engineer, an accountant, a swimming coach, an architect, a graphic artist, a technician, a business lawyer, a physicist, students, and printers.

Most of us had never met before. However, we got to know each other very well in the course of the long hike. I was disappointed that so few came from Hanover; they came from Cologne, Stuttgart, Minden, Meschede, Heidelberg, Essen, and Erlangen. Then there was Herbert, a young man from Australia. I thought that was so "international," but Dieter said that we would have to be very watchful that no communists mixed in with us. They were only against nuclear weapons from the West, while we were deliberately demonstrating "against atomic weapons East and West." We had written that on our placards and signs, as well as "First Bergen-Belsen, now Bergen-Hohne," and "No nuclear warheads on German soil."

The whole time we were trailed by two agents of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution.³ Once, when we stopped to rest at an inn, they sat at a table across the room, until a couple of our guys invited them to join us. After that it was easier for them. They probably figured out that we were just a bunch of idealists walking along the rural roads in rain, hail, and wind carrying signs. "Pure

---

² The expressionist anti-war drama *Draussen vor der Tür* [The Man Outside], by Wolfgang Borchert, was first performed on the radio in 1947 and was widely performed as a stage play.

³ The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution [Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz] was West Germany's federal police, surveillance, and counter-espionage service.
self-gratification," commented Andreas from Essen sarcastically. "No, masochism!" responded Hanne.

In Celle we staged a protest of silence. That only seemed to make the passers-by louder. "Go over to the East!" they shouted, "You have too much time on your hands!" An old man barked, "You riff-raff, you nuts, you idiots!" But the worst was the cat-call, "They must have forgotten to gas you all!" I was so shaken that I almost started to cry, while Waltraud, who was stronger, nearly grabbed the man and dragged him to the police. "Those kinds of statements are illegal," she told me that evening in the barn where we were camping. "To want to gas people fifteen years after the end of the war! And especially in this region [near the former concentration camp Bergen-Belsen] – it's disgraceful!" She didn't calm down until Heiner said that he found it even more disturbing that no one challenged the old Nazi. You can imagine how disturbed I was. I had trouble falling asleep.

The next morning Herbert walked alongside me for a while. He shouted to all the [British] soldiers we met along route B3, "Damn the bomb!" Not infrequently they responded, "I quite agree." He pointed out someone looking out of a window who nodded in our direction. Then he was delighted when a young woman waved to us. He didn't even seem to notice the grouples and the incorrigible ones. This showed his experience. He had taken part in the march from London to Aldermaston on two occasions. He made him immune to bitterness and self-pity.

When we finally arrived at the demonstration in Bergen-Hohne on Easter Monday, some communist groups had actually arrived before us and distributed their fliers so as to make it look like they were part of the Easter March. In their fliers they of course only decried the awful military buildup of the West. I felt the gall rise in my throat, and I realized how far I still have to go before I achieve Herbert's peace of mind.

Be well. Hopefully we will see each other again soon. Until then all the best from your still very exhausted friend, Eva.
1. Villa Marlier

The villa was built in 1914-15 by the merchant, factory owner, and Privy Commercial Councilor Ernst Marlier. Paul O. A. Baumgarten, a student of Alfred Messels, designed both the building, which contained 1,500 square meters of living space, and the large garden, which measured 30,000 square meters and was like a park. Baumgarten had already built several villas nearby, among them one for the painter Max Liebermann in 1909. Ernst Marlier and his wife Margarete lived at Wannsee for only a few years. He sold the house and premises on September 8, 1921, to a firm belonging to the industrialist Friedrich Minoux.

2. Friedrich Minoux

Friedrich Minoux (1877-1945) began his career in 1900 with the Essen Gas and Water Works. In 1912, he entered the service of the industrial magnate Hugo Stinnes and became a managing director of his business in 1919. On February 21, 1923, he mediated an unsuccessful discussion in the villa between the chief of the Army command, General Hans von Seeckt, and the former quartermaster general, Erich Ludendorff, on possible measures to be taken against the occupation of the Ruhr region. In fall 1923, Minoux was considered as a possible member of a dictatorial "Directory" that was to replace the elected Reich government. On October 25, 1923, he met with Ludendorff and Hitler in Munich, but they reached no agreement on a common plan for the attempted Putsch of November 9, 1923.

3. The Nordhav Foundation

After Stinnes and Minoux parted ways in fall 1923, Minoux opened a wholesale coal firm. Between 1924 and 1938, he exploited his position as a member of the board of GASAG (utility company) to defraud the company, together with two accomplices, of at least twelve million Reichsmark. Suspicions were first aroused in 1935, but Minoux succeeded in delaying criminal proceedings against him until 1937, and was not arrested until May 1940. He started to serve his five-year sentence in Brandenburg penitentiary in June 1942. In summer 1945 he returned to Berlin, where he died shortly thereafter.

