

The SHOAH

(H O L O C A U S T)
I N L I T H U A N I A

Edited by Joseph Levinson

THE VILNA GAON JEWISH STATE MUSEUM



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Jonas Steponaitis (Introductions, chapters I, II, III, and VI most of VI)
Darius James Ross (chapter VIII and parts of other texts).

On the dust jacket – Samuel Bak's color plate *The Eve of the Sabbath*.

Printed on the flyleaves are fragments with inscriptions
about the Lithuanian Jewish community
from the memorial wall in the Community Valley of Jerusalem.

This wall is dedicated to the memory of
murdered Jewish communities
and was built by the
Yad Vashem Institute.

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DOCUMENTS SPEAK

THE LAF AND THE FIRST ACTS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Information about how the government institutions of the Nazi occupation in Lithuania – district commissars, the Security Police and Security Service, the offices of the military commandants – enthusiastically carried out the Nazi program for the extermination of the Jews is, in essence, not new. Therefore, most of the documents in this chapter are about the role of the LAF (Lithuanian Activist Front) and the collaboration of Lithuanian administrative bodies and the police with the Nazis in perpetrating the Shoah in Lithuania – matters that are almost unknown to the general public.

As indicated by the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania (Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo centras – LGGRTC) in a note to the Seimas of the Lithuanian Republic, “part of the LAF program drawn up in Berlin (mainly by Kazys Škirpa, Antanas Maceina, who was chairman of the ideological commission, and Antanas Valiukėnas) was notable for its anti-Jewishness. Its sixteenth article announced that: ‘The Lithuanian Activist Front revokes the hospitality accorded to the Jewish national minority in Lithuania,’ i.e. ‘proclaims it to be outside the bounds of the law.’”¹

The appeals intended for Lithuania (and prepared mainly by Kazys Škirpa, who was leader of the LAF, and Bronys Raila, who was chairman of the propaganda commission) were saturated with National Socialist ideology and racist slurs concerning the Jews. The Jews were unconditionally identified with the Communists. They became the objects of appeals, posters, and caricatures full of the ugliest anti-Jewish insinuations, absurd accusations, and threats which spewed malice and hatred for the Jews.

That this agitation and propaganda reached Lithuania and that it was undoubtedly inspired by the LAF is even attested by the fact, indicated in the above-mentioned LGGRTC note to the Seimas of the Lithuanian Republic: “that the insurgents implemented the recommendation made in ‘Chapter VII: Carrying Out the Uprising’ of *Instructions for the Liberation of Lithuania*:

‘So that the Germans may distinguish the insurgents from the rest of the civilian population and not mistake them for armed local Communists, once the uprising has taken place, its participants shall put on their left arms white (cloth) bands with the letters T.D.A. (Tautinio darbo apsauga [National Work Guard]).’ White armbands were worn by most of the insurgents in various Lithuanian localities.”²

1 Akiračiai, 2000, no. 9.

2 Loc. cit.

Soon after the uprising, in a directive sent in July to the heads of districts and cities, to district boards and city mayors, the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Provisional Government, Jonas Šlepetys, gave instructions “to issue the appropriate decrees so that all literate partisans, riflemen... take pen in hand and describe the deportations of the people, the beginning of the war, the activities of the partisans, and the *Communist-Bolshevik-Jewish terror* [emphasis added].” As can be seen from this information, during the early days of the war an anti-Jewish mood was already dominant in some places, and violations of the elementary civil rights of Jews had begun. Naturally, this directive from a minister stirred up even greater anti-Jewish feeling and activity.

During the early days of the uprising in June 1941, efforts had already begun to re-establish the administrative apparatus that had functioned in Lithuania before the occupation, the organs of local government, and the police, all of which immediately became involved in the anti-Jewish actions being perpetrated by the Nazi occupational structures.

As soon as the Provisional Government began to function, it enacted the Declaration on Economic Affairs, which provided that Jewish property nationalized by the Soviets would “remain the property of the Lithuanian state,” i.e. that the Jews would lose their property in every branch of the people’s economy, that their bank accounts, securities, etc. would not be returned to them.

Soon the Provisional Government approved Regulations on the Status of the Jews, whose introduction is a collection of the most vicious stereotypical anti-Jewish accusations. According to this act, the Jews were placed outside the bounds of the law. They lost elementary civil rights, were forced to wear badges degrading to human dignity and honor, and – most importantly – were removed from where they lived and resettled “in separate places intended for this purpose.”

All of this was in complete accordance with the Nazi strategy for the extermination of the Jews. Robbed, deprived of their rights, and forced into ghettos, the Jews became easy prey for murderers.

The above-mentioned LGGRTC note to the Seimas of the Lithuanian Republic states:

“While the Provisional Government was in power, the Sonderkommandos of the German Security Service and Gestapo used the re-established local governments to implement most of the orders discriminating against the Jews and to begin the process of setting up ghettos, and they used their own forces and those of the TDA battalion to begin the mass destruction of the Jews (preparations for these actions also involved the local police and the heads of some districts, cities, and civil parishes).

By August 5, about 38,000 Jewish citizens of Lithuania had become victims of the Holocaust. Zenonas Ivinskis, who was responsible for relations with

German institutions, urged the Provisional Government to condemn these massacres, but that was not done. [...]

It can be stated that during the entire six weeks of its existence the Provisional Government not only failed to prevent the destruction of the Jewish community in Lithuania but also did not make an official protest. On the contrary, provisions discriminating against the Jews were enacted in decrees concerning denationalization and the restitution of property. [...] In its session of June 30, the Government approved the financing of the National Work Guard (Hilfspolizeidienst) battalion and did not take steps to stop this financing when some of the soldiers in this battalion were used in the mass killing of Jews. During this same session, the Government approved the setting up of a concentration camp.... [...]

The Provisional Government very quickly lost any real chance of controlling the situation in Lithuania.... Nevertheless, the enactment of discriminatory laws, the establishment of concentration camps, and indifference to the destruction of the Jews (no public resolutions condemning these acts were adopted, and Lithuanian military units that participated in the Holocaust were not brought under control) encouraged, in the Lithuanian society of that time, anti-Semitic attitudes and the participation of individuals and groups in the Jewish Holocaust. All this had a direct and real influence on the fate of the people of Lithuania – both the perpetrators and the victims of the Jewish Holocaust.”

Joseph Levinson

APPEALS DISTRIBUTED IN LITHUANIA BEFORE JUNE 22, 1941

Read and Pass On

AWAY WITH THE JEWS

[...] After centuries of slavery, OUR FELLOW LITHUANIAN, join the struggle for freedom. The hour of reckoning has come. Someone is on our side.

Let us wreak hundredfold vengeance on the Jews and Communists for shedding the innocent blood of our countrymen.

Enough of the Jews baking their matzos in Lithuanian blood. [...]

OUR FELLOW LITHUANIANS, IF YOU ARE AMONG THE LIVING, JOIN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST JEWRY.

OUR FELLOW LITHUANIANS, LET US LIBERATE OUR FATHERLAND FROM ENSLAVEMENT BY THE JEWS.

LYA, f. K-1, ap. 58, b. 12949/3, vokas 63, l. 17.

Read and Pass On

TO THE JUDASES OF LITHUANIA

[...] THE PEOPLE SEE YOUR TREASONABLE WORKS. At the hour of reckoning all degenerates, traitors, sellouts, Communists, and Jews will be repaid at the price they themselves have set. [...]

Judases, your days are numbered. The final hours of enslavement by Jews and Bolsheviks are approaching.

After being ravaged and mauled by you, LITHUANIA IS READY TO RISE UP. Freedom will come to us over your corpses.

AWAY WITH THE JEWS, COMMUNISTS, AND LITHUANIAN JUDASES.

ALL HAIL AN INDEPENDENT NEW LITHUANIA.

THE SONS OF THE PEOPLE

LYA, f. K-1, ap. 58, b. 12949/3, vokas 63, l. 15.

OUR FELLOW LITHUANIANS

[...] After centuries of enslavement to foreigners, OUR FELLOW LITHUANIAN, join the struggle for freedom. The hour of reckoning is coming with gigantic steps. Someone is on our side.

In one year the Jews and Communists have not yet managed to cut from our hearts the thirst for freedom. Let us pay the Jews back in kind – in blood. Let us not let them out of our sight so that not even one of them may escape. Let us not make any distinctions among them; all of them rejoiced during our days of woe.

Let us pull up by the roots for all time the most hateful parasite of our nation and our exploiter – the Jew.

Let us swear to wreak hundredfold vengeance on the Jews and Communists for shedding the innocent blood of our countrymen.

[...]

OUR FELLOW LITHUANIANS, if you are still among the living, COME FORWARD IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST JEWRY.

OUR FELLOW LITHUANIANS, LET US LIBERATE OUR FATHERLAND FROM THE JEWS.

LONG LIVE INDEPENDENT LITHUANIA.

THE FIGHTERS

LYA, f. K-1, ap. 58, b. 12949/3, vokas 63.

LITHUANIAN INFORMATION BUREAU IN BERLIN

FIGHT!

To our Countrymen in Occupied Lithuania

March 19, 1941

OUR BELOVED ENSLAVED BROTHERS!

The hour of liberation is approaching for Lithuania. The results of several months of our diligent work and of your suffering under Asiatic oppression are at hand. It is our duty to quickly announce and inform you about these matters:

[...]

2. As already mentioned, for Lithuania the hour of liberation is at hand. Once the campaign from the west has begun, you will be informed about it that very minute by radio or other means. At that point, in the towns,

villages, and hamlets of occupied Lithuania local uprisings must take place, or more precisely put, the taking of the government into our own hands. Local Communists and other sorts of traitors to Lithuania must immediately be arrested so that not even one of them may avoid retribution for his actions.

3. We are sure that you are organizationally prepared; wherever preparations have not been made, organize into small secret groups. You have already learned that even among Lithuanians there are many traitors, so even at this fateful moment be very careful.

[...]

5. Once the actions have begun, occupy bridges, important railroad junctions, airfields, factories, etc. Do not destroy them, and do not let the Russians do so. They have great military and economic importance.

6. Inform the Jews today that their fate is sealed. Whoever can, therefore, let him get out of Lithuania in order to avoid unnecessary victims. At the decisive moment, take their property into your own hands in order to avoid unnecessary losses.

[...]

LITHUANIAN INFORMATION BUREAU

P.S. This announcement must, in spoken or written form, reach the most remote corners of Lithuania.

*LMAB RS, f. R-54, l. 226.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 49-50.*

[No later than June 22, 1941]

OUR LITHUANIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS!¹

[...] The fateful hour of final reckoning with the Jews has come. Lithuania must be liberated not only from Asiatic Bolshevik slavery but also from the age-old yoke of Jewry.

In the name of the entire Lithuanian nation, the Lithuanian Activist Front most solemnly declares:

[...]

1. The ancient right of refuge in Lithuania, granted to the Jews during the times of Vytautas the Great, is completely and finally revoked.

2. Every Lithuanian Jew without exception is hereby sternly warned to abandon the land of Lithuania without delay.

¹ From an appeal issued in Berlin.

3. All those Jews who exceptionally distinguished themselves with actions of betraying the Lithuanian state and of persecuting, torturing, or abusing our Lithuanian countrymen will be separately held accountable and receive the appropriate punishment. If it should become clear that at the fateful hour of reckoning and of Lithuanian rebirth especially guilty Jews are finding opportunities to escape somewhere in secret, it will be the duty of all honorable Lithuanians to take their own measures to apprehend such Jews and, if necessary, carry out the punishment.

[...]

The new Lithuanian state will be restored through the efforts, work, hearts, and wisdom of the people of the Lithuanian nation itself. The Jews are to be expelled completely and for all time. If any one of them should dare to believe that in the new Lithuania he will nevertheless find a refuge of sorts, let him learn today the irrevocable judgment on the Jews: in the newly restored Lithuania not even one Jew will have either the rights of citizenship or the means of earning a living. In this way, we will rectify past mistakes and repay Jewish villainy. In this way, we will lay a strong foundation for the happy future and creative work of our Aryan nation.

Thus, let us all prepare for struggle and victory – for the freedom of the Lithuanian nation, for the cleansing of the Lithuanian nation, for an independent Lithuanian state, for a bright and happy future.

THE LITHUANIAN ACTIVIST FRONT
LCVA, f. 1398, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 102-104. A copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 50-51.

A DECREE ON THE COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARTISANS

A Directive From the Minister of Internal Affairs to the Heads of Districts and Towns, to District Boards and Town Mayors About the Collection of Material About the Activities of the Partisans

Kaunas, July 1941

L. R. Ministry of Internal Affairs

Kaunas, July 1941

Received by the Precinct of Dusetos

July 14, 1941, No. 55

TO THE HEADS OF DISTRICTS AND TOWNS,
TO DISTRICT BOARDS AND TOWN MAYORS

DIRECTIVE

Since June 22, partisans, riflemen, and other more active and conscious Lithuanians have carried out rather significant campaigns in various parts of Lithuania, have fought hard against the Bolshevik terror, *against Communist-Jewish excesses* [emphasis added – J. L.] and the executions of our unarmed population. [...]

All these campaigns are extremely significant for the Lithuanian nation, and so that they may not pass into oblivion, we must undertake to record them, to collect all the material that relates to the bloody terror of the Bolsheviks and the campaigns of the partisan riflemen against them.

Therefore, I ask the heads of districts and towns, district boards and town mayors to issue the appropriate decrees in order to extensively inform all literate partisans, riflemen, teachers, local and other civil servants that they should take pen in hand and, in every place, describe *the events since June 13 of this year – the deportations of our population, the beginning of the war, the activities of the partisans, the Communist-Bolshevik-Jewish terror – giving the precise names of the civilian victims* [emphasis added – J. L.]. [...]

Jonas Šlepetys
(signature)

Minister of Internal Affairs

*LCVA, f. R-1106, ap. 2, b. 18, l. 263. Original typescript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 28-29.*

REPORTS AND EXCERPTS FROM REPORTS ABOUT PARTISAN ACTIVITIES

Izidorius Kurklietis, Secretary of the Civil Parish of Salantai
A Report About Anti-Communist Activity in the Vicinity of Salantai

December 19, 1941

SALANTAI

ANTI-COMMUNIST ACTIVITY IN THE VICINITY OF SALANTAI SINCE JUNE 22, 1941

The German Army occupied the town of Salantai on June 23 at about ten o'clock in the morning. On June 22 there was a mass retreat through Salantai of the Red Army and of Bolshevik henchmen from the German border toward Latvia. That same June 22, in Salantai itself, the partisans had not yet organized; there was only jeering from individual people at the flight of their former masters; for this reason, the militia arrested Aleksas Smilkys, Vytautas Paulauskas, and others, but that same day, at about 4-6 o'clock in the afternoon, when the militiamen fled from Salantai, they left the arrested men happily alive. All night from June 22 to 23 there was no government in Salantai, only straggling Red Army units fleeing from the front. On the morning of June 23 Staff Sergeant Jonas Petrauskas from the village of Gedgaudžiai began to organize a partisan squad in Salantai. [...]

On June 25 the partisan squad in Grūšlaukė disbanded and joined the one in Salantai. Later, the auxiliary police squad in Salantai cooperated with the squads in Mosėdis, Plateliai, and other towns; in addition, it had contacts with Kretinga. This squad thoroughly cleansed the surrounding area of Red henchmen, Jews, and protected the area from attacks. [...] From July 15 onward, the chief of police was Sergeant Stasys Jonaitis, under whose command of the auxiliary police squad *the entire Jewish element was finally eliminated from Salantai* [emphasis added – J. L.] and the entire area was completely cleansed of the Communist leaven. [...]