Minoux had sold the villa in November 1940 to the Nordhav SS Foundation set up by Heydrich. The purpose of the foundation was to build and maintain vacation resorts for the SS Security Service (SD). However, the first purchase the foundation made, in 1939, was a large landed estate on the island of Fehmarn, close to where Heydrich had his vacation home. He obviously wanted to retain both the estate and the Wannsee villa on a long-term basis for private and official purposes. In his capacity as Head of the Reich Security Main Office, or conceivably in an even higher political position, he wanted ultimately to use them for official functions and as a holiday resort.

4. Sale of the Premises

Friedrich Minoux was not forced to sell. The Nordhav Foundation paid him 1.95 million Reichsmark, the market price. The SS also took over part of the furnishings, among them the dining room with a Gobelin. Converted into a guest house in summer 1941, the building was at the disposal of primarily out-of-town police and SS officers from October 1941 on. On January 20, 1942, Reinhard Heydrich chaired here the meeting that subsequently became known as the "Wannsee Conference."

5. SS Guest House

After Heydrich's death in June 1942, the foundation saw no further need to maintain such a spacious and costly building. On February 4, 1943, it sold the house to the Reich Security Main Office for the same price it had paid to Minoux. The stated purpose was the preservation of the building as a recreation center for men and officers of the Security Police.

At the end of 1944, SS officers and officials of the Reich Ministry of the Interior discussed here the "plans of the participants in the plot of July 20, pertaining to reforms of state and administration" Their deliberations were based on a memorandum written by the resistance fighter Fritz-Dieffolf Count von der Schulenburg, who had been executed on August 10, 1944.
6. The Postwar Period

In 1945, the house was inhabited first by Soviet Russian marines, thereafter by American officers. In 1947, the August Bebel Institute of the Social Democratic Party turned it into a residential adult education center, and from 1952 until 1988, the building served as a school hostel for the district of Neukölln.

It is largely owing to the historian Joseph Wulf that the villa became publicly known as the location of the Wannsee Conference. In 1955, Wulf suggested to establish here an 'International Documents Center for the Study of National Socialism and its Consequences'.

7. Joseph Wulf's Legacy

Wulf's plans gained prominent advocates. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress, offered substantial financial support if such a document center were established at this historic site. But the Berlin government was not willing to make the building available to Wulf. After years of unsuccessful negotiations, the Association for a Document Center dissolved in 1972. Joseph Wulf committed suicide in fall 1974. Not until two decades later, in January 1992, on the 50th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, was the house formally inaugurated as a memorial and educational site.

**APPENDIX:**

**THE PROTOCOL**

This translation is a revised version of the translation in *The Wannsee Protocol and a 1944 Report on Auschwitz by the Office of Strategic Services*, vol. II of *The Holocaust: Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes*, ed. John Mendelsohn (New York: Garland, 1982), with stylistic clarifications by Dan Rogers and Mark Roseman.

Stamp: Top Secret

30 copies

16th copy

Minutes of discussion.

1.

The following persons took part in the discussion about the final solution of the Jewish question that took place in Berlin, 56-58 Am Grossen Wannsee, on January 20, 1942.
purpose of clarifying fundamental questions. The wish of the Reich marshal to have a draft sent to him concerning organizational, policy, and technical prerequisites for the final solution of the European Jewish question makes it necessary to ensure in advance that the central organizations involved be brought together and their policies properly coordinated.

Overall control of the final solution of the Jewish question lies, irrespective of geographical boundaries, with the Reichsführer-SS and chief of the German police (chief of the Security Police and the SD).

The chief of the Security Police and the SD then gave a short report of the struggle that had been carried on thus far against this enemy, the essential points being the following:

a) the expulsion of the Jews from every sphere of life of the German people,
b) the expulsion of the Jews from the living space of the German people.

In pursuit of these ends, the only provisional solution available had been a planned acceleration of Jewish emigration out of Reich territory.

By order of the Reich marshal, a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration was created in January 1939, under the leadership of the chief of the Security Police and the SD. Its most important tasks were...
Appendix: The Protocol

a) to make all necessary arrangements for the preparation for an increased emigration of the Jews,
b) to direct the flow of emigration,
c) to speed the procedure of emigration in each individual case.

The aim of all this was to cleanse German living space of Jews in a legal manner. The drawbacks of such enforced accelerated emigration were clear to all involved. In the absence of any alternative, however, these drawbacks had initially to be accepted.

In the ensuing period, the tasks associated with emigration became not just a German problem but one confronting the authorities of the countries to which the flow of emigrants was directed. Financial difficulties, such as the demand by various foreign governments for increasing sums of money to be presented at the time of the landing, the lack of shipping space, increasing restriction of entry permits, or the canceling of such, radically increased the difficulties of emigration. In spite of these difficulties, 537,000 Jews were sent out of the country between the takeover of power and the deadline of October 31, 1941. Of these,

approximately 360,000 were in Germany proper on January 30, 1933,
approximately 147,000 were in Austria (Ostmark) on March 15, 1938,

approximately 30,000 were in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia on March 15, 1939.