Fortunately, none of the partisans from the Salantai area were wounded or killed.

*Salantai
December 19, 1941*

*Izidorius Kurklietis
Secretary of the Civil Parish of Salantai*

*A true copy
Secretary (signature illegible)*

*LCVA, f. R-635, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 10. A typescript copy.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 98-99.*

INFORMATION FROM THE CORRESPONDENT JURGIS KRASAUSKAS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN KUDIRKOS NAUMIESTIS DURING THE FIRST MONTH OF THE WAR

K[udirkos] NAUMIESTIS

K[udirkos] Naumiestis is almost unscathed by the war. One house was blown up in which some Russian soldiers had hidden (the local commandant, the head of the GPU, and others). The explosion broke several dozen windows. On June 22, in the afternoon, at the initiative of the German military commandant, a local Lithuanian committee was organized, consisting of the notary Lapušinskas, the veterinarian Krasauskas, the physician Kriaučiūnas, the postmaster Barauskas, and the priest Dobrovolskis. Administrative work began immediately.

When the old mayor, Mr. Skirgaila, returned, the committee assigned his duties to him.

The food supply is adequate: there is enough bread, butter, and meat. On August 10 ration cards were introduced.

In the villages the rye harvest is proceeding at full pace, even though a shortage of workers can be felt. The mood of the entire population is good. Everyone is determined to heal the wounds caused by the Bolshevik terror as quickly as possible.

After being organized during the first days, the police and partisans cleansed the surrounding area of Jews, Communists, and bands of USSR soldiers [emphasis added – J. L.].

Today, life in K[udirkos] Naumiestis is completely normal, as if there had not been any war at all, only there are very few Jews to be seen....

*News from the correspondent – j – k –
K[udirkos] Naumiestis
Jurgis Krasauskas
LMAB RS, f. 222 – 1751, l. 6. Original manuscript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, p. 145.*

ANTANAS DVORŽECKIS ABOUT THE BATTLES OF THE PARTISANS OF PUŠALOTAS

During June 22-26:

[...] All male Jews are being arrested and taught to do useful physical work. A normal free life is beginning.

*A. D. My address:
Antanas Dvoržekis
Kaunas
Juozapavičius St. 103, Apt. 1
LMAB RS, f. 222 – 1756, l. 3-5. Original manuscript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, p. 132.*

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MOODS AND EVENTS IN ŠAKIAI AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

ŠAKIAI

August 12, 1941

...the Red year of Jewish violence did not pass without a trace. Throughout that time the population was constantly drawn, more and more, into great apathy, ...workers, farmers, and intellectuals, full of rancor because of Jewish violence, clenched their teeth and suffered....

As soon as the first sounds of war could be heard, the Bolsheviks hurriedly armed the Jews and sellouts....

Toward evening, when the German Army arrived, all the fiercest Jews and Communists had already abandoned the town....

Šakiai

August 12, 1941

LMAB RS, f. 222 – 1751, l. 1-5. Original manuscript.

Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 143-144.

A CHRONICLE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ACTIVIST PARTISAN SQUAD OF DUSETOS

DUSETOS

August 4, 1941

...only the Jews and Russians as well as party sellouts and Communist youth betray their brothers to the Asiatics....

The Lithuanian does not forget. He will always be thankful to Greater Germany for liberation from bloody terror and enslavement by the Jews. [...]

The Jews are being relocated from the town to the suburb of Užtiltė. The town has been cleansed of parasites who have preyed on it for centuries.

The Lithuanian residents of Užtiltė are being resettled in the more suitable apartments of the Jews. The town is clean. [...]

Dusetos

August 4, 1941

Squad Headquarters

LCVA, f. R-1106, ap. 2, b. 18, l. 265-266. Original typescript.

Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 180-185.

A SURVEY OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ACTIVISTS IN JONIŠKIS

1. The Activists began to operate on Saturday, June 28, 1941. A committee was immediately organized to maintain law and order in the city....

Later, the Activists were organized into separate groups, namely: a cadre commission, a commission to manage Jewish affairs....

Intended Activist activities: [...]

4. To concentrate the Jews in one place and use them for work in the fields and public works. [...]

*K. Ralys
(signature)
Chief of Activist Headquarters*

*Delegates from Riflemen Activist Headquarters:
J. Meškelevičius (signature)
Pr. Volodka (signature)
(one illegible signature)*

*LCVA, f. R-739, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 3. Original typescript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 251-253.*

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ACTIVIST HEADQUARTERS IN JONIŠKIS ON THE QUESTION OF MANAGING THE JEWS

[no later than July 18, 1941]¹

The head of the Civil Parish of Joniškis, Mr. Staškevičius, is asked to serve as chairman, and Mr. Valiukas – as secretary.

Concerning the first item on the agenda, Mr. Ralys states his position about coordinating the operations of the Activists with those of the local governments. He states that we are on the eve of the collapse of Communism. We will undoubtedly join the National Socialist camp. The mayor of the town raises the question of who among those present will give direction to all this, for in local government very many difficulties arise on this matter. It is determined: the local governments will work in contact with Activist Headquarters (the Commission to Manage the Jews).

On the second question – that of relocating the Jews – Mr. Tininis states his position. The Jews need to be relocated. The mayor of the town intends to call a meeting and invite several members of the Activists. The selection of a quarter. There are about 1200 Jews in Joniškis. There will not be any room in Joniškis for Jews who have fled here from other places. The mayor states that the Jews should be concentrated in one place – moved from

¹ *MŽL*, part 2, p. 241.

smaller towns to one place. The chief of police states that the Jews could be held in the synagogues. The mayor of the town states that it would not be a bad idea to hold the Jews in the triangle formed by Darius-Girėnas Street and Pašvitinys Street. Settling the Jews near the market place would be a very bad idea. The chief of police states that the Jews who have fled here should be driven out of Joniškis and then it would be easier to cope with the Jews of Joniškis. The Jews could be moved to Žagarė. Everyone agreed on this question. The details will be settled by the Commission to Manage the Jews. The Lithuanians should not object to being moved from the Jewish quarter. A special commission will count the Jews and calculate whether it will be possible to hold them in that triangle. It would be fully possible to relocate the Lithuanians – all of the Lithuanians will agree to being relocated. The best place, in everyone's opinion, would be in the triangle between Darius-Girėnas and Pašvitinys streets. In Mr. Butkus' opinion, it would be best to settle the Jews in their synagogues and in houses near the market place because no Lithuanians live there. This question will be finally settled by the Commission to Manage the Jews. One representative from our local government is being summoned to the Commission to Manage the Jews. The question of a contribution from the Jews. Mr. Kakliauskas suggests 20,000 roubles. Everyone agreed.

The chief of police raises a question about the lack of furniture for Activist Headquarters, the police, and citizens who have suffered from the war. It is decided to take the needed furniture from the Jews, from those who have fled or who are well-to-do. After the contribution is signed, to give the Jews some time: it is voted to give them three hours. The deadline cannot be extended. The sanction if they do not sign, suggested by the chief of police – if they do not sign or do not bring the required sum, to lock up twelve of the more influential Jews and not let them out until everything is in order. Concerning the Jews' wearing of the Star of David, the chief of police states that the matter should be organized in such a way that this badge does not differ from the ones worn in other towns, likewise where it is worn. The deadline is to be announced today: tomorrow everyone will have to wear it. There will be a punishment for not wearing the badge. The police are undertaking to deal with this matter.

The question of the Jews who have not returned from the countryside. To return those who are not doing any work. This question will be settled in greater detail by the head and elders of the civil parish. The question of registering the Jews, the inventorization of their property – homes, farms – has been delegated to the local governments. In the opinion of the chief of police, for the time being they should be left on their farms; in Mr. Ačas' opinion, directors should be appointed for those farms that the Jews managed, and the Jews should be driven off these farms. Everyone

agrees with Mr. Ačas' opinion – to drive the Jews off the farms. To assign the former farms of the Jews to their former owners or to reliable persons who have a livestock or equipment inventory. It is decided: to punish with a fine those people who take in the Jews or their property. Its size will be determined by the Commission itself. Property is to be confiscated at the discretion of the Commission.

The question of the kiosk: the kiosk is to be left under the management of the local government.

*LCVA, f. R-739, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 10. Original typescript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 257-259.*

Lithuanian Activist Front Joniškis Branch
Commission to Manage the Jews

ORDER

On July 11 of this year, the Commission to Manage the Jews of Activist Front Headquarters publicly announced in the town nine orders for the Jews, which many of the Jews have not obeyed.

For example, not all of the Jews have returned to the town from the villages, not one Jew has yet made for himself or yet wears on his chest a Star of David, some of the Jews still walk on the sidewalks, some of the Jews still use Aryan services, etc.

Seeing that the Jews are not obeying the orders that have been announced, Activist Front Headquarters has decided to impose on the Jews a contribution of 20,000 roubles, which must be paid to Activist Headquarters on July 19 between twelve o'clock noon and three o'clock in the afternoon.

*Chairman of the Commission
Secretary
Joniškis
July 18, 1941*

July 18, 1941, 4:20 p.m.

Order received: (signature illegible)

*LCVA, f. R-739, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 13. Original typescript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, p. 259.*

A NOTE FROM LITHUANIAN ACTIVIST HEADQUARTERS TO A BRANCH OF THE
BANK OF LITHUANIA TO OPEN A CHECKING ACCOUNT

Lithuanian Activist Front Joniškis

Branch Headquarters

Joniškis, July 24, 1941

TO THE BANK OF LITHUANIA
JONIŠKIS

Please open, in our name, checking account No. 160003.²

Checks and other instruments of payment will be signed by:

First Signature Stasys Kakliauskas

Signature Specimen (signature)

Second Signature Antanas Graunas

Signature Specimen (signature)

(Seal)

(Lithuanian Activist Headquarters of Joniškis)

Lithuanian Activist Front Joniškis Branch Headquarters

A. Šplitas (signature)

LCVA, f. R-739, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 14. Original typescript.

Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, p. 260.

LITHUANIAN ACTIVIST HEADQUARTERS

Joniškis

August 5, 1941

Herr Generalkommissar

Dr. A. von Renteln

We congratulate you, Herr Generalkommissar of the former Lithuanian state, on your assumption of the civil government in our country, and we hope that in a short time you will be able to heal the wounds inflicted on our country by the Bolshevik government.

We, the Activists and partisans of the town of Joniškis in the district of Šiauliai, promise to assist you everywhere and at all times.

Activist Leader St. Kakliauskas

Secretary A. Šplitas

LMAB RS, f. R-167, l. 2.

Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 247.

² In the name of LAF Joniškis Branch Headquarters 20,000 roubles were deposited. Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 240.

Administis koros su bolševikais. M
 Kazys Jusas gyv. gysl. Jusas Kazys gyv. Kaunas
 ir kol. Jankūnais, ap. Pasvalis, vnt. Amal
 manū. auri kaimė.

1947 met. VI m. 27. - 28 diena.

Pasiūtikėi servinis ir leimėti gra svarbiuvis
 žmogaus rukiolas. Us teie ip teryne auk
 di taro gyvok, gra einklas terynis mede
 pas myk teryne, tos jai auroja vira - gy
 be. skaudėtai man sūdi rasti jousma
 teryniau bolševikams - bendradarbiams.
 Dėkinga, mesinams laisvy ir žydėstis rasti
 pas bazi kuonu.
 As si d. jai kad tas nidos turės praest

tohmė. 2 man rames gyvenam
 2 jasi r. akliu. Tute gyv. jasi r. akliu
 bolševikų karvominėi es. gra rai
 is saro. kas okimuz. darba jamos ir
 links mias mes us mūsų laisvy ir gyv.
 da bar buoli. Didevisis. Dekit. jasi
 galingsi. karvominė ir jasi raiolas.
 Admininimus rasti saro darbu
 ir koros. lie turru korai prisiminti
 su bolševikais.
 1947 met. lėpas. 27 diena
 Amaliai, auri. Kazys Jusas
 "Curemu" 1977. Jankūnais
 B. 9559/3.T.Y

From information provided by the partisan Kazys Jusas. Facsimile.

FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE PARTISAN KAZYS JUSAS
OF THE PETRAŠIŪNAI PARTISAN GROUP
ABOUT HIS ACTIVITIES:

...my heart was sorely pierced by this feeling. When the Bolshevik gang marched into Lithuania, bearing freedom and a Jewish paradise of barbarity.

I believed that all this would have to pass, that the cannibals, once they had drunk their fill of innocent blood, would burst....

By the blessing of the Most High, the mighty German Army could be heard marching into Lithuania and neighboring countries; at the same time, we also heard a Lithuanian appeal on the radio waves – Lithuanians, thwart the enemy, help in whatever way you can, drive the enemy out of Lithuania.

...I showed them a Lithuanian fist for the Jewish paradise they had bestowed on us. I fought in the fields of Petrašiūnai... Palemonas. From June 21 to June 30 alone and together with the Petrašiūnai group. [...]

I returned to my everyday work at peace and happy because our freedom and lives are now watched over by the powerful army of Greater Germany and its leader. [...]

*July 27, 1941
Amaliai (signature)*

LYA, b. 9559/3, t. 4, l. 10.

DOCUMENTS OF THE LITHUANIAN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

One of the first enactments of the Provisional Government of Lithuania was "A Declaration on Economic Matters" (Provisional Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers, meeting of July 4, 1941, minutes no. 10, p. 36):

In gratitude to the savior of European culture, Chancellor Adolf Hitler of the Greater German Reich, and to his courageous army, which has liberated the territory of Lithuania, honoring the blood and self-sacrifice of our partisans, the finest sons of our Nation, and empowered by their sacrifices to carry out the will of our Nation, the Provisional Government of Lithuania proclaims:

1. The economy of liberated Lithuania is based on private property, which alongside the public property of our nation is the most necessary precondition for raising our national well-being.

Setting the common economic and social interests of our nation above the affairs of individual persons, our state coordinates the economic activities of private property with the public goals of our nation.

2. Insofar as not needed for the public affairs of our nation, lands and other property taken away by the Bolshevik government through nationalization, confiscation, or other means will be returned as provided for by our government.

Land owners whose property rights were taken away by the land nationalization program announced by the Bolshevik government will have their former property rights restored to them.

3. **Nationalized Jewish property, as well as nationalized property that belonged to other persons who actively worked against the interests of the Lithuanian people, remains the property of the Lithuanian state.** [emphasis added – J. L.]
4. Until the necessary regulations have been published, this nationalized property will be controlled by the institutions to which it has been or will be entrusted.
5. The distribution of land, of urban and other property will be regulated in order to provide those who have little or no land with their own land and to create better economic conditions for rural and urban people.
6. In order to implement social justice and solidarity and to protect the interests of working people, the state will adhere to the principle "the public good before the private good."

To this end, those who work will be included in the management of their workplaces, the improvement of productivity, and the betterment of economic and cultural conditions for workers.

*Juozas Ambrazevičius
Acting Prime Minister (signature)*

*P. J. Švelnikas
Secretary of the Cabinet of Ministers (signature)*

LLV. Pos. prot., p. 36-38.

ON THE BASIS OF THIS DECLARATION THESE LAWS WERE ENACTED:

Signed by Acting Prime Minister Juozas Ambrazevičius and Minister of Local Government Services Vytautas Žemkalnis of the Provisional Government, Paragraph 2 of the Law on the Denationalization of Urban Houses and Lots provided:

The nationalized houses, lots, and farm buildings of Jews, foreigners, and other natural and legal persons who acted against the interests of the Lithuanian people are not to be returned to their former owners.

LLV. Pos. prot., p. 99.

Signed by Minister Vytautas Žemkalnis, the regulations to implement this law indicate that if, when nationalized houses and lots are returned, there are several owners and if one or some of them are Jews, the owners also take control of the shares of their former partners.

LCVA, f. R-496, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 12.

Paragraph 2 of the Law on the Denationalization of the Lithuanian Merchant Marine and River Fleet provided that “the nationalized ships of Jews and persons who acted against the interests of the Lithuanian people are not to be returned to their former owners.”

LLV. Pos. prot., p. 132.

Similarly formulated are the laws on the denationalization of factories, stores, and restaurants as well as the law to manage land ownership (the relevant paragraphs are 2, 2, and 14).

LLV. Pos. prot., pp. 92, 101, 107.

The decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on bank deposits and current accounts:

- 1. Credit institutions are to return from the consolidated current account Annulled Current Accounts and Bank Deposits the rightful sums to the current and deposit accounts of their depositors. [...]*
- 4. This decision does not apply to Jews and persons who acted against the interests of the Lithuanian people.*

LLV. Pos. prot., p. 144.

The decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on the return to their owners of stocks and bonds transferred to the Bank of Lithuania for safekeeping:

- 4. This decision does not apply to Jews and persons who acted against the interests of the Lithuanian people.*

LLV. Pos. prot., p. 145.

REGULATIONS ON THE STATUS OF THE JEWS

Appendix 1 to Minutes No. 31 of August 1, 1941¹
[of the Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers]

Whereas the Jews have, for centuries, exploited the Lithuanian people economically and degraded them morally, and during the past year, under the mantle of Bolshevism, they have expanded the struggle against Lithuanian independence and the Lithuanian people, and in order to prevent this destructive Jewish activity and protect the Lithuanian people from their harmful influence, the Cabinet of Ministers has decided to enact these regulations: [...]

1

The Jews living in the territory of Lithuania are to be divided into these two categories:

Category I. Members of Communist organizations and other persons who, although not members of these organizations, participated in Bolshevik activities. They are to be arrested and prosecuted as criminals.

Category II. All other persons of Jewish nationality who do not fall into Category I. They are to be settled in separate localities selected for this purpose and on the left side of their chests wear a yellow, 8-centimeter circle with the letter J² in the middle.

The localities for settling the Jews in separate suburban quarters or on farms are to be selected, on the basis of local conditions, by the heads of districts after consulting with town mayors or other relevant local government bodies.

2

The Jews are prohibited from leaving the localities they have been assigned to live in without special police permission.

3

Persons of Jewish nationality may have personal effects only in the localities assigned for them to live in. The personal effects they have in other localities they must liquidate in two weeks from the day on which these regulations are enacted. The property that the Jews have not disposed of during that time is to be confiscated and handed over for public use.

4

Jews are forbidden to have:

- a) radios;
- b) printing presses, typewriters, or other means of printing written material (rotary presses, shapirographs, etc.);

1 Minutes nos. 29-31 of the meetings on July 31 and August 1, 1941, have not survived except for some of the appendices.

2 For Jude – Jew.

Priedas Nr. 1
prieš 1944. VII. 1 pakt.
Nr. 31 40

ZYDŲ PADĖTIES NUOSTATAI

Ministerių Kabinetas, atsižvelgdamas į tai, kad žydai ištisus šimtmečius išnaudojo Lietuvių tautą ekonomiškai, smugė ją morališkai, o pastaraisiais metais, prisidengę bolševizmo skraiste, kovą prieš Lietuvos nepriklausomybę ir Lietuvių tautą plačiausiai išvystė, ir siekdamas užkirsti kelią šiai žalingai žydų veiklai bei apsaugoti

/.../

Vyčio Kryžiumi arba yra savanoriai įstoję į Liet. kariuomenę iki 1919 m. III.5 d., jeigu jie vėlesniu laiku neveikė prieš Lietuvių tautos interesus.

9

Šiems nuostatams vykdyti instrukcijų leidžia ir kylančius dėl šių nuostatų vykdymo neaiškumus ir skundus galutinai sprendžia Vidaus Reikalų Ministeris.

10

Šie nuostatai veikia nuo jų priėmimo dienos.

Kaunas, 1944 m. rugpjūčio mė. 1 d.

Kubarcinis
L. e. MINISTERIO PIRMININKO p.

J. Stelmu
VIDAUS REIKALŲ MINISTERIS

c) automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, or other mechanized means of transportation;

d) upright pianos, grand pianos, or harmoniums;

e) cameras.

5

Doctor's offices, X-ray machines, and apparatuses, instruments, and medicines used in physiotherapy are to be inspected by a special commission appointed by the Minister of Health, and what is needed is to be taken for public use.

6

Jews are prohibited from using the services of persons of other nationalities in their households.

7

Persons who have violated paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 of these regulations as well as persons of Jewish nationality who are dangerous to public order, peace, or security may be, at the discretion of the head of the district, held in forced labor camps for a period of up to one year if these crimes are not more severely punished by other laws.

8³

These regulations do not apply to persons who have been awarded the Knight's Cross or who voluntarily enlisted in the Lithuanian Army before March 5, 1919, if they did not at a later date act against the interests of the Lithuanian people.

9

The instructions to implement these regulations are to be issued and any ambiguities or complaints that arise over the implementation of these regulations are to be ultimately settled by the Minister of Internal Affairs.

10

These regulations are to take effect on the day that they are enacted.

Kaunas, August 1, 1941⁴

*Acting Prime Minister (signature)
Juozas Ambrazevičius*

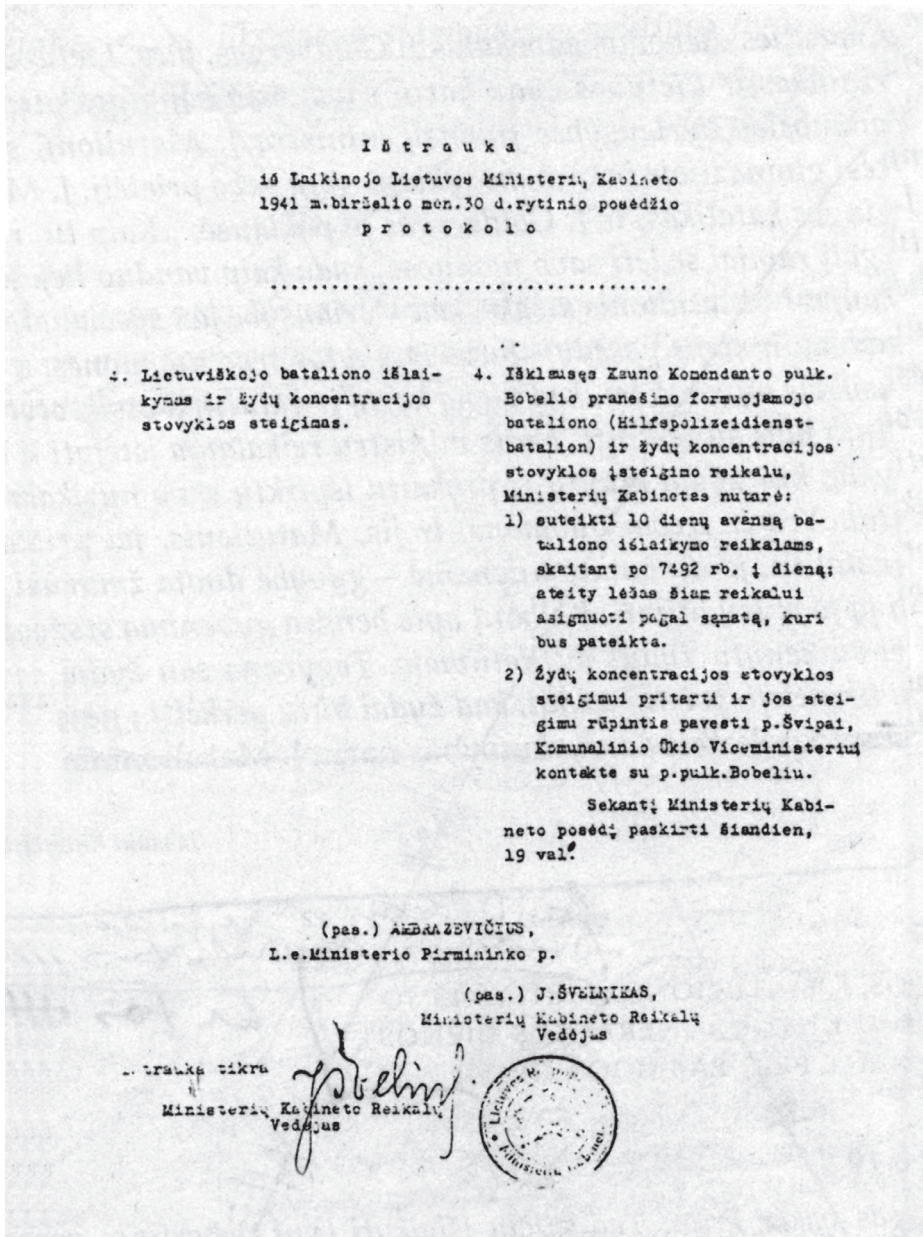
*Minister of Internal Affairs (signature)
Jonas Šlepetys*

LLV. Pos. prot., pp. 135-137.

3 This regulation was not put into effect.

4 This record was handwritten.

AN EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MORNING MEETING ON JUNE 30, 1941,
OF THE PROVISIONAL LITHUANIAN CABINET OF MINISTERS.



Facsimile.
Published in LLV. Pos. prot., pp. 19-20.

REFERENCE
Minutes
of the morning meeting on June 30, 1941,
of the Provisional Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers

.....

4. The upkeep of a Lithuanian battalion and the setting up of a Jewish concentration camp.

4. After hearing Kaunas Com-mandant Col. Bobelis' report on the formation of a battalion (Hilfspolizeidienstbataillon) and the setting up of a Jewish concentration camp, the Cabinet of Ministers resolved:

- 1) to provide a 10-day advance for the upkeep of the battalion at 7492 roubles per day; in the future, to allot funds for this purpose based on the estimate which will be submitted;
- 2) to approve the setting up of a Jewish concentration camp and to put Mr. Švipas, Vice-Minister of Local Government Services, in charge of this operation, working in contact with Col. Bobelis.

To schedule the next Cabinet of Ministers meeting for today at 7:00 p.m.

Acting Prime Minister J. Ambrazevičius
(signature)

Secretary to the Cabinet of Ministers J. Švelnikas
(signature)

True certified copy
(signature)

Secretary to the Cabinet of Ministers (seal)

Commenting on this document, Sarah Gin Rubinson writes:

This is a proposal to set up a concentration camp for Jews. [...] Thus, barely one week after the war began, the Lithuanian government decided, on its own initiative, to set up a concentration camp for Jews on Lithuanian territory. If this proposal had been implemented, Lithuania could have "taken pride" in being one of the first Nazi-occupied countries in Europe to have, without being urged or forced by the Nazis, a concentration camp intended only for Jews.⁵

⁵ Sara Ginaitė-Rubinsonienė, *Atminimo knyga: Kauno žydų bendruomenė 1941-1944* [Book of Memory: The Jewish Community of Kaunas, 1941-1944] (Vilnius: Margi raštai, 1999), p. 59.

THE DECREES OF OCCUPATIONAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES AND OF THE POLICE

On August 5, 1941, the activities of the Provisional Government of Lithuania were terminated. The Baltic States were turned into Ostland (the eastern land) of the German Reich. Lithuania became a general region of a province whose capital was Riga. It was managed by a general commissar, district (Gebiet) commissars, and military commandants. The structure of the German occupational government was supplemented by an auxiliary Lithuanian system of "self-governing" bodies. These consisted of nine general councilors under General Petras Kubiliūnas, the mayors of Vilnius and Kaunas as well as of district towns, the heads of civil parishes, the elders of precincts, and the public and the auxiliary police – 6000 people.¹

One of the blackest deeds that the Lithuanian self-governing bodies had to perform was the extermination of the Jewish population and the seizure of their property.²

It began with violations of the elementary civil rights of the Jews, of their human dignity and honor; the Jews at once found themselves outside the bounds of the law.

1 Solomon Atamuk, *Lietuvos žydų kelias* [The Road Traveled by the Jews of Lithuania] (Vilnius: Alma littera, 1998), p. 250.

2 Juozas Bulavas, *Vokiškųjų fašistų okupacinis Lietuvos valdymas 1941-1944 m.* [The Occupational Rule of Lithuania by the German Fascists During 1941-1944], (Vilnius, 1969), p. 53.

VILNIUS DISTRICT

ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 3
TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE VILNIUS REGION³

1. Residents of Jewish nationality are prohibited from walking on sidewalks. Jews must walk only along the right edge of the pavement in single file.

2. Residents of Jewish nationality are prohibited from walking about in all gardens, parks, and squares as well as from resting on the benches in these places.

3. Residents of Jewish nationality are prohibited from traveling on and using all means of public transportation, such as taxis, carriages, buses, steamships, etc.

Owners and operators of means of public transportation must prominently display a sign saying "Prohibited for Jews."

4. All residents of Jewish nationality of both sexes are obligated to wear a yellow Star of David, 8-10 centimeters in size, on the left side of their chests and also on their backs.

5. Residents of Jewish nationality are prohibited from leaving their apartments from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.

6. Jews are prohibited from hiring persons of non-Jewish nationality or allowing them to stay overnight in their homes.

7. All previously issued orders are hereby confirmed by the regional⁴ commissar.

8. For failure to obey this order, offenders will be severely punished.

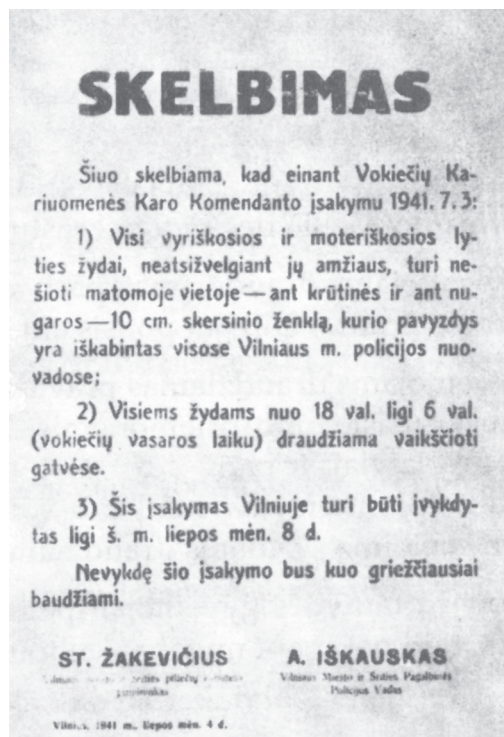
9. This order comes into force as of today.

Wulff
Vilnius District Commissar
Vilnius, August 9, 1941
Amtsblatt des Generalkommissars in Kauen, November 1, 1941, no. 2.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 30.

3 Should be district.

4 Should be district.

VILNIUS CITY



ANNOUNCEMENT

It is hereby announced that in pursuance of the order of July 3, 1941, from the military commandant of the German Army:

1) All Jewish males and females, regardless of their age, must wear in a prominent place – on their chests and on their backs – a badge ten centimeters in diameter, a sample of which is posted in all police stations in the city of Vilnius.

2) All Jews are prohibited from walking in the streets from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. (German summer time).

3) This order must be obeyed in Vilnius by July 8 of this year. Whoever disobeys this order will be punished most severely.