The Jews themselves, or their political organizations, financed the emigration. In order to avoid impoverished Jews remaining behind, the principle was followed that wealthy Jews had to finance the emigration of poor Jews; this was arranged by imposing a suitable tax, that is, an emigration tax, which was used for financial arrangements in connection with the emigration of poor Jews and was imposed according to wealth.

Apart from the necessary Reichsmark exchange, foreign currency had to be presented at the time of landing. In order to prevent a drain of German foreign exchange holdings, the foreign Jewish financial organizations were—with the help of Jewish organizations in Germany—made responsible for arranging an adequate amount of foreign currency. Up to October 30, 1941, these foreign Jews donated a total of around $9,500,000.

In the meantime the Reichsführer-SS and chief of the German police had prohibited emigration of Jews due to the dangers of emigration in wartime and the possibilities of the East.

III.

Instead of emigration, the new solution has emerged, after prior approval by the Führer, of evacuating Jews to the East.

These actions are nevertheless to be seen only as temporary
Appendix: The Protocol

relief but they are providing the practical experience that is of great significance for the coming final solution of the Jewish question.

Approximately eleven million Jews will be involved in the final solution of the European Jewish question, distributed as follows among the individual countries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany proper</td>
<td>131,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>43,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern territories</td>
<td>420,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalgouvernement</td>
<td>2,284,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bialystok</td>
<td>400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia</td>
<td>74,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>free of Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>43,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France/occupied territory</td>
<td>165,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unoccupied territory</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>69,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>160,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>over 11,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of Jews given here for foreign countries includes, however, only those Jews who still adhere to the Jewish faith, since some countries still do not have a definition of

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    |
Romania, including Bessarabia                | 342,000  |
Sweden                                        | 8,000    |
Switzerland                                   | 18,000   |
Serbia                                        | 10,000   |
Slovakia                                      | 88,000   |
Spain                                         | 6,000    |
Turkey (European portion)                    | 55,500   |
Hungary                                       | 742,800  |
USSR                                          | 5,000,000|
Ukraine                                       | 2,994,684|
White Russia, excluding Bialystok             | 446,484  |

The number of Jews given here for foreign countries includes, however, only those Jews who still adhere to the Jewish faith, since some countries still do not have a definition of
the term Jew according to racial principles. Dealing with the problem in these individual countries will meet with difficulties due to the attitude and outlook of the people there, especially in Hungary and Romania. Thus, for example, even today the Jew can buy documents in Romania that will officially prove his foreign citizenship.

The influence of the Jews in all walks of life in the USSR is well known. Approximately five million Jews live in the European part of the USSR, in the Asian part scarcely a quarter of a million.

The breakdown of Jews residing in the European part of the USSR by occupation was approximately as follows:

- Agriculture 9.1%
- Urban workers 14.8%
- In trade 20.0%
- Employed by the state 23.4%
- In private occupations such as medical profession, press, theater, etc. 32.7%

In the course of the final solution and under appropriate leadership, the Jews should be put to work in the East. In large, single-sex labor columns, Jews fit to work will work their way eastward constructing roads. Doubtless the large majority will be eliminated by natural causes. Any final remnant that survives will doubtless consist of the most resistant elements. They will have to be dealt with appropriately because otherwise, by natural selection, they would form the germ cell of a new Jewish revival. (See the experience of history.)

In the course of the practical execution of the final solution, Europe will be combed from west to east. Germany proper, including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, will have to be dealt with first due to the housing problem and additional social and political necessities.

The evacuated Jews will first be sent, in stages, to so-called transit ghettos, from where they will be transported to the East.

SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich went on to say that an important prerequisite for the evacuation as such is the exact definition of the persons involved.

It is intended not to evacuate Jews over sixty-five years old but to send them to an old-age ghetto—Theresienstadt is being considered for this purpose.

In addition to these age groups—of the approximately 280,000 Jews in Germany proper and Austria on October 31, 1941, approximately 30 percent are over sixty-five years old—severely wounded veterans and Jews with war decorations (Iron Cross I) will be accepted in the old-age ghettos. With this expedient solution, in one fell swoop many interventions will be prevented.

The larger evacuation actions would commence when the military situation allowed. Regarding the handling of the final solution in those European countries occupied and
influenced by us, it was proposed that the appropriate experts of the Foreign Office discuss the matter with the relevant official of the Security Police and SD.

In Slovakia and Croatia the matter is no longer so difficult, since the most substantial problems in this respect have already been brought near a solution. In Romania the government has in the meantime also appointed a commissioner for Jewish affairs. In order to settle the question in Hungary, it will soon be necessary to force an adviser for Jewish questions onto the Hungarian government.

With regard to taking up preparations for dealing with the problem in Italy, SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich considers it opportune to contact the chief of police with a view to these problems.

In occupied and unoccupied France, the registration of Jews for evacuation will in all probability proceed without great difficulty.