St. Žakevičius

*Chairman of the Citizens' Committee
of the City and District of Vilnius*

A. Iškauskas

*Auxiliary Police Chief
of the City and District of Vilnius*

Vilnius, July 4, 1941

*LCVA, f. 677, ap. 6, b. 1, l. 11.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 105.*

[No earlier than August 2, 1941]

TO ALL THE CAPTAINS OF THE POLICE STATIONS
IN THE CITY OF VILNIUS

By order of the commissar of the city and district of Vilnius, Jews are prohibited from walking on these streets: Gediminas, Basanavičius, Savanoriai Avenue, Trakai, Domininkonai, šv. Jonas, Didžioji, Kalvarijos, Pylimas, Magdalena, Vokiečiai, Jogaila, Sodai, Stotis, Aušros vartai, and Bazilionai.

Persons of Jewish nationality may only cross the streets listed here, and the Jews who live on these streets may walk on these streets only from their apartments to the nearest side street.

The captain of Police Station IV must immediately pass this prohibition on to the Jewish Committee so that the latter may announce it to persons of Jewish nationality.

All police station captains are obligated to communicate this prohibition to their police officers and see that it is obeyed.

Iškauskas

[the signatures of 36 police officers familiarized with this order]

LCVA, f. 692, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 4. Original. Manuscript.

Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 108.

ORDER NO. 11

Following the decree of the Vilnius district commissar, I announce this order:

1

Jews are prohibited from buying and being sold in streets and on roadsides the food products brought to the city by farmers.

2

Jews are prohibited from visiting marketplaces before 11 a.m.

3

In the stores, Jews may be sold merchandise from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

4

Violators of this order will be punished severely.

5

This order comes into force on the day of its announcement.

Br. Draugelis

Head of the Vilnius District

Vilnius, August 21, 1941

LCVA, f. 677, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 39. Printed on a press.

Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 107-108.

Vilnius, September 19, 1941

To Mr. K. Kalendra, Advisor to the Commissar

VILNIUS

RE: SETTLEMENT OF THE JEWS IN GHETTOS

If in some district cities, towns, or villages the Jews have not yet been settled in ghettos, all the Jews must be moved as soon as possible to ghettos established in parts of towns or villages and suitably enclosed with a fence and barbed wire. These ghettos must be guarded by the Lithuanian auxiliary police. As for ghetto security, the relevant mayor or district head must reach an agreement on this matter with the German police sergeant located in the district city. In each case, the ghettos must be properly guarded and separated from the outside world. The German police sergeant shall issue permits-certificates to Jewish craftsmen so that the Jews may go to work. Teams of Jewish workers for street work and other types of public work must be led to work by one responsible Jew. In all places the settlement of the Jews in ghettos must be carried out as quickly as possible. Precise information about the situation in the ghettos is absolutely necessary. District heads shall inform me as soon as possible of the implementation of this order.

All Lithuanians who belong to the auxiliary police must, to the fullest extent possible, help implement this urgent and important matter. In all localities, measures for implementing this matter must be carried out diligently and secretly so that the escape of individual Jews is impossible. In this case, firearms should be used immediately. All vacated Jewish apartments, shops, farms, etc. should at that time be sealed and locked by reliable Lithuanian institutions, government officials, etc. The locked buildings and premises should be constantly inspected.

In accordance with Order No. 5 concerning Jewish property, everything of value, such as buildings, etc., remains the property of the German state. All heads of districts, mayors, and heads of civil parishes shall emphatically impress on those of their subordinates who are concerned with the implementation of this matter that each of them is responsible for the correct and honest management of this Jewish property. Whoever takes any Jewish property or other Jewish valuables which have been expropriated for the German Reich will be punished with my severest punishment. All heads of districts, mayors, and heads of civil parishes are obligated to submit a report to me as quickly as possible about offenses and acts of negligence committed by government officials in this matter.

Means of cash payment, savings account books, foreign bills of exchange, jewelry, stocks, and debt schedules must be itemized exactly, as inventory, on separate lists but also packed honestly and placed safely in the safe of a Lithuanian government institution.

It is necessary to take great care that, when this matter is carried out, the civilian population not be able to enter Jewish houses and apartments.

Wulff
Vilnius District Commissar

LCVA, f. 684, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 19. A certified copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 113-114.

To the Head of the Vilnius District

From Board Member Leonardas Palevičius,
District Engineer Balys Rasiulis,
Engineer Jonas Abraitis

REPORT

At your instructions, in compliance with Note No. 474 of August 26, 1941, from the head of the Vilnius district concerning a Jewish ghetto, we announce that we have inspected several localities within the Vilnius district, of which only the following localities would be suitable, in our opinion, for setting up a Jewish ghetto:

1. Ten kilometers toward Nemenčinė and about two kilometers to the right toward Kairionys are located the buildings of the Russian army camp. There are more than a dozen of these buildings, of which thirteen are heated by ovens and four are not. Also, there are five kitchens. This place could hold all the Jews of the Vilnius district, but it is necessary to note that at this time all the buildings have been horribly looted and damaged by the local population: window frames have been removed, doors broken down, ovens torn down or at least their parts stripped away, kettles stolen from the kitchens, partitions dismantled, etc. Thus, in order to settle the Jews here, these needed repairs would have to be made.
2. About 9.5 kilometers toward Šumskas and about one kilometer to the left is located Vėliučionys Manor. At this manor, the Poles had set up a house of correction. The Russians had some sort of military school. The manor was nationalized. Here, there are several wooden buildings and one big two-story brick building which could hold the Jews of the

Vilnius district. Besides these buildings, there are a number of farm buildings. Almost all the buildings are in good condition, except for the damaged water and electric system, and the Jews could be moved here at any time. The other repairs could be made by the Jews themselves. There is no inventory in these buildings.

In our opinion, this site is convenient because it is not far from the cities of Vilnius and Naujoji Vilnia, so that it would not be difficult to use this Jewish labor force for maintenance work in these cities. In addition, of all the localities inspected, this place is the most suitable to live in under winter conditions.

*Leonardas Palevičius
Balys Rasiulis
Jonas Abraitis*

Vilnius, September 2, 1941

*LCVA, f. 685, ap. 5, b. 4, l. 5. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 208-209.*

The Head of the Vilnius District

No. 9

Vilnius, September 19, 1941

Urgent – Secret

TO ALL THE HEADS OF THE CIVIL PARISHES OF THE VILNIUS DISTRICT
AND THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF NAUJOJI VILNIA

(A copy – to inform police station captains)

In compliance with the instructions of the Gebietskommissar, I order you, by 6 a.m. on September 22 of this year, to gather all the Jews within your civil parishes (within the town of Naujoji Vilnia) and to deliver them to Vėliučionys Manor, five kilometers from Naujoji Vilnia, within Mickūnai civil parish.

So that these instructions may be carried out in an orderly fashion, I order the following:

1. All the Jews living within your civil parish must be collected in one place that you have chosen in advance. All Jews shall be collected, regardless of whether they work somewhere or not (e.g. those doing road or bridge construction work and even those who are working for the German military authorities).

2. To transport sick people, little children, old people unable to walk, those who become faint along the way, and things dropped by the Jews during their journey, you are required to provide the necessary number of wagons.
3. Jews are allowed to take with them only as many things as each of them is able carry by himself. When collected, the property dropped by the Jews along the way shall not be returned to the Jews but taken back to the civil parish and put into a common warehouse for storing Jewish property.
4. The houses vacated by the Jews and the property in them shall be immediately locked and sealed, the shutters closed, and guards selected from reliable persons (preferably Lithuanians) shall be stationed there. The guards may, as needed, be paid a wage by the head of the civil parish. The head of the civil parish shall take the keys. Supervision of the men guarding this Jewish property shall be assigned to the police.
5. As soon as possible, this Jewish property must be taken to one or several warehouses. When being taken to one place, all this property must be listed in detail, with a separate document for each former property owner.
6. The Jewish property taken to the warehouses shall be locked and sealed, and guards shall be stationed there until further orders, as mentioned in Paragraph 4 of these instructions.
7. All of the real and personal property of Jewish farmers shall be listed in detail and, until further orders, entrusted to the care of a reliable person. Left in this person's care shall be only such property of the former Jewish farmer as is necessary only for a farm, while the rest of this property (e.g. furniture, bed linens, clothes, etc.) shall be taken to common warehouses for keeping Jewish property. Jewish farmers are also allowed to take with them only as many things as each of them can carry by himself. The custodian shall look after this property, feed the animals, and take care of other farm chores until an agreement is reached with officials from the agricultural department on the appointment of a permanent manager for this property.
8. The heads of the civil parishes and the mayor of the town of Naujoji Vilnia shall take strict care and, with the assistance of the local police, see that not one Jew remains behind. If any such Jew is found who has remained behind, he should be seized immediately and marched to the above-mentioned place for settling the Jews – the ghetto.
9. On those who hide a Jew or his property in their homes, reports shall be written up, and they shall be sent to me for punishment.
10. From their collection point in the civil parish the Jews shall be handed over for transportation to the chief guard, after they have been called

- by name from a list, one copy of which, signed by the chief guard after accepting the Jews, shall remain at the government office of the civil parish, and the second copy shall be submitted to the chief guard.
11. The transportation of the Jews must begin at a time so calculated that they may with assurance reach the place intended for them to live in at the appointed time, i.e. the Jews must be marched to the ghetto by no later than 6 a.m. on September 22.
 12. About the collection of the Jews for transportation, how many of them were transported, the disposition of the property they left behind, and any incidents that occurred during the execution of this order – about all these matters I must receive your written reports by 11 a.m. on September 23 of this year.
 13. Execute this order using the assistance of the captains of the police stations and of all the officials in the government offices of the civil parishes.
 14. The heads of the civil parishes and the mayor of the town of Naujoji Vilnia shall be responsible for precise and strict compliance with this order.

Br. Draugelis
Head of the District

LCVA, f. 684, ap. 1, b. 4, l. 21. A copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 209-210.

THE CITY OF KAUNAS

ORDER NO. 15

OF THE COMMANDANT OF KAUNAS AND THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF KAUNAS

§1

All persons of Jewish nationality who have fled from the city of Kaunas have no right to return to the city of Kaunas – those who return will be arrested.

The owners of houses, the managers of nationalized houses, and the actual managers of other houses who allow persons of Jewish nationality who have returned to Kaunas to settle in their houses will be punished.

§2

All persons of Jewish nationality living in the city of Kaunas, regardless of sex or age, starting on July 12 of this year, shall wear on the left side of their chest the following badge: a yellow Star of David, 8-10 centimeters in diameter. These badges shall be provided by persons of Jewish nationality themselves.

If seen without this badge, persons of Jewish nationality will be arrested.

§3

Persons of Jewish nationality are permitted to walk on the streets and appear in public places from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. If seen in public places at other times, persons of Jewish nationality will be arrested.

§4

All persons of Jewish nationality living within the city of Kaunas, regardless of sex or age, must move, from July 15 to August 15 of this year, to the suburb of Kaunas – Vilijampolė.

[...]

§6

This resettlement shall be carried out at the personal expense of those being resettled.

[...]

§9

Persons of Jewish nationality are prohibited from using the hired labor of persons of other nationalities.

*Kaunas, July 10, 1941
The Commandant of Kaunas
The Mayor of the City of Kaunas*

*LCVA, f. 1444, ap. 1, b. 6, l. 5. A certified copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 233-234.*

MINUTES

Kaunas, July 25, 1941

At the Kaunas Commandant's Headquarters, an interdepartmental meeting was held concerning the resettlement of the Jews in a district assigned in Vilijampolė.

This meeting was attended by: Kaunas Commandant Capt. Kviecinskas, Kaunas Deputy Commandant Col. Kalmantas, Mayor of the City of Kaunas Palčiauskas, Security Department Director Reivytiš, Police Department Director Taunys, Kaunas Police Chief Renigeris, and Head of the Organization Department of the Kaunas Commandant's Headquarters Maj. Biknaitis.

This meeting was chaired by Kaunas Commandant Capt. Kviecinskas, and the secretary was Maj. Biknaitis.

The meeting began at 5 p.m. and ended at 7 p.m.

Discussed:

1. Transference of the Jews from the city and suburbs of Kaunas to the district assigned for the Jews in Vilijampolė.

Decided:

On this matter it was decided to issue the order and instructions given below.

The order will be issued by the Commandant of Kaunas and the Mayor of the City of Kaunas.

The instructions – by the Chief of the Kaunas City Police.

It was decided to issue the following order and instructions:

ORDER

§1

All the Jews living within the city of Kaunas must move to the assigned district in Vilijampolė by the time indicated in Order No. 15.

Transfer of the Jews shall be carried out, and the time and manner for transferring individual Jewish families shall be determined, by the Chief of the Kaunas City Police.

The city government of Kaunas shall allocate quarters for the Jews being moved.

§2

The district assigned for the Jews in Vilijampolė is designated in a certain plan.

§3

The Jews are prohibited from selling, mortgaging, or exchanging real or personal property, and they are also prohibited from engaging in any kind of trade.

§4

The Jews moving to their assigned district in Vilijampolė are permitted to take with them only their work tools and the belongings needed for their new living conditions.

The things that the Jews are permitted to take with them are identified in separate instructions which the police will announce to the Jews who are moving. Other property shall be left at the disposal of the Kaunas city government. [...]

From the appended instructions:

§4

The property left behind by the Jews shall be disposed of by the mayor of the city of Kaunas, in agreement with the police chief of the city of Kaunas. [...]

Chairman
Kviecinskas

Participants Kalmantas
Palčiauskas
Reivytis
Taunys
Renigeris

Secretary
Biknaitis

LCVA, f. 1444, ap. 1, b. 6, l. 2-4. A certified copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 234-237.



The creation of the Kaunas Ghetto: Jews forced to leave the city for the suburb of Vilijampolė (Slobodka) in August 1941.

NAZI SECURITY POLICE DOCUMENTS

Chief of the SS and Local Police in Vilnius
Vilnius, September 19, 1941

I hereby authorize the use of officers from the police stations in the Vilnius district and of soldiers from the self-defense units in the special action to take place at 6 a.m. on September 20-22, 1941.¹

The soldiers from the self-defense units to reinforce the Vilnius district police stations shall depart from Vilnius at 5 a.m., and at 8 a.m. they shall present themselves to the district police stations. In order to carry out this action, I authorize the mayors and the heads of civil parishes of the Vilnius district to take under their authority the police stations and the soldiers of the self-defense units. In connection with the execution of this action, the soldiers of the self-defense units may be assigned to guard the ghettos.

During participation in this action, I request that the soldiers of the self-defense units be billeted and fed according to established procedure.

*SS Obersturmbahnführer
Krieg*

*LCVA, f. 659, ap. 1, b. 2, l. 10. Translated from the German original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 212.*

Kaunas, June 27, 1942

To the General Commissar in Kaunas
To the Gebietskommissar of the City of Kaunas
To the Gebietskommissar of the District of Kaunas

RE: THE PARTICIPATION OF UNIFORMED REICH GERMANS
WHEN ESCORTING JEWISH TRANSPORTS

During the escort of Jewish transports from the ghetto to the city and back, unpleasant remarks, full of indignation, have often been heard from the Lithuanian population. I am of the opinion that the labor of the Reich German is too valuable for him to be assigned to escort Jewish transports to the ghetto. Therefore, in the future, in the interest of German prestige, I request that I be allowed to assign members of the Lithuanian public police to escort the Jewish transports.

*Jäger
SS Standartenführer
Commander of the Security Police and Security Service
[...]*

¹ According to Karl Jäger's "Tabulation," on these days a mass killing of Jews occurred in Nemenčinė and Naujoji Vilnia.