Unterstaatssekretär Luther calls attention in this matter to the fact that in some countries, such as the Scandinavian states, difficulties will arise if this problem is dealt with thoroughly and that it will therefore be advisable to defer actions in these countries. In view of the small numbers of Jews affected, this deferral will in any case not cause any substantial limitation.

The Foreign Office sees no great difficulties for Southeast and Western Europe.

SS-Gruppenführer Hofmann plans to send an expert to Hungary from the Main Office for Race and Settlement for general orientation at such time as the chief of the Security Police and the SD takes up the matter there. It was decided to assign this expert from the Main Office for Race and Settlement, who will not work actively as an assistant to the police attaché.

IV.

In the planning of the final solution, the Nuremberg Laws will in effect provide the general framework, though a prerequisite for reaching an overall solution is finding an answer to the question of mixed marriages and persons of mixed blood.

The chief of the Security Police and the SD discusses the following points, at first theoretically, in regard to a letter from the chief of the Reich chancellery:

1) Treatment of Persons of Mixed Blood of the First Degree

Persons of mixed blood of the first degree will, as regards the final solution of the Jewish question, be treated as Jews.

From this treatment the following exceptions will be made:

a) Persons of mixed blood of the first degree married to persons of German blood if their marriage has resulted
in children (persons of mixed blood of the second degree). These persons of mixed blood of the second degree are to be treated essentially as Germans.

b) Persons of mixed blood of the first degree, for whom the highest offices of the party and state have already issued exemption permits in any sphere of life.

Each individual case must be examined, and it is not ruled out that the decision may be made to the detriment of the person of mixed blood.

The prerequisite for any exemption must always be the personal merit of the person of mixed blood (not the merit of the parent or spouse of German blood).

Persons of mixed blood of the first degree who are exempted from evacuation will be sterilized in order to prevent any offspring and to eliminate the problem of persons of mixed blood once and for all. Such sterilization will be voluntary. But it is the precondition for remaining in the Reich. The sterilized "person of mixed blood" is thereafter free of all restrictions to which he was previously subjected.

2) Treatment of Persons of Mixed Blood of the Second Degree

Persons of mixed blood of the second degree will be treated essentially as persons of German blood, with the exception of the following cases, in which the persons of mixed blood of the second degree will be considered as Jews:

a) The person of mixed blood of the second degree was born of a bastard marriage (both parents persons of mixed blood).

b) The person of mixed blood of the second degree has a racially especially undesirable appearance that marks him outwardly as a Jew.

c) The person of mixed blood of the second degree has a particularly bad police and political record that shows that he feels and behaves like a Jew.

In these cases, however, exceptions should not be made if the person of mixed blood of the second degree has married a person of German blood.

3) Marriages between Full Jews and Persons of German Blood

Here it must be decided case by case whether the Jewish partner should be evacuated or, in view of the effects of such a step on the German relatives of the marriage, sent to an old-age ghetto.

4) Marriages between Persons of Mixed Blood of the First Degree and Persons of German Blood
Appendix: The Protocol

a) Without children

If no children have resulted from the marriage, the person of mixed blood of the first degree will be evacuated or sent to an old-age ghetto (same treatment as in the case of marriages between full Jews and persons of German blood, point 3).

b) With children

If children have resulted from the marriage (persons of mixed blood of the second degree), they will, if they are to be treated as Jews, be evacuated or sent to a ghetto along with the parent of mixed blood of the first degree. If these children are to be treated as Germans (regular cases), they are exempted from evacuation, as is therefore the parent of mixed blood of the first degree.

5) Marriages between Persons of Mixed Blood of the First Degree and Persons of Mixed Blood of the First Degree or Jews

In these marriages all members of the family (including the children) will be treated as Jews and therefore be evacuated or sent to an old-age ghetto.

6) Marriages between Persons of Mixed Blood of the First Degree and Persons of Mixed Blood of the Second Degree

In these marriages both partners will be evacuated or sent to an old-age ghetto without consideration of whether the marriage has produced children, since possible children will as a rule have stronger Jewish blood than the Jewish person of mixed blood of the second degree.

SS-Gruppenführer Hofmann is of the view that extensive use should be made of sterilization, particularly as the Mischling, presented with the choice of evacuation, would rather submit to sterilization.

State Secretary Dr. Stuckart points out that the practical implementation of the strategies outlined for dealing with the mixed race and mixed marriage questions will entail endless administrative work. In order, on the other hand, to ensure that the biological facts are fully taken into account, State Secretary Dr. Stuckart proposes proceeding to forced sterilization.

Furthermore, to simplify the problem of mixed marriages, possibilities must be considered, such that the law in effect says: "These marriages have been dissolved."

With regard to the question of the effect of the evacuation of Jews on the economy, State Secretary Neumann stated that, as long as replacements were not available, Jews employed in industries vital to the war effort could not be evacuated.

SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich pointed out that, according to the rules he had approved for carrying out the evacuations, these Jews would not be evacuated anyway.
Appendix: The Protocol

State Secretary Dr. Bühler stated that the Generalgouvernement would welcome it if the final solution of this problem could begin in the Generalgouvernement, since on the one hand transportation does not play such a large role there nor would the question of labor supply hamper this action. The Jews must be removed from the territory of the Generalgouvernement as quickly as possible because of the particular danger there of epidemics being brought on by Jews. Jewish black-market activities were persistently destabilizing the region's economy. The 2½ million Jews in the region were in any case largely unable to work.

State Secretary Dr. Bühler stated further that the solution to the Jewish question in the Generalgouvernement is the responsibility of the chief of the Security Police and the SD and that his efforts would be supported by the officials of the Generalgouvernement. He had only one request—that the Jewish question be solved as quickly as possible.

In conclusion, the various possible kinds of solution were discussed, with both Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and State Secretary Dr. Bühler taking the position that certain preparatory activities for the final solution should be carried out immediately in the territories in question, without alarming the populace.

With a final request from the chief of the Security Police and the SD that the participants provide him with necessary cooperation and assistance in carrying out his tasks, the meeting was closed.
Biography of Ralph Giordano

Ralph Giordano (born March 23, 1923 in Hamburg) is a German writer and publicist. Giordano was born to a Sicilian father and a Jewish mother. Due to his Jewish heritage, he was persecuted by the Nazis during the Adolf Hitler regime. During World War II, his family survived the Holocaust by hiding at a friend's place. After his experiences, Giordano became a communist, but left the Communist Party in 1957 because of his dislike for Stalinism. In 1964, Giordano joined the West German Broadcast Corporation (WDR) as a journalist and stayed there until 1988. Currently, Giordano is a freelance writer and has written numerous articles and books about his experiences in Nazi Germany, the dangers of Neo-Nazi movements, and other contemporary topics. He sparked some controversy because of his criticism of Islam in Europe. In a New York Times interview (2007), he vehemently opposed the construction of a new mosque in Cologne, citing German mosques as "a symbol of a parallel society", and calling the integration of German Muslims "a failure". Giordano was married to his second wife Roswitha Everhan from 1994 until her death in 2002. He lives in Cologne.
Auschwitz—and Life!
Why I Have Remained in Germany

by Ralph Giordano

1.

Yes, why?

My family and I were liberated from the illegal existence we were leading in the darkness of a cellar in Hamburg by the Eighth Army under Field Marshal Montgomery on May 4, 1945. When we crawled out of it—my father, mother, my two brothers and I—we only very vaguely resembled human beings. If the “desert rats” had not made it to the Elbe until just a few days later, we would not have lived to see them, but would have died of starvation. Our lives had long since become a race between the “final solution” and “final victory” by the opponents of Hitler’s Germany. It had been quite obvious to all of us before liberation that, if we lived to see it, we would leave Germany, would shake its blood-stained dust from our feet as quickly as we could.

As of about 1938, we began calling them “the Germans”—“we” had nothing more to do with “them.” And we still felt this way after World War II broke out, but with a slight difference—we now felt that we were part of the Allies, of the coalition against Hitler, our potential liberators. They were our home and our hope. There was no other.

But there is a prologue to all this, and an epilogue.
We started to become isolated immediately after Hitler came to power at the end of January 1933.

As early as April of that year, on our first day of enrollment in secondary school we were already being divided up into "Aryan" and "non-Aryan" pupils—an unforgettable experience, being weeded out from the others on that very first day, putting an early end to the feeling of being equal among equals—we were branded, contemptible, inferior.

As time went on, and in line with Nazi racist policy, this experience was followed by all the stations of persecution, which not only included our being stripped of rights by the state, such as being barred from certain professions, being interrogated by the Gestapo, being expelled from school, and being faced with endless lists of prohibitions, but also anti-Semitic actions on the part of private individuals, with people being physically abused, denounced or terrorized by hate-mail. Eventually, based on a realistic assessment of the system which ruled amidst the jubilant cries of the vast majority of the population, our own lives came to be ruled by a single, overwhelming fear—the fear of a violent death which could come at any time. So that, finally, we decided to avoid such an eventuality by going underground . . .

I am trying to convey here in a few brief words the unimaginable state of terror which I have described in more detail in *The Bertinis*, my thinly disguised autobiographical saga of a Hamburg family and the persecution they suffered.

In other words, up to the time of liberation, the inevitable had inevitably come to pass—we were completely uprooted, politically, psychologically, socially, and mentally.
Which brings me to the crux of the matter, namely, the question of belonging.

When I was denied that feeling of belonging because of my Jewish descent for the first time on that April morning at school in 1933, I was ten years old, an extremely impressionable age. The exclusion showed which way the new wind was blowing, although the full implications of the dangers it bode were not yet apparent. And the first, severe internal wounds that were about to come were not inflicted so much from the top, by the state, but came from a different, unofficial direction where one would have least expected them—which made them all the more painful.