A Copy for the Information of Police Headquarters in Vilnius

Jäger
SS Standartenführer

I agree with Standartenführer Jäger's opinion. German policemen under my authority must not be assigned to escort Jewish transports from the ghetto to the city and back.

Denicke
Police Colonel
Commander of the SS and the Police
in the city and the district of Vilnius

LCVA, f. 659, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 170. Translated from a German copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 114-115.

Commander of the Security Police and Security Service in Lithuania
Vilnius Office
Department IV
Section B

Vilnius, July 25, 1943

Directive
To the Chief of the Vilnius City Police
Vilnius

POLICE SECURITY MEASURES AGAINST THE JEWS IN VILNIUS

Whenever necessary, it is essential to take the following police security measures, which come into force on July 27, 1943:

1. From now on, the Jews of the Vilnius ghetto may appear only within the city of Vilnius. Going outside the city limits shall be punished with death.

2. The Jews shall be punished with death for walking alone in the streets. When the Jews are walking in a column, it is prohibited for fewer than five people to stop.

3. The use of individual Jews for work is hereby completely abolished. It is prohibited to use Jews for night work.

4. All permits previously issued by the security police or the offices of the Vilnius Gebietskommissar for walking alone shall become invalid on Tuesday, July 27, 1943.

Permits previously issued in exceptional cases to use Jews for work outside the ghetto shall become invalid on the same day.

Because this is a directive decree, please do not submit any requests, for they will not be considered.

Neugebauer
SS Obersturmführer

LCVA, f. 689, ap. 4, b. 923, l. 320. Translated from a German copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 160-161.

ALYTUS DISTRICT

From the Speech Given by the District Head and Police Chief Capt. A. Audronis at the Convention of District Police Station Captains Held on July 16 in Alytus

FURTHER REBUILDING WORK IN THE CIVIL PARISHES

The civil parishes are currently enduring hard times because of the Bolshevik terror that raged for an entire year and the ongoing war, but all Lithuania should be and is happy that the Jewish Red terror has ended. [...]

ON TAKING THE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

The means of transportation – automobiles, motorcycles, and bicycles – must be collected from the Communists, Komsomol members, and Jews and used as our own only to serve the police and partisans. [...]

THE ISSUE OF MINORITIES

The interests of Germany are our interests. Whoever is an enemy of Germany is our enemy too. The Jews, as a degenerate nation that under cover of the Red flag, by means of the worst sadism, wants to enslave all mankind and turn us into animals, are being dealt with very quickly by the radical measures of the Führer of the German nation.

It should be said that this issue has already been solved, but a few Lithuanians, even policemen, are still appearing who are attempting to solve this issue in their own way. I say to you that on this issue there cannot be two opinions, there must be and is only one opinion, it must be carried out 100%, it is clearly laid out in Adolf Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*. Thus, the Jew, as the greatest exploiter, sadist, grasping Geschäft-keeper, and defiler of culture, is the lowest of all people, nations, and races; he cannot be considered, regarded as equal to other people. Whoever associates with the Jews, whoever serves the Jews, whoever intermediates for the Jews to buy food products or supports the Jews in one way or another and has sexual relations is a traitor to our nation and will be posted on a noticeboard – a pillar of shame – and later punished. The first-class citizens are the Germans and the Lithuanians, while the second-class citizens are the Poles and the Russians, and the Jews are the last of all nations; thus they are and must be considered by each of us. I ask and demand that you strictly see to it that

the Jews wear the badge assigned to them in front and in back *and obey all the instructions given on July 12 of this year*. The police station captains are strictly required to see to it that this order is obeyed. The Jews who disobey this order are to be arrested. The badges must be clearly visible on their outer clothing, not covered by either kerchiefs or scarves. [...]

FOOD

The German military command in Lithuania has determined the weekly food rations for one person:

		for Jews
BREAD	1750 g	875 g
FLOUR	200 "	100 "
GROATS	150 "	75 "
MEAT	400 "	nothing
FAT	125 "	"
SUGAR	125 "	"

Only by following these rations can the entire population be fed, and the police will have to see to it that this order is obeyed without any exceptions. As you can see, a distinction has been made for the Jews here, too. This order will be announced immediately. [...]

CONCLUSIONS

We must spare no effort so that the Germans may be convinced by our work that we are worthy of independence; second, we must help the German Army in any way that we can and, third, scrupulously implement all the orders of the Germans and, after doing so, inform them.

I call everybody to the sincere and conscientious work that is required for the rebuilding of our Fatherland.

*LCVA, f. R-1436, ap. 1, b. 29, l. 14-20. Original, typescript.
Published in MŽL, part 2, pp. 62-65 (excerpt).*

A Report From the Captain of the Butrimonys Police Station
Captain of the Butrimonys Police Station of the Alytus District Police
July 15, 1941

To the Police Chief of the Alytus District

REPORT

I am reporting to you that the survey situation at the police precinct assigned to me is as follows:

[...]

22. The issue of minorities is very urgent, since the town has almost over two thousand Jews, who should be dealt with² as soon as possible. [...]

*Captain of the Police Station
(signature illegible)*

*70. Original, typescript.
LVCA, f.R-1346, ap. 1, b. 29, l.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, pp. 208-209.*

A Report From the Captain of the Seirijai Police Station
to the Police Chief of the Alytus District
About the Events and Situation in His Civil Parish

Seirijai, July 16, 1941

L.N.P.
Seirijai

Captain of the Seirijai Police Station

To the Police Chief of the Alytus District

REPORT

I am reporting to you, Sir, as follows: [...]

22. The Jewish question has been dealt with. [...]

*Official of the Criminal Police and Captain of the Police Station
(signature illegible)*

*LCVA, f. R-1436, ap. 1, b. 29, l. 78. Original, manuscript.
Published in 1941 m. birželio sukilimas, p. 223*

² *Sutvarkyti* 'to deal with' was used at that time to mask the word *sunaikinti* 'to exterminate.'

IN THE KRETINGA DISTRICT

IN DARBĖNAI

Captain
of the Darbėnai Police Station
No. 90

Darbėnai, August 15, 1941
20
To the Police Chief
of the Kretinga District

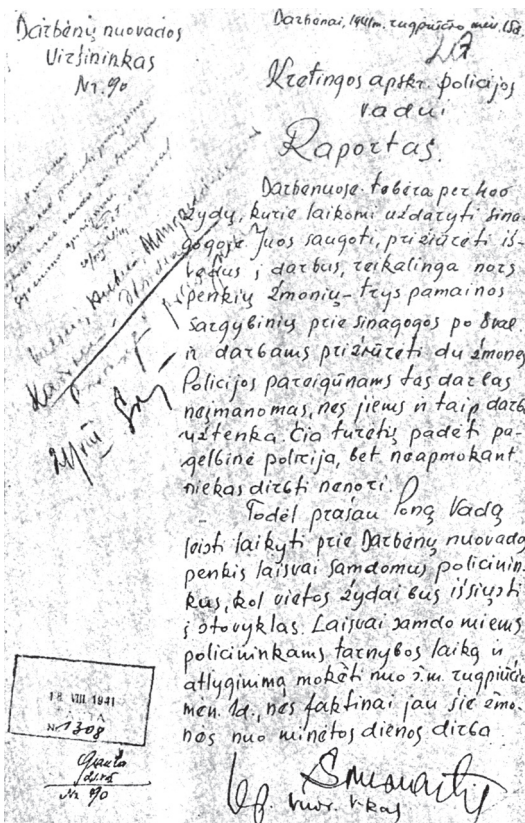
REPORT

In Darbėnai, there are still over four hundred Jews, who are being held in the synagogue. To guard them, to supervise them after taking them to work, at least five people are needed – three shifts of guards at the synagogue, eight hours each, and two people to supervise their work. For my police officers, that work is impossible because they have enough work as it is. Here, the auxiliary police should help, but nobody wants to work without being paid.

Therefore, I ask you, Sir, to allow me to keep five freelance policemen at the Darbėnai Police Station until the local Jews are sent to the camps. The

freelance policemen should be paid a wage for service time from August 1 of this year because these people have, in fact, already been working since this date.

(signature illegible)
Captain of the Police Station



A letter from the captain of the Darbėnai police station to the police chief of the Kretinga district on the allocation of funds for policemen who will guard the Jews held in the synagogue and supervise them when they are led to work.

LCVA, f. 643, ap. 2, b. 36, l. 20.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 144.

MARIJAMPOLĖ DISTRICT

Order No. 4 From the Head of the District

For the information of the people of the town and district of Marijampolė, I announce that from the date of this order:

I. The Jews are prohibited:

In the town of Marijampolė – from walking freely on the following streets: Vytautas, Bažnyčia, Donelaitis (Vilkaviškis), Petras Arminas, and Darius-Girėnas.

The Jews must go to their workplaces and other meeting places on side streets.

In the entire district –

1. From visiting public places: bath houses, town parks, cafes, bars, eating places, libraries, and similar institutions.
2. From buying food products in streets, marketplaces, yards, and on roads.

The Jews may buy food products as well as other articles only in stores specially indicated by the town mayor or the head of the civil parish or in general stores at appointed hours.

3. From using non-Jews for personal jobs and services.

II. The Jews are required:

To make and wear the Jewish national emblem – the six-pointed star.

This star shall be worn on the left side of the chest and in the middle of the back. This star shall be made of yellow material, of isosceles triangles with lines 8-10 centimeters long, and sewn on the outer garment.

The Jews must wear this badge, regardless of age or sex, starting 8 a.m. on July 18 of this year.

All Jews who fail to identify themselves with this badge will be arrested and put in prison.

III. The Jews who disobey this order will be punished.

IV. This order shall come into effect on the day it is announced.

*V. Goštautas
District Head
Marijampolė, July 15, 1941*

*Nauja Gdynė, July 19, 1941, no. 8.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 159.*

ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT

Announcement No. 6 from the Head of the District

1. None of the persons of Jewish nationality who have fled from the towns of the Šiauliai district have any right to return to these towns. Those who return will be arrested. The owners and managers of houses who allow Jews returning to the towns to move in will be punished.
2. All the Jews living in the towns of the Šiauliai district, regardless of sex or age, starting July 25 of this year, shall wear a yellow Star of David on the left side of the chest, ten centimeters in diameter. The Jews themselves shall make these badges at their own expense.
Jews seen without this badge or wearing it so that it cannot be seen (under a coat) will be punished.
3. Persons of Jewish nationality are permitted to walk and appear in public places from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. If seen at some other time in the streets or in other public places, they will be punished, except for those who have special permits issued by the head of the local government or the mayor.
4. Persons of Jewish nationality living in the towns must move, from July 25 to August 15 of this year, to the places indicated by the heads of the civil parishes or town mayors.
5. To ensure an orderly resettlement, the local governments shall, together with a representative of the Jewish community, determine the conditions and manner of the resettlement:
This resettlement shall be supervised by local police officers.
Those who fail to resettle by the time indicated will be punished.
6. Persons of Jewish nationality who own real estate in the towns from which they must move must liquidate that property, primarily by arranging for exchange with the Lithuanians who live in those quarters or localities into which the Jews are being moved and who own real estate and want to move out of there.
The liquidation and exchange of real estate shall be supervised by the head of the local civil parish or mayor.
In the case of failure to move or liquidate property by the deadline, all property shall be transferred to the disposal of the local government.
7. Persons of Jewish nationality are prohibited from using persons of other nationalities to serve them.
8. For settlement of the Jews, the local government, after consulting with the local police captain, shall choose a more secluded quarter of the town or some other locality in the civil parish.

9. Jewish personal property left after this resettlement shall be listed and held by the local government until further orders.
10. It is prohibited to appropriate personal property left behind by Jews who have fled. Citizens in whose keeping such property may turn up must present it without delay to the local government.
11. The heads of the civil parishes, the mayors, and the local police shall be responsible for the implementation of this order.

*Šiauliai, the Head of the Šiauliai District
July 23, 1941*

*LCVA, f. 1099, ap. 1, b. 2, l. 989. Printed at a print shop.
Published in MŽL, part 2, pp. 225-226.*

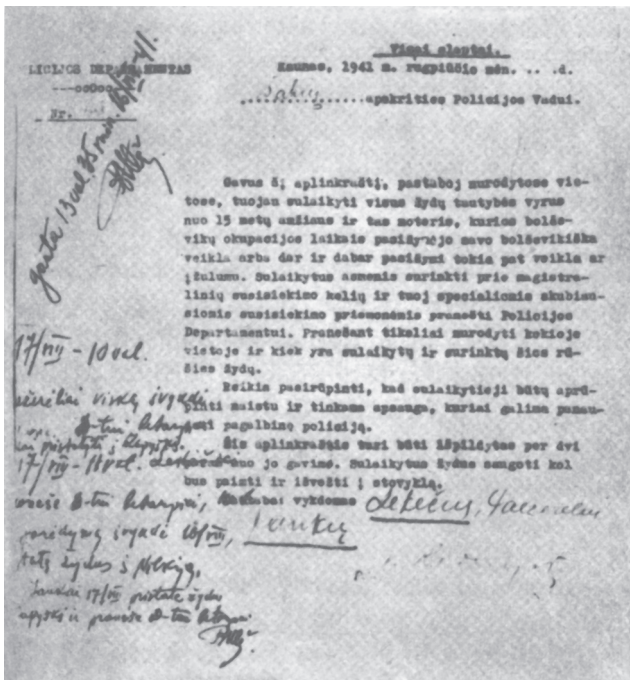
THE ORDER TO ARREST THE JEWS AND HAND THEM OVER TO THE MURDERERS¹

In the summer and autumn of 1941, the Jews were quickly collected and murdered. On August 14, the Lithuanian Police Department sent Secret Directive No. 3 to the police chief of the Kaunas district:

After receiving this directive, you are to immediately apprehend, in the places indicated in the comment, all men of Jewish nationality over the age of fifteen and those women who during the Bolshevik occupation stood out for their Bolshevik activity or even now stand out for such activity or insolence. You are to collect these apprehended persons at highways and immediately inform the Police Department by special means of communication. When informing, you are to precisely indicate in what place and how many Jews of this type have been apprehended and collected.

It is necessary to take care that the detainees are provided with food and properly guarded, for which end the auxiliary police may be used.

This directive must be implemented within two days of its receipt. The apprehended Jews shall be guarded until they are taken and transported to the camp.



This Police Department directive was also sent to the police chiefs of other districts. Police station captains notified the Police Department about their progress in the implementation of this directive.

LCVA, f. R-683, ap. 2, b. 2,
l. 48.
Published in MŽL, part 1,
p. 109.

1 The following selection is excerpted from Arūnas Bubnys, *Vokiečių okupuota Lietuva (1941-1944)* [German-Occupied Lithuania (1941-1944)] (Vilnius: Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo centras, 1998), p. 201.

ALYTUS DISTRICT

District Police Chief
Alytus, August 30, 1941
No. 11 Secret
To the Director of the Police Department

REPORT

While executing Police Department Directive No. 3 (Secret), I am reporting that in the Jieznas police precinct the Jews went into hiding when arrests began after we received Police Department Directive No. 3. Later, some of them returned to the town, but because the police station captain was unable to contact the Prienai subdistrict security police, and the division into subdistricts is not at all finally clear, while the directive had to be executed within two days, further arrests were carried out with the knowledge of the Alytus subdistrict security chief. Altogether, 38 were brought to Alytus by August 31 of this year. Some of the Jews have not yet returned to the town but are living, according to information received, in the forests. The police station captain has been given an order to use the auxiliary police to catch these Jews in the forests and deliver them to Alytus. [...]

S. Krosniūnas

*LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 85. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 87.*

KĖDAINIAI DISTRICT

Captain of the Josvainiai Police Station
Secret No. 2. Secret.
Josvainiai, August 16, 1941
To the Director of the Police Department

REPORT

I am informing you that the Jews of the town and civil parish of Josvainiai have been removed from the Josvainiai civil parish on August 14 of this year to the ghetto in Ariogala in compliance with Order No. 7 of August 9 of this year from the head of the Kėdainiai district.

*J. Čaplikas
Captain of the Josvainiai Police Station*

*LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 30. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 138.*

Kėdainiai, August 17, 1941
Captain of the Police Station in the Town of Kėdainiai
Top Secret
No. 1

To the Police Chief of the Kėdainiai District

REPORT

In execution of Top Secret Directive No. 3 from the Police Department and of the instructions you gave orally, I am reporting that 730 men of Jewish nationality over the age of fifteen and 183 women of Jewish nationality, a total of 913, have been collected from the town and civil parish of Kėdainiai.

All these Jews are being held in the barn and granary of Kėdainiai Cultural-Technical School, the men separately from the women.

They have been placed under guard and are being guarded pending your instructions.

V. Mimavičius
Captain of the Police Station

LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 39. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 110.

Police Chief of the Kėdainiai District
Top Secret
August 17, 1941
No. 1
Kėdainiai
To the Director of the Police Department

REPORT

In reply to Secret Directive No. 3 of this year from the Department, I am reporting that all citizens of Jewish nationality in the Kėdainiai district have been grouped into three subdistricts: in the Kėdainiai subdistrict 913 people, including 183 women; in the Ariogala subdistrict 290 people, including 80 women; and in the Krakės subdistrict 452 people, including 115 women.

Enclosure²: 3 pages.

Kvikutis
Chief of Police

LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 138.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 138.

² This enclosure has not been published.

MARIJAMPOLĖ DISTRICT

Captain of the Balbieriškis Police Station
Top Secret
August 22, 1941
No. 3. Secret.
To the Director of the Police Department

REPORT

In reply to your Secret Directive No. 3, Sir, I am reporting that the Balbieriškis police station arrested and handed over to the Jewish ghetto in Prienai 100 Jewish men and 6 Jewish women.

At the present time, in pursuance of your directive, in the town of Balbieriškis there are only two Jewish men left – the medical doctor Bielocki and the leather factory chemist Yankel Itzikovich, without whom the leather factory cannot operate, and at this time no substitute has been found for him.

*Captain of the Police Station
(signature illegible)*

*LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 77. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 164.*

Police Department
Kaunas

TO OBERSTURMFÜHRER HERR HAMANN³

I am supplementing my letters of August 18, 19, and 20, 1941, to report that the number of Jews arrested in Prienai has increased to 493. Therefore, I am requesting that you give the order to remove the arrested Jews as soon as possible from where they have been collected, because contagious diseases are raging among them. That is already the case in Kaišiadorys.

There is a danger that these contagious diseases will spread.

*Kaunas, August 25, 1941
Reivytis
Director of the Police Department*

*LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 82.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 176*

3 What was meant by handing over the Jews to Hamann's disposition is revealed in Karl Jäger's report, see p. 154.

ŠAKIAI DISTRICT

Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
Top Secret

Police Chief of the Šakiai District
No. 3. Secret.
Šakiai, August 16, 1941

To the Captain of the Lekėčiai Police Station

On the basis of Top Secret Directive No. 3 from the director of the Police Department, I order you to immediately apprehend all men of Jewish nationality over the age of fifteen and those women who during the Bolshevik occupation stood out for their Bolshevik activity or even now stand out for the same activity or insolence.

You are to collect these apprehended persons at highways and immediately inform me by the fastest special means of communication. When informing, you are to precisely indicate in what place and how many Jews of this type have been apprehended and collected.

It is necessary to take care that the detainees are provided with food and properly guarded, for which end the auxiliary police may be used.

The apprehended Jews shall be guarded until they are taken and transported to the camp.

These instructions must be executed immediately and by no later than 4 p.m. on August 17 of this year. Money and valuables, after a list has been made and the signatures of the owners have been taken, shall be sealed and held at the police stations. Other personal and real property must be taken over and held by the local governments.

V. Karalius
District Head

B. Vilčinskas
Chief of Police

LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 56. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 2, pp. 223-224.

Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
Captain of the Lekėčiai Police Station of the Šakiai District Police
Secret
August 17, 1941
No. 8. Secret.
Lekėčiai

To the Director of the Police Department

REPORT

After receiving the instructions from the police chief of the Šakiai district concerning the apprehension of citizens of Jewish nationality, I am reporting that I executed them at 2 p.m. on August 16 of this year.

All the citizens of Jewish nationality who lived in Lekėčiai civil parish were apprehended and handed over to the soldiers of the defense battalion, who were collecting them in Vilkija. Within Lekėčiai civil parish, there had remained a total of nine Jews, who were all apprehended. Now, Lekėčiai civil parish is completely cleansed of Jews.

No valuables of any sort or money was found in their possession. All of their other personal and real property was taken over for keeping by the government of Lekėčiai civil parish.

Enclosure: Directive No. 3 (Secret) from the police chief of the Šakiai district.

*Captain of the Police Station
(signature illegible)*

*LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, b. 2, l. 55. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 110-111.*

Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
Secret – Personal

Head of the Šakiai District
ŠAKIAI, September 16, 1941

No. 3. Secret.

To the Director of the Police Department

In delivering this correspondence, I am reporting to you, Sir, that from this day onward there are no Jews in the district assigned to me. They were dealt with by the local partisans together with the auxiliary police: on September 13, 1941, in Šakiai – 890 persons; on September 16, 1941, in Kudirkos Naumiestis – 650 persons.

Before they were finally dealt with at Herr Gebietskommissar's instructions, the officers authorized by him, with the help of the local police, searched the apartments and persons of all the Jews in Šakiai and Kudirkos Naumiestis and took away the money and other valuables they found. The rest of their personal and real property, pending further instructions from Herr Kommissar, has been handed over to the care and keeping of the local governments.

If ordered to do so, I will later submit lists of the names of the Jews who have been dealt with.

Herr Gebietskommissar has been informed of this.

V. Karalius
Head of the Šakiai District

B. Vilčinskis
Chief of Police

LCVA, f. 683, ap. 2, l. 86. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 111.

ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT

Republic of Lithuania
Ministry of the Interior
The Government of Žeimelis Civil Parish

August 25, 1941

No. 268, Žeimelis

To the Head of the Šiauliai District
To No. 962

It is reported that Žeimelis civil parish had a total of 205 Jews. When the Bolshevik army retreated, 44 Jews fled. On August 21 of this year, 180 were shot.

Now, two Jewish women have fled to this place, and they will be sent to the town of Žagarė.

Head of the Civil Parish (signature)
Secretary

Published in Yahadut Lita, vol. 4, p. 48.

AND IN VARÈNA THE POLICE FILED A COMPLAINT AGAINST THE PRIEST

Captain of the Varèna I Police Station of the Alytus District Police

Secret

September 14, 1941

No. 7

To the Police Chief of the Alytus District

REPORT

I am reporting to you, Sir, that on September 14 of this year the parish priest of Varèna I, Jonas Gylys, preached a sermon in church against the interests of the State. Because this was a feast day in Varèna I, there were many people in the church. In his sermon Fr. Gylys called Lithuanian officials executioners, saying: "Uniformed Lithuanians beat innocent people, shoved old people and pregnant women, and shed innocent blood in the Varèna Forest. They suffered like Christ from Judases. Moreover, their blood had not yet dried, and they were already plundering their property." As can be seen, in preaching this sermon the priest intended to intercede for the Jews who were liquidated on September 10 of this year.

I will add to this that Fr. Gylys appealed to me on September 9 of this year, requesting permission to go to the Jews being held in the town of Varèna I to speak with them. I did not permit the priest to do so. He went to the synagogue without my permission and began to give a speech, comforting them, and said: "Be brave, and in your last hour at least utter the name of Christ." The priest was immediately asked to leave the synagogue and was not allowed to speak further. I report this for your information, Sir.

*J. Kvaraciejus
Captain of the Police Station*

*LCVA, f. 1436, ap. 1, b. 30, l. 363. Original. Manuscript.
Published in MŽL, part 2, pp. 113-114.*

[Resolution]

To the Captain of the District Security Police

September 20, 1941

S. Krosniūnas⁴

As can be seen from the document below, even the head of the district was not indifferent to this complaint from the captain of the police station.

September 23, 1941

No. 2579

Secret

To the Commissar of the Vilnius District

Via the Head of the Vilnius Region

Re: Fr. Gyls, parish priest of Varėna I.

Grounds: Letter No. 7 from the captain of the Varėna police station.

Enclosure: 1 page.

I am submitting for instructions a copy of Letter No. 7 of September 14, 1941, concerning the behavior of Fr. Gyls, parish priest of Varėna I, and his intercession for the Jews.

*St. Maliauskas
Head of the District*

*LCVA, f. 1436, ap. 1, b. 30, l. 362. Copy.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 114.*

⁴ Police chief of the Alytus district.

JEWISH PROPERTY, MONEY, AND VALUABLES WERE EXPROPRIATED FOR THE USE OF THE REICH

This work was performed by the police and local governments. The occupational authorities followed their activities and threatened harsh punishments for abuses.

STATEMENT OF THE RECEIPT AND DISPOSITION OF MONEY RECEIVED FROM THE CIVIL PARISHES OF THE VILNIUS DISTRICT FROM THE SALE OF JEWISH FURNITURE AND OTHER PROPERTY

Line No.	Date of Receipt	From Whom Received	Amount in Reichsmarks
1.	Oct. 20, 1941	Nemenčinė Civil Parish	1,500.00
2.	Oct. 20, 1941	Riešė Civil Parish	4,800.00
3.	Oct. 20, 1941	Jašiūnai Civil Parish	3,898.88
4.	Nov. 3, 1941	Captain, Šumskas Police Station	268.76
5.	Nov. 3, 1941	Captain, Šumskas Police Station	54.37
6.	Nov. 6, 1941	Captain, Šumskas Police Station	21.94
7.	Nov. 7, 1941	Šumskas Civil Parish	609.00
8.	Nov. 7, 1941	Rudamina Civil Parish	1,003.90
9.	Nov. 11, 1941	Maišiogala Civil Parish	4,753.90
10.	Nov. 13, 1941	Mayor, Naujoji Vilnia	3,342.84
11.	Nov. 13, 1941		150.00
12.	Nov. 14, 1941	Paberžė Civil Parish	2,437.20
13.	Nov. 18, 1941	Mickūnai Civil Parish	133.08
14.	Nov. 29, 1941	Šumskas Civil Parish	2,859.82
15.	Dec. 5, 1941	Nemenčinė Civil Parish	710.30
16.	Dec. 6, 1941	Mayor, Naujoji Vilnia	1,261.10
17.	Dec. 9, 1941	Jašiūnai Civil Parish	1,325.00
18.	Dec. 11, 1941	Mayor, Naujoji Vilnia	350.51
19.	Dec. 12, 1941	Captain, Turgeliai Police Station	2,508.00
20.	Dec. 16, 1941	Captain, Šumskas Police Station	279.00
21.	Dec. 16, 1941	Captain, Rudamina Police Station	4,187.60
22.	Dec. 16, 1941	Captain, Jašiūnai Police Station	771.40
23.	Dec. 16, 1941	Captain, Turgeliai Police Station	3.82
24.	Jan. 12, 1942	Šumskas Civil Parish	400.00
25.	Jan. 16, 1942	Nemenčinė Civil Parish	380.00
26.	Jan. 21, 1942	Turgeliai Civil Parish	1,875.00
27.	Jan. 28, 1942	Captain, Nemenčinė Police Station	187.12

28.	Feb. 10, 1942	Jašiūnai Civil Parish	1,277.00
29.	Feb. 12, 1942	Mayor, Naujoji Vilnia	83.90
30.	Feb. 21, 1942	Nemenčinė Civil Parish	1,600.00
31.	Feb. 23, 1942	Turgeliai Civil Parish	5,466.50
32.	Feb. 25, 1942	Mayor, Naujoji Vilnia	232.75
33.	Feb. 25, 1942	Mickūnai Civil Parish	829.55
	Total:		RM 49,562.24

Expenditures

			RM
1.	Paid	Linās Factory of Naujoji Vilnia Bank of Lithuania receipt no. 279520 of February 25, 1942	77.03
2.	"	Carrier Šečyla for bringing fur coats to Gebietskommissar's office bill of November 16	5.00
3.	"	Vilnius District Gebietskommissar's cash office receipt of December 23, 1941	31,602.00
4.	"	Bank of Lithuania – Credit Bank to current account of Vilnius District Gebietskommissar receipt of February 26, 1942	12,195.62
		Total expenditures RM	43,879.65
		Balance	5,682.59

I, Marcelė Seibutienė, manager of the economic department of the office of the head of the Vilnius district, am transferring to the office accountant the balance of the money collected from the sale of Jewish furniture in the amount of five thousand six hundred eighty-two Reichsmarks and 59 Pfennigs as well as the receipts and other documents in support of this statement.

*Received by Jonas Paškevičius
Transferred by M. Seibutienė*

Note: The items received – 1 gold ring, 1 watch, 5 silver teaspoons, 1 old shaver, and 2 leather wallets – were handed over to the Gebietskommissar of the Vilnius district on March 10, 1942.

Receipt for these items received by J. Paškevičius

*Br. Draugelis
Head of the Vilnius District*

*LCVA, f. 685, ap. 4, b. 29, l. 3. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, pp. 212-214.*

(December 17, 1942)

Vilnius City Gebietskommissar

GOLD ARTICLES FROM THE FORMER PROPERTY
OF THE JEWS OF THE CITY OF VILNIUS

A List of the Articles in Box No. 4¹

1.	wedding rings	516	1.	136 coins	gold 5-rouble
2.	other rings	175	2.	90 coins	gold 10-rouble
3.	gold scrap	456 grams	3.	1 coin	gold 15-rouble
4.	gold plates	10	4.	1 coin	gold 25-rouble
5.	gold watches	102	5.	16 coins	US gold 20-dollar
6.	gold watch frames	16	6.	2 coins	US gold 10-dollar
7.	gold watch bracelets	27	7.	1 coin	US gold 5-dollar
8.	gold watch chains	15	8.	1 coin	Italian gold 10-lira
9.	gold earrings	176 pairs	9.	1 coin	French gold 20- franc
10.	gold brooches	38	10.	2 coins	English shillings
11.	gold neck and watch chains	38	11.	1 coin	English shilling
12.	gold buttons for shirts	20	12.	1 coin	Austrian ducat
13.	gold watches with diamonds	3			
14.	gold rings with precious stones	39			
15.	gold medallions	25			

Paper Money

1.	US dollars	1214
2.	zloty	7262
3.	litai	30
4.	francs	5
5.	Canadian dollars	11
6.	South African pounds	36
7.	English pounds	35
8.	Palestinian pounds	7

*LCVA, f. 614, ap. 1, b. 388, l. 98. Translated from a German copy.
Published in MŽL, d. 1, pp. 157-158.*

¹ This list, together with these articles, was sent to the financial department of the Generalkommissar in Kaunas.

Šiauliai District Board
November 5, 1941
No. 1479

To the Heads of Civil Parishes
and the Mayors of Towns

The Gebietskommissar ordered that the money received from the sale of Jewish articles be deposited by November 15 in the Gebietskommissar's special I account in the Reich Credit Bank in Šiauliai. Please report to me by that date how much money has been deposited in this I account or in the bank of the district board.