Like the morning of that summer day in 1934, when I came up to my buddies in the same cheerful way I always had, kids I had known ever since childhood, had grown up with, people my own age, only to be greeted with the curt and hostile call: "We don't play with Jews—you're not our friend anymore!"

I will never forget how it felt to have friendship and affection withdrawn so abruptly and without warning, even if I live to be as old as Methuselah. Even today, when I am free to decide who I want for a friend, and people tend to seek my friendship, even today that moment of 60 years ago is still so vivid in my mind that my hair stands on end whenever I think of it.

When the Nuremberg Laws* to "Protect German Blood and German Honor" were proclaimed and enacted in September 1935, it was already quite clear to me, a 12 year-old at the time, that I did not want to belong to the people who did not allow me to belong to them, not for anything in the world. And when, after eons of being in power (because that is how long those 12 years seemed to me at the time, even if they amount to just a sixth of my life so far), they were finally beaten on land, at sea and in the air, I felt not only that the
Nazi system was my mortal enemy but also a sense of alienation from "the Germans" as such, a feeling so profound that it can hardly be described. The only ones who were not affected by it, really, were those who had remained personal friends, the helpers and life-savers. I regarded all the others, the anonymous ones, the unknown millions, as my adversaries, from the ones who went along with the system to the political murderers of individuals and masses.

Attempting to achieve some sense of belonging when one is filled with feelings such as these—can there be anything more difficult in the life of a human being, especially if one is young? But something embedded in my biography was already guiding me, even then, without my being aware of it yet, something which had taken hold of me and yet was beyond me to define at that point—the umbilical cord to the Holocaust, which I had only escaped by chance, the "law" of my life, as I call it. What I mean is the internal bond to the world of the victims, those who had been murdered, the "compass of Auschwitz"—and the lesson to be learned from it: "Never again!"

However, the center of this struggle was here—in Germany—whether I liked it or not.

4.

And more often than not I did not.

Survivors of the Nazi policy of race and the genocide committed against the Jews in German-occupied Europe during World War II have two burdens to bear, and both of them blocked the emergence of a new sense of belonging.

The first of these burdens is the memory of the atrocities experienced from 1933 to 1945.

The half-century which has gone by since liberation has been time enough to find out that time does not heal anything! On the contrary—the further away we get from the
events of the past, the closer we get to the images of horror inside us, the more vivid the details become, the shorter the intervals between increasingly horrible nightmares—delayed syndromes of many survivors of the Shoah*. Today I know they will last a lifetime.

Now, add to this first burden a second one, namely the stigma of German postwar history—the almost complete exoneration of the Nazi perpetrators!

With few exceptions, which, moreover, are to the credit of Allied military courts, they not only got off scot-free, but were even able to carry on their careers as if nothing had happened. Within the borders of what was West Germany, the biggest crime known to history, with millions and millions of victims, who were killed like insects—behind the frontlines no less—was followed by the biggest "rehabilitation" operation for perpetrators that has ever existed. It was only natural for those who had been the experts in destruction prior to 1945 to become the expert architects of reconstruction, of the "economic miracle" which followed thereafter. Indeed, the industrial, military and bureaucratic elite in West Germany well into the 1970s was virtually identical to the elite under Hitler—perpetual winners.

Prosecution under the German criminal justice system never amounted to anything more than a token attempt at atonement, but still took an enormous amount of time and effort. Since 1958, for 37 years, in other words, there has been an almost uninterrupted flow of court cases against Nazi perpetrators, including mammoth ordeals such as the trials that dragged on for years in Frankfurt and Düsseldorf against the guards at Auschwitz and Maidanek. An endless string of defendants were charged with murder and tons of files and documentation were plowed through in the process. Yet, anyone who monitored these proceedings over a longer period of time, for decades, as I did, soon realized that the only ones in the docks of the West German courts came almost exclusively from the lowest-level links in the chain of production-line
serial killing and mass murder, of genocide. Those on trial were the “little clerks” of the administrative massacre (which was then treated with inordinate leniency by a postwar legal system that had never been cleansed of its Nazi elements, and with a leniency which contrasted sharply with the harsh sentences that were meted out to left-wing terrorists). But their superiors, the organizers of Auschwitz and everything which this name symbolizes and calls to mind, the real murderers who had run the machinery of destruction from their desks in the Reich Central Security Office, were never even charged, let alone convicted. Nor were any of the Nazi system’s cold-blooded judges—in spite of 32,000 documented cases of people who were sentenced to death for political reasons—none of them was ever duly sentenced by a West German court, not a single one. It was no different with Hitler’s diplomats, the leaders of Germany’s armaments-based economy and high-ranking military figures after 1945. And if any of them were actually put behind bars by the Allied courts, they were released by the mid-1950s at the latest: They had been exculpated by the Cold War, given that Germany was now sought as an ally in view of the global rivalry which had sprung up between the superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union—the fault line of which ran through the middle of Germany—but also because of politicians who were reacting in a populistic way to a public—voters!—that was unwilling to come to terms with the past.