M. Leonauskienė
On behalf of the property managers

LCVA, f. 1624, ap. 1, b. 5, l. 241.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 227.

Ministry of the Interior
Head of the Tauragė District
Tauragė, August 7, 1941
No. 254

To the Commanders of the National Defense Squads

Warnings have been received from the local military commandant concerning the impermissible taking – stealing, to put it bluntly – of property from the Jews. In some places, valuables were taken: watches, rings, bracelets, and the like. And other things. Where these things are put and what they are used for is not known. When such incidents are investigated, it turns out that these excesses were committed by officers of the defense squads because such things cannot be done without the knowledge of the police.

Therefore, I am strictly warning all the commanders of the defense squads....

VI. Mylimas
Head of the District

Baltrūnas
Secretary

LCVA, f. 1476, ap. 1, b. 3, l. 137. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 2, pp. 276-277.

Republic of Lithuania
Ministry of the Interior

Ukmergė District
Chief of the State Security Police

Tauragė, August 29, 1941
No. 467

To All Captains of Police Stations
and Heads of Civil Parishes

At the instructions of the German military commandant, upon agreement between the captain of the police station and the head of the civil parish, I request that all remaining Jewish personal property be collected in one place in a quick and orderly fashion, with two copies made of a list of articles, and that this property be strictly guarded against appropriation and disappearance until further instructions. One copy of the list of articles is to be promptly delivered to me. Gold, silver, money, rings, currency of various countries, watches, and other valuables are to be delivered to me together with a list. If these articles are appropriated or disappear, the captains of the police stations and the heads of the civil parishes shall be responsible under the laws that are currently in force.

A. Braziukaitis
Head of the District

LCVA, f. 1175, ap. 1, b. 2, l. 31. Printed by hectograph.
Published in MŽL, part 2, p. 296.

THE FATE OF MIXED FAMILIES

The documents given below show once again how brutally, with what tenacity the Nazis and their henchmen implemented their racist attitudes.

Latušinskis Petras

Half-Jew, born on December 18, 1920, in Vilnius, arrested on December 14, 1941, by the police in Žiežmariai and sent to the Lukiškės prison.

Latušinskis was specially dealt with on March 11, 1942.

Registration No. 51/42-L.33 Division II, Subdivision B.

*LCVA, f. 1673, ap. 1, b. 1888. Translated from the German original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 118.*

Timent Hedwig Erna

Maiden name Starke, born on February 14, 1900, in Dresden, lived in Vilnius on Savičius St. No. 12-8. Registration No. 854/42, sl. – S/A st. 21-Division II, Subdivision B.

[...]

June 23, 1942 Gf.

Starke was married to a Jew, Timent, and exiled from Germany. In August 1941, she submitted a request for a divorce to the Gebietskommissar of the city of Vilnius and asked to be allowed to return to the Reich. After the divorce, she was sent to the Reich with a transport carrying workers. At the demand of the Gebietskommissar, both of her children – a boy of thirteen and a girl of nine – were treated like Jews, and they were sent to the camp in Paneriai.

*LCVA, f. 1673, ap. 1, b. 3556. Translated from the German original.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 119.*

Secret

Secret Order No. 28

from the Director of the Security Department

Kaunas, November 4, 1942

Commander of the Security Police

and of the Security Service in Lithuania II B-1858/42

To the Lithuanian Department in Kaunas
of the Security Police and Security Service Commander for Lithuania

RE: THE REGISTRATION OF JEWISH MIXED FAMILIES

I request that by December 31, 1942, a list be made of the names of all the Jewish mixed families living in Lithuania and that it be sent to me. This registration shall be performed by the Lithuanian security police. The

German security police divisions in Vilnius, Šiauliai, and Panevėžys are to receive copies of the lists of the families living within their territory from the Lithuanian security police.

When making these lists, follow the following rules: include in the lists all mixed families in which

- a) the husband is a Jew, and the wife is an Aryan,
- b) the husband is an Aryan, and the wife is a Jew.

The children from these marriages shall also be entered in these lists. [...]

The family member of Aryan origin must... prove his/her origin by providing his/her birth certificate, his/her marriage certificate, and his/her parents' marriage certificate, from which the origin of his/her grandparents may also be determined. [...]

This is to be carried out by the deadline given.

Schmitz
SS Hauptsturmführer

MIXED FAMILIES THAT LIVE IN THE CITY OF ŠIAULIAI²

1. Kantoravich, a physician, a Jew, his wife a German, two children – the son works as an interpreter at the Gubernija Brewery, the daughter is married in Kaunas.
2. Žilinskis family, typing bureau, the husband a Lithuanian, the wife a Jew, two children.
3. Wolfberg,³ an office worker, a Jew, his wife a Lithuanian, two children. In March 1942, was arrested and put in prison.
4. Rose,⁴ a farm worker, a Jew, his wife a Lithuanian, one child. In December 1941, was arrested and put in prison.
5. Mockus, a postal worker, the husband a Lithuanian, the wife a Jew.
6. Norkus, a musician, the husband a Lithuanian, the wife a Jew, one child.
7. Barilka, a surveyor, a Jew, his wife a Lithuanian.
8. Frankas, a Lithuanian military officer, his wife a Jew, one daughter.

*LCVA, f. 1399, ap. 1, b. 41, l. 3. Translated from a German copy.
Published in MŽL, part 1, p. 121.*

2 In March 1944, this information was sent by the Šiauliai division of the Lithuanian security police to the commander of the German security police and security service in Lithuania.

3 On March 4, 1944, the Šiauliai division of the Lithuanian security police repeatedly reported to the commander of the German security police and security service in Lithuania that Wolfberg and Rose had been executed during the first year of the occupation (LCVA, f. 1399, ap. 1, b. 41, l. 6.).

4 See note 3 above.

State Security and Criminal Police
Panevėžys District

Secret – Dated Material
November 24, 1941

No. 1716

To the Chiefs of all Subdistricts
of the Security Police

Information has been received that persons of Jewish nationality have survived and live freely after crossing over from the Israelite to the Catholic or other Christian faiths and marrying persons of other nationalities. However, crossover by these persons to another faith in no way changes their Jewish race and nationality.

I order that there be a thorough ascertainment within the subdistrict of all persons mentioned here as being of the Jewish race or having Jewish blood in them.

I order that all persons of the Jewish race (no matter when or to what faith they have crossed over, as long as they were born of Jewish parents) and their children be marched by December 7 to the Panevėžys prison, from where they will be transferred for settlement to the Jewish ghetto.

If the second half of a Jewish race married couple (husband or wife), who is not of Jewish blood, should not want to be separated, those persons may go, together with their Jewish race families, to the prison – and later, to the ghetto.

A. Liepa
Head of the District

LCVA, f. 650, ap. 1, b. 13, l. 132. Original.
Published in MŽL, part 2, pp. 189-190.

FROM THE LITHUANIAN PRESS ABOUT THE JEWS DURING THE NAZI OCCUPATION 1941–1942¹

Algis Kasparavičius

...in late June and in July of 1941, publication of the new Lithuanian newspapers (*Į laisvę* in Kaunas, *Naujoji Lietuva* in Vilnius, *Tėvynė* in Šiauliai, *Išlaisvintas panevėžietis* in Panevėžys, *Nauja gadynė* in Marijampolė, *Žemaičių žemė* in Telšiai, and *Naujosios Biržų žinios* in Biržai) was begun not by the Nazi occupational government but by activists and supporters of the LAF (Lithuanian Activist Front) and the LNP (Lithuanian Nationalist Party), which was only then being formed. These people were also the editors of these newspapers.

And the degree of anti-Semitism in these newspapers depended only on the will of these editors and, in part, on that of the LAF and LNP leaders standing behind them. We say 'degree' because it is obvious that in the Eastern space occupied by the Third Reich the legal press could not have been philo-Semitic. However, it could probably have barely mentioned the Jews, as was done, for example, by the editor of the newspaper published in Panevėžys.²

Moreover, at least in late June and early July, the Germans were still only setting up their administration in Lithuania, and control was not very effective. Nevertheless, both the Kaunas daily *Į laisvę*, whose first issue is dated June 24, 1941, and the Vilnius paper *Naujoji Lietuva*, which began publication on June 29, immediately attacked the Jews with abandon, identifying all of them with the Bolsheviks.

In the first issue of *Į laisvę*, the editorial "Priespaudą numetant" wrote thus about the Jews: "The Jewish accomplices of the Bolsheviks are also fleeing headlong, for whom Communism was the best means to exploit others and to rule, because the Bolsheviks and the Jews are one and the same inseparable thing."³ A few days later, the editorial in *Į laisvę* attacked the Jews even more violently, accusing them not only of collaborating with the Bolshevik government but also of exploiting the Lithuanians in the more distant past. "We have risen to the struggle with our enemies, our Russian oppressors, and with the despicable Jews, parasites who have long sapped our country. They have eaten the richest morsels; they have built

1 Algis Kasparavičius, from a paper read on December 4, 1996, at the scholarly conference *Judaica*, held at Vilnius University.

2 The name of this newspaper changed twice in 1941. At first, it was called *Išlaisvintas panevėžietis*, later – *Panevėžietis*, and at the end of the year – *Panevėžio apygardos balsas*. However, the editor remained the same person.

3 "Priespaudą numetant" [Throwing Off Oppression], *Į laisvę* (June 24, 1941).

themselves mansions; today, in many places they have killed us. Their hour has also struck, and a just law shall rein in their rampages and eliminate their insatiable appetites.”⁴

Thus, all Jews were evil – both the Communists and the capitalists as well as the others. Such a view was based on the authority of Adolf Hitler himself. By the end of June, *Į laisvę* had already managed to publish short excerpts from *Mein Kampf*, full of brutal anti-Semitic attacks.⁵ It is unlikely that the occupational authorities had forced this newspaper to print these texts. If political considerations demanded obeisance to Hitler, it was not difficult to select excerpts from *Mein Kampf* devoted to other themes, in which the Jews were not mentioned.

Hostility toward the Jews was expressed in almost every issue of *Į laisvę*, often in articles with characteristic titles. On July 5 *Į laisvę* wrote: “The past and present ‘meritorious service’ of the Jews to our economic life, our national endeavors, and our national morality are so marked that they alone suffice, in the name of just compensation, to ship all the Jews out of Lithuania to Birobidzhan or to march them to the Lublin ghetto, where these patent exploiters would eat bread earned by the bloody sweat of their brows.”⁶

The Jews as a whole had to answer for the actions and crimes of the Communist government, and they were threatened with revenge:

For their efforts to defile Lithuanian national culture, for the blood of partisans ambushed and struck down, for those shot and those tortured in prison, for the suffering and death of thousands exiled, the Jews of Lithuania must answer. It is not enough to eliminate them from our national life, but until their fate is finally determined, they – so that they may not eat the bread of our country for free – must be driven without delay into labor battalions to do public work....⁷

In the article “Žydai sutvarkyti” [The Jews Have Been Dealt With] this newspaper welcomed the decrees of the Kaunas District Nazi Commissar SA Oberführer Lentzen concerning discrimination against the Jews, the wearing of the Star of David, and the application of other humiliating restrictions: “Dealing with the Jews this way seems, to us, intoxicating and new. After being exploited by the Jews for so long, we shall finally see our town free of Jews, our commerce free of Jewish hucksters, and we shall be able to sell without our prices being bargained down.”⁸ Interestingly,

4 “Pagaliau...” [Finally...], *Į laisvę* (June 27, 1941).

5 “Mūsų kova su pasauliniu priešu: Adolfo Hitlerio mintys iš *Mein Kampf*” [Our Struggle With a Worldwide Enemy: Adolf Hitler’s Thoughts From *Mein Kampf*], *Į laisvę* (June 28, 1941); “Bolševikinis žydinis tautų nuodijimas: Mintys iš *Mein Kampf*” [The Bolshevik-Jewish Poisoning of Nations: Thoughts From *Mein Kampf*], *Į laisvę* (June 30, 1941).

6 “Apvalyti lietuvių tautą nuo grybo” [To Cleanse the Lithuanian Nation of a Fungus], *Į laisvę* (July 5, 1941).

7 Loc. cit.

8 “Žydai sutvarkyti,” *Į laisvę* (August 4, 1941).

this article did not even mention Jewish collaboration with the Bolshevik government.

That omission was no accident. The accents of extreme anti-Semitism had changed: the greatest crime of the Jews was no longer proclaimed to be collaboration with the Bolsheviks but the very fact that they were Jews, that they were different. [...] This is the title of... an anti-Semitic article published in August 1941: "Tauta be šaknų"⁹ [A Nation Without Roots].

[...]

In hostility toward the Jews, *Į laisvę* was surpassed by the Vilnius daily newspaper *Naujoji Lietuva*. In its first issue, an appeal published by the Vilnius district leadership of the Lithuanian Activists maintained that "the Jews, by parasitically penetrating our nation, have always brought it misfortune" and sought to convince readers that the Jews not only served the Bolsheviks but also "called the Jewish Communism of Moscow to their aid in order to completely destroy our nation."¹⁰ We already know the conclusion: "There is no room for the Jews in Lithuania."

This Vilnius newspaper proclaimed that in 1940-1941 Lithuania had been ruled by "Jews and Bolsheviks" and that the Moscow leadership, under the direction of Jews (Beria, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, and other members of the "Supreme Soviet of the International Kahal"), had been preparing to kill off our nation.¹¹ Especially aggressive was the editorial "Lietuva be žydų"¹² [Lithuania Without Jews].

The specific emphasis of the anti-Semitism in *Naujoji Lietuva* lay in urging Lithuanians not to help the Jews, who were forbidden to visit public places, including stores. Lithuanians who bought food products for Jewish families were labeled "Jew-servants" by this newspaper, which asked that they be immediately reported to the editorial office [of *Naujoji Lietuva* – A. K.] and other relevant institutions and that the names of such persons be publicly announced.¹³ [...]

The most anti-Semitic newspaper was *Tėvynė*, published in Šiauliai. The titles of its articles speak for themselves: "Žydų klausimas turėtų būti išspręstas iš esmės" [The Jewish Question Needs a Radical Solution], "Užteks švelnumo su žydais" [Enough Pampering of the Jews], "Žydai mums duobę kasė" [The Jews Were Digging Our Grave], and so on.¹⁴ [...]

9 *Į laisvę* (August 12, 1941).

10 See *Naujoji Lietuva* (June 29, 1941).

11 Vilya K., "Ką sako žuvusiųjų vardai?" [What Do the Names of Those Who Have Perished Say to Us?], *Naujoji Lietuva* (June 29, 1941).

12 *Naujoji Lietuva* (July 4, 1941).

13 V-la, "Nebūsime žydų vergai" [We Shall Not Be the Slaves of the Jews], *Naujoji Lietuva* (July 5, 1941).

14 See *Tėvynė* (July 13, 1941; July 27, 1941; September 7, 1941). Even today, after more than half a century, the following exhortation inspires horror: "Lithuanians! Once and for all cleanse the sacred land of Lithuania of the treacherous and sadistic Jews!" See "Kartą visiems laikams" [Once and for All], *Tėvynė* (July 13, 1941).