To avoid any misunderstandings here, it should be mentioned that the other German state, the GDR, did not face up to the Nazi past either. As we all know, its leadership had, after all, declared itself one of the victors of World War II, and proclaimed all “its” Germans to be anti-fascists: fantastic lies concocted by an “anti-fascism ordained from above” which prevented any real process of appraising Nazism, in spite of the anti-Nazi window dressing which the East German regime had given itself.

Let me summarize: the memories of persecution, which
have not only endured but have actually become more present in our minds; and the virtually collective exoneration of the perpetrators, the "Grand Peace" that was made with them, the "second guilt"—these are the two burdens which weigh down on the survivors of the Holocaust.

So, when all is said and done, is there any room left for a sense of belonging?

But there must be something to offset this dual burden! Otherwise, would I not have made off a long time ago, giving in to the urge to escape, an urge that had been so deeply implanted in me by the Nazis? Would I not have done what had been such an obvious option before liberation, indeed as obvious as the fact that the sun would rise the next day—namely, leave Germany, shake its blood-stained dust from my feet forever and bid it farewell, once and for all?

So, the question must be: Why have I stayed in Germany?

5.

If I were to give a simple answer to this question, it might be: I stayed here because my ties to this country were stronger than the damage it had inflicted on me—and the ties must be strong indeed, for the damage, as already mentioned, proved to be irreparable.

But if I wanted to be more precise about it, I would have to say: There was not one, but a whole variety of reasons for my deciding to stay in Germany.

What were they then, what are they now?

I stayed because, as it turned out, it was impossible to leave behind those starving people in a devastated city to whom my family and I owed our lives; people who had helped us, although they knew that their lives would have been worth just as little as our own if the Gestapo had found us in our hiding place. And these people who saved our lives were German.
I stayed because it soon became clear that the perpetrators had stayed as well—at first they got over the brief shock of retaliation, they were back in operation. Having become aware of the "second guilt" at an early date, I would have felt like a deserter if I had left Germany then—it would have followed me wherever I went.

I have stayed because German is my native language, a creation with which I have never felt the slightest dissonance, not even during the darkest Nazi period, a living creature which lends us a universal ability to express ourselves down to the very last capillaries of the human soul, the wonderful instrument of a writer who could never have written in another language, although his IQ is not underdeveloped.

I have stayed because I feel close to Hamburg, my home town, the setting of my novel, The Bertinis—an indissoluble bond, in spite of all that happened there.

I have stayed because, in addition to the powerful "anti-German" feelings within me during the first phase after liberation, I slowly came to realize, though it seems to have taken as long as it does for one Ice Age to replace another, that there are not only individual Germans but many millions of Germans who are my compatriots! And I feel that this is one of the most precious insights of my life.

These Germans who are my compatriots are the breeding ground for a new feeling of belonging that the people in my biography are developing toward in this Germany of the unforgettable primordial experiences. They are the people who believe in the same things I do, and they are everywhere, in every village, in every town and city. Not that they represent the majority, but they are nonetheless a strong force against indifference, organized stultification and malicious insistence. I consider the force a political motor which is insurmountable, at least under the conditions of a democratic republic—and, in terms of historical plausibilities, I see no better alternative to this force for a long time to come.

The day-to-day community of federated Germans, men,
women, young people—they are the center of my feeling of belonging.

6.

Even so, it will never be the same as it is for others who have never been ostracized. And I will always feel threatened, threatened by fears which go way back, back to those early years I spoke of in the beginning, but also by contemporary phenomena.

For my sense of belonging naturally comes under heavy attack from that smoldering racist faction which is spreading over united Germany and is far from being stamped out. It is dampened by that notorious, Nazi-inspired misanthropy which lurks behind the guise of xenophobia, which has cost dozens of lives and hundreds, and I mean hundreds, of casualties. But even though I myself am seriously threatened by the anti-democratic right wing, even though I am shattered by the passive stance taken by the government power monopoly towards the danger from the right and am aware of a dismaying lack of courage among citizens to stand up for the victims, I still do not believe that the “ugly Germans” will score another triumph in history.

In one of my most recent books—Wird Deutschland wieder gefährlich? (Is Germany Becoming Dangerous Again?)—my answer to the title question was: “Not without trusting in Germany’s political, economic and military integration into the European Community and the international commitments this involves; and I am still firmly convinced that the majority of Germans, today and tomorrow, will have enough good common sense not to engage in a new life-and-death confrontation with such a completely different world, not again; and then, for the third time, to try and strike out on a course of its own, which could very well leave Germany once again as the loser. All of this at the end of the 20th century,
after careful deliberation and with a view that goes a good bit beyond the threshold of the 21st century, I still sense that I would be more inclined to answer the title question of my book in the negative—with a prudently skeptical optimism.”

That was my answer to the basic question as to the future of Europe and the world.

It is strictly at odds with the frequent accusation made of me and my work: “unadulterated Germanophobia…”

And I will admit that there are times when I would like to scream “Oh, if only we were!” Those are the times when I feel like running away, giving up, making a decision: Those years between 1933 and 1945 and the 50 years after that—that’s enough, more than enough. But—I can’t. I am, like Heinrich Heine was, literally nailed to this country, to what is German. It has never asked me what I want or do not want, it holds on to me, hopelessly and with no prospect for change. This is what will not let me go, and it would have followed me everywhere, no matter where I would have gone.

But do not think this is an easy confession for me to make!

I want my problems as a survivor of the Holocaust to be seen and heard, for they are not only mine. I want this Germany to know that in it, even now and most likely into the next century, there are eyewitnesses who cannot forget and do not want to forget. I want it to know that some of them are people who are inevitably reminded of the gas chambers in Auschwitz, or the gas trucks of Chelmno, whenever they have to breathe the exhaust fumes in the traffic jams of our motorized affluent society. People who have to think of Babi Yar, Lidice, Oradour-sur-Glane at the sight of a wound, or a drop of blood. People who tremble whenever the Lingua tertii imperii, the language of the Third Reich, of the monsters, is perpetuated in a way which is as inflationary as it is incomprehensible—using the word “Einsatz” (commando), for example, heedless of the fact that the mobile death squads, the Einsatzgruppen operating behind the German-eastern front, caused millions of deaths.
No, my sense of belonging will not be easy, not even and not for anyone—of that I am sure.

Epilogue

"How on earth can a Jew live in Germany with all of these burdens weighing down on him?"

That is the question I am most often asked, by Jews and non-Jews alike, both here and abroad, and I have been asked it for almost 50 years now.

I have tried to give an answer in these pages.

And behind it is a motto for life that does not come easily for anyone. It must be suffered and fought for, and it guides me like a compass which has never failed me to this very moment, and will continue to show me the way. It is:

"Auschwitz—and life!"
Preface □ The Exodus of Jews to—
of All Places—Germany

Jews and Germans have suffered from a love-hate relationship—or at least a tolerate-hate relationship—since the Crusaders first rampaged across Europe. In one generation Jews are protected by Germans; in another they are massacred.

Exodus to Berlin is the little-known story of the unexpected resurgence of the Jewish community in Germany, which began after the Berlin Wall fell, and the concurrent rise there of neo-Nazi, racist, nationalistic, and anti-Semitic violence. As the twenty-first century began, Germany found itself in the ironic position of being home to the fastest-growing population of Jews in the world. This unexpected surge of Jews into Germany not only surprised both Jews and Germans, it occurred without much of the world noticing. As I was finishing the research for this book I encountered a friend, a grammar school teacher who had taught one of my sons, and I told him of my work on this project. He joined a parade of others shocked by the story of Jews and neo-Nazis rising simultaneously in reunified Germany.

"Why would Jews want to live where the biggest slaughter of Jews took place?" he fumed at me. "As a Jew I'm speaking," he made clear. "And here come the right-wing scum again!"

Despite his commonplace concern, Exodus to Berlin is a story of hope, renewal, and redemption.
TODAY IN GERMANY, the people with the guns are on the side of the Jews. Since the end of World War II, police protect Jews, their community, and their institutions. Until the fall of the Soviet Union and Eastern European communism, protecting Jews in postwar Germany was a relatively easy task. The Jewish community in Germany was tiny—virtually wiped out by the Nazis and shrinking fast as most survivors died or emigrated. All that changed sharply after the Berlin Wall fell.

Starting in 1989 a growing exodus of Jews from the former Soviet bloc has enriched Berlin and the rest of Germany with renewed elements of a vibrant Jewish subculture. The nation whose very name justifiably invoked fear and hatred in Jews around the world is surprised to be waking up to synagogues filled for services, bagels and blintzes in new restaurants sporting Hebrew-language signs, and the exotic strains of Klezmer music in clubs and street festivals. Tens of thousands of mostly Russian and Ukrainian Jews are seeking and receiving sanctuary in Germany from the anti-Semitism, violence, and economic chaos that distort the former Soviet Union and its former satellites. These Jews, many of them highly educated professionals, are often ignorant of the details of the faith of their ancestors. After all, practicing any religion other than communism had been for them an invitation to a nightmare of state-sponsored discrimination, brutality, and even murder in their former homelands. To this day, despite many genuine political reforms, Jews in the former Soviet Union are still at risk despite laws against national, racial, and religious persecution. Merely being Jewish by birth still marks them for trouble in a land where some identity papers continue to label them as “Jew,” not Russian, Ukrainian, or any other ethnically or geographically defined population group.

This modern exodus to Berlin and Germany has been encouraged and underwritten by the German government since 1990, soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall. By 2003 well over 100,000 Jews had made the journey from the former Soviet Union to Germany. There they find a wide range of generous, government-provided benefits to help them establish themselves in their new home. There has also been a warm welcome from many German Christians.

Nonetheless, the idea of Jews moving to Germany remains repugnant, or at least bizarre, for many—such as my disgusted schoolteacher friend.