Tėvynė stood out at that time for the sheer quantity of its anti-Semitic themes, which were “treated” in all their aspects. Thus, in late August 1941 this newspaper announced: “The Talmud tells Jews to hate Christians. The Jews compare Christians to beasts. As understood by the Jews, love for one’s neighbor means hatred for Christians.”¹⁵ In early September, *Tėvynė* published an article entitled “Talmudo paslaptys. Ritualinės žmogžudystės egzistuoja”¹⁶ [The Secrets of the Talmud. Ritual Killings Do Exist] and, in October, an entire series with the title “Žydų siekimas valdyti pasaulį”¹⁷ [The Jewish Ambition to Rule the World]. It was precisely in September and October that in the city and district of Šiauliai Einsatzkommando 3 of the Reich Security Service, with the collaboration of the local police, killed almost all the Jews.

Tėvynė in 1941 could be compared to the Nazi weekly *Der Stürmer*, only the Šiauliai newspaper did not contain any pornography. The anti-Semitic fury of *Tėvynė* was by no means due to pressure from the occupational authorities. It was primarily determined by the special hostility of its editor, Simas Miglinas, toward the Jews. In no other way is it possible to explain the fact that during that same 1941 in the newspaper *Žemaičių žemė*, published in Telšiai, fewer anti-Semitic attacks occurred,¹⁸ in *Naujoji gadyne* of Marijampolė and in *Naujosios Biržų žinios* of Biržai they were rare, and the newspaper in Panevėžys only hinted at “Jewish Bolshevism” and other similar catch phrases of that time.

Of course, it was not the degree of anti-Semitism in Lithuanian newspapers that determined where more Jews were killed sooner. However, the incitement of anti-Semitic passions created a favorable psychological background for genocide by forming the image of Jews and the Lithuanian nation as deadly enemies. Thus, these publications justified and even encouraged the Lithuanian murderers who collaborated with the Nazis and paralyzed efforts to help the suffering Jews who were being killed. [...]

From the Note Submitted by the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania to the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania:

“The anti-Jewish attitudes incited by the LAF press impelled some Lithuanians to participate in the Jewish Holocaust or to help implement the policy of discrimination against the Jews.”¹⁹

15 See *Tėvynė* (August 24, 1941).

16 See *Tėvynė* (September 7, 1941).

17 See *Tėvynė* (October 3, 1941; October 6, 1941; October 13, 1941; October 17, 1941; October 20, 1941; October 24, 1941).

18 However, when it did publish anti-Semitic articles, their titles were sufficiently aggressive. For example: “Atskirkime šiukšles iš savo tarpo” [Let Us Expel the Rubbish From Our Midst], *Žemaičių žemė* (August 9, 1941); “Nepakeliui su mūsų tautos nedraugais” [At Odds With the Enemies of Our Nation], *Žemaičių žemė* (August 23, 1941); “Kodėl atšaukėme žydams savo svetingumą?” [Why Have We Revoked Our Hospitality From the Jews?], *Žemaičių žemė* (September 6, 1941).

19 *Akiračiai*, 2000, no.9.



**THE LITHUANIAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH
AND THE SHOAH IN
LITHUANIA**

THE POSITION OF THE HIERARCHY OF THE LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH REGARDING THE JEWS¹

This question is difficult to deal with because little archival material has survived. We will use a diary kept in 1941 by Metropolitan Archbishop Juozapas Skvireckas (the part of this manuscript held at the Curia Archives of the Archdiocese of Kaunas),² *Lietuvos Vyskupų konferencijos protokolai* [The Minutes of the Lithuanian Bishops' Conference] (published by émigrés), and several other documents.

Skvireckas' diary reveals not only the Archbishop's own view of the Jews but also, in part, that of those people with whom he associated. It also generally reflects the events and moods in Kaunas at the beginning of the war between Germany and the USSR. Let us analyze these records in chronological order.

Skvireckas' first diary entry on this subject is dated June 24, 1941. The Archbishop was informed by telephone that in Kaunas "an exchange of fire is taking place between Riflemen and all sorts of Bolsheviks and Jews."³ Several paragraphs later, on the same day, he returned once more to the Jews:

"In Kaunas, allegedly, very many Jews are being arrested. Crowds of them are being driven along the streets. German soldiers are driving them. A rather precise means has been found to sort them out. First of all, they are arresting all those Jews who under the Bolsheviks set themselves up in Lithuanian... institutions...."⁴

On June 25, i.e. on the day when regular units of the German Army reached Kaunas, the Archbishop recorded in his diary:

"The Jews reportedly continue to be apprehended and arrested.... Very many Jews were driven to City Hall. What their fate will be is not entirely clear. Some people think that at least some of them are being shot. A threat is being announced over the radio that for one German a hundred Jews will be shot."⁵

And further:

"News is coming from Kaunas that a real battle is going on there between the Jews and the Lithuanians and Germans. The Jews are attacking madly, shooting from houses, trying to kill as many as possible. A good number of

1 From Valentinas Brandišauskas' article "Holokaustas Lietuvoje: istoriografinė situacija ir pagrindinės problemos" [The Holocaust in Lithuania: The Historiographic Situation and the Main Problems], in *Lietuvos katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis* [Yearbook of the Lithuanian Catholic Academy of Science], vol. 14 (Vilnius, 1999), pp. 140-147.

2 Excerpts from this diary have already been published in *MŽL*, part I, pp. 51-53.

3 Juozapas Skvireckas' diary, entry of June 24, 1941, Lithuanian National Museum (LNM), D-41, l. 229.

4 *Ibid.*, l. 232.

5 *Ibid.*, entry of June 25, 1941, l. 232-233.

Lithuanian partisans, fighting against the Jews, have already fallen. Today, sixty persons have been buried in coffins, not counting those – there must be unidentified casualties – who have been buried in a common grave. Many Jews are being arrested and led in groups to be shot. Before being shot, they are being forced to dig their own graves.”⁶

Barely a couple of days later, we find another entry:

“The battle against the Jews is continuing. The Jews have not stopped their attacks. All the houses are being searched, and groups of criminals are being led to be shot. The following episode is being mentioned in Kaunas: a Jewish nurse was fatally shot while walking with a briefcase. The briefcase was inspected, and some bullets and grenades were found inside. Somebody there saw with his own eyes three or four Jewish women arrested in Šilainiai, disguised as nuns so that they would not be recognized but carrying ammunition. All the streets are being searched; today, Valančius Street was surrounded. The scenes of execution are very painful, and our partisans can hardly bear them. They are shooting entire families, young and old. But also, their crimes are said to be inhuman: lists were being made and were completed of Lithuanians who were to be shot or killed in other ways. Sadism is quite common among the Jews.”⁷

It is obvious that so far we are finding more descriptions of events and reported commentaries on them than clear-cut assessments by the Archbishop himself. These are still being avoided, but one can already discern that they will not be favorable to the Jews: attempts are being made to put the Jews and the Bolsheviks in the same ranks, and the Jews are being blamed for the deaths of Lithuanian partisans. Interesting, too, is another detail, judging from which the concept of citizenship had not yet become part of Skvireckas’ thinking. To paraphrase the Archbishop’s thought, positions at government institutions should be reserved not for citizens but for fellow Lithuanians: there should not be any room there for Jews.

On June 28, Skvireckas was visited by the regiment doctor Balys Matulionis and the priest Simonas Morkūnas. They “sought approval of an action to intercede for the Jews with powerful persons.” They wanted the Archbishop to intercede for the Jews and speak with the Kaunas Commandant, Jurgis Bobelis, or the partisans’ Chief of Staff. But instead of himself, he suggested his assistant, the prelate Kazimieras Šaulys.⁸ As Skvireckas later learned from the prelate, “intervention concerning the massacre of the Jews did not, perhaps, find great support, but we did what our humanity demanded.”⁹

6 Ibid., l. 234.

7 Ibid., entry of June 27, 1941, l. 234-235.

8 Ibid., entry of June 28, 1941, l. 236.

9 Ibid., entry of July 1, 1941, l. 239.

After the war began, publication began in Kaunas of the daily newspaper *Į laisvę*.¹⁰ Its early issues¹¹ reprinted many of Adolf Hitler's ideas. Nor did the Archbishop remain indifferent to them. We read in his diary:

"Bolševikinis žydinis tautų nuodijimas. *Mein Kampf* mintys" [The Bolshevik-Jewish Poisoning of Nations: Thoughts From *Mein Kampf*] deserves attention. These thoughts about the Jews are really interesting. There really is a lot of truth in the responses. [...] They [these thoughts – V. B.] attest, nevertheless, that **Hitler is not only an enemy of the Jews but also a very right-thinking man** [emphasis added – J. L.]. For there is plenty of information about the massacres perpetrated by the Bolsheviks and the Jews."¹²

Further on, the text of this diary makes clear that Skvireckas was a proponent of collective responsibility. The Jews of Kaunas, upon learning that there were plans to resettle them in Vilijampolė, visited Bishop Vincentas Brizgys. He explained that "the Jews probably know what the attitude of the Catholic clergy is toward the Jews, but if they tried to publicly stand up for the Jews now, they might be lynched themselves. It is obvious," the Archbishop concludes, "that **not all Jews are guilty, but the guilty ones have provoked the hatred of Lithuanian society for all Jews in general**" [emphasis added – J. L.]."¹³

Some of Skvireckas' entries confirm that the then (and today still) popular stereotype "Jew = Communist" was not foreign to him. We will cite a couple of diary entries that confirm his attitude: when copying excerpts from the above-mentioned newspaper *Į laisvę*, the Archbishop especially stressed the nationality of some current or former politicians: "Litvinov – the former Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs – a Jew whose real name is Finkelstein"; "there is an interesting photo in *Į laisvę*. It shows the Soviet Ambassador Maisky (a Jew) visiting St. Paul's Cathedral."¹⁴

Compassion for the Jews can be sensed in only one passage in this diary, namely, when the subject is the order issued by the Commandant of Kaunas and the Mayor of Kaunas on July 10, 1941.¹⁵ Skvireckas called it "horrible."¹⁶

Further on in the text of this diary, which ends with an entry made on August 13, 1941, there is almost nothing about the Jews (except for several official news items from *Į laisvę* about them). However, even the excerpts

10 The name *Į laisvę* [Toward Freedom] was chosen to symbolize that complete freedom had not yet come.

11 See *Į laisvę*, no. 5 (June 28, 1941) and no. 6 (June 30, 1941).

12 Juozapas Skvireckas' diary, entry of June 30, 1941, l. 238.

13 Ibid., entry of July 11, 1941, l. 249.

14 Ibid., entries of July 10 and 11, 1941, l. 247, 248.

15 This order stated that from July 12 onward all Jews had to wear a distinctive symbol and that between July 15 and August 15 all of them had to resettle in Vilijampolė. It also regulated the procedure for this resettlement, etc.

16 Juozapas Skvireckas' diary, entry of July 11, 1941, l. 250.

quoted here allow us to maintain that the rather deeply rooted stereotypes of that time were not foreign to Skvireckas' thinking: Jews, Bolsheviks, and criminals are set alongside one another, and the main enemy of the Lithuanian partisans during the early days of the war is not, it appears, the retreating Red Army but the Jews. And while the impressions of the first week of the war are not firsthand¹⁷ (they should rather be considered a diary record of telephone conversations and later reflections), they still provide a basis for speaking about a certain type of stereotypical thinking: the Jews are sadistic, they were the ones who drew up the lists of Lithuanians to be shot, etc.

Skvireckas' position on the Jews – as well as that of the Church hierarchy – is made even clearer by the Archbishop's comments entitled *Žydų reikalai* [On the Jewish Issue]. During the period in which the Provisional Government (PG) was in existence, it also befell Skvireckas, accompanied by the prelate K. Šaulys and the priest Stanislovas Ūsorius, to visit Generalkommissar Adrian von Renteln (it was not possible to determine the precise date). Skvireckas wrote:

“Actually, the former Prime Minister of the independent Provisional Government had come to propose some sort of action concerning the killing of the Jews. You see, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Germans want to shift all the blame for the killing of the Jews onto the Lithuanians themselves, onto the Lithuanian partisans. The partisans are supposedly so full of rage and so set against the Jews that they themselves are straining to shoot the Jews and even give their signatures that they are doing so voluntarily. The Germans are filming the shooting of the Jews, and these films feature the Lithuanian Yellows, our partisans with yellow piping on their uniforms. [...] Dr. A. [probably the PG Prime Minister Juozas Ambrazevičius – V. B.] himself saw... one such execution, in which Lithuanians really did also participate, perhaps after getting a lot of beer to drink and mixed with vodka. These executions take place without any trial, at orders from who knows whom. When the war is over, and if the English win by only a little, the Lithuanians may be presented with a very large bill to pay for this massacre, for they will not have any proof that they are not the ones who did this and that they are not to blame; so, a protest should be signed against this massacre, one which would be signed by the most eminent people in Lithuania, like the former President of Lithuania Dr. Grinius and me as Archbishop of Kaunas....”¹⁸

17 During the first few days of the war, Skvireckas was not in Kaunas but in Linkuvėlė [later – Linkuva, now – part of the city of Kaunas – V. B.] because he lacked “suitable means of transportation” to return to Kaunas. Moreover, “there was still the fear that some enraged, lurking Jew might fire a shot from somewhere.” See Skvireckas' diary, entry of June 29, 1941, l. 237.

18 Part of Juozapas Skvireckas' manuscript, *Žydų reikalai*, in *KAKA* (Curia Archives of the Archdiocese of Kaunas), b. 175, l. 181.

In reply to this proposal, Skvireckas said that it was appropriate for Kazys Grinius, as a former president, to sign political declarations but that he “needs to distance himself from them lest he needlessly provoke German hatred for the Curia in general.” When they discussed whether to include that the Lithuanians oppose the massacre of the Jews, Skvireckas pointed out that the Curia had already, more than once, stated its position and fallen into disfavor with the Germans because he had made efforts to make his position known to the partisan staff, that he had signed a note “concerning Jewish Catholics and persons born in mixed marriages with Jews,” and that the bishops would find a means, in their own way, to inform world opinion of what they think about the massacre of the Jews and of who the real culprits are.¹⁹

Although Skvireckas defended his unwillingness to sign a resolution as noninterference in political matters, surviving documents attest that he did not avoid other declarations connected with public life. [...]

One must suppose that nobody forced the Archbishop either when he also signed a telegram on July 7, 1941, thanking Hitler “for liberating Lithuania from the Bolsheviks.” He was the second to sign it, after former President Kazys Grinius.²⁰ [...] We can easily find even more examples of public statements of his position. On February 22, 1942, Skvireckas prepared a pastoral letter which the parish priests and rectors of his archdiocese had to read instead of a sermon one Sunday during Lent. In this letter the Archbishop, after beginning with reflections about the ongoing war, focused on “godless Russian Bolshevism”: he spoke about the consequences of Bolshevik rule in Russia and in neighboring countries and about the introduction of a Bolshevik government in Lithuania and the danger that had arisen to the faith and to the Catholic Church. The Archbishop devoted much attention here “to expelling the Bolshevik spirit” and rescuing Christian civilization, to Christian education, etc.

Other representatives of the Church hierarchy did not avoid stating their position on public questions either. [...]

During the war, the bishops of Lithuania held six conferences.²¹ The Jewish question was considered at two of them, both in 1941. At the first conference, which was convened on August 6-7 [when the Jews were already being shot en masse – J. L.], the bishops “decided to sign an appropriate note to the Government in support of Jews baptized before June 22, 1941, so that they would not be forced into the ghettos.”²² We can also find an entry

19 Loc. cit.

20 Juozapas Skvireckas' diary, entry of July 11, 1941, l. 248.

21 They were usually attended by the Church hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Kaunas and of the dioceses of Kaišiadorys, Panevėžys, Telšiai, and Vilkaviškis.

22 Minutes no. 4 of the Bishops' Conference, held on August 6-7, 1941, of the Lithuanian Ecclesiastical Province, in the book *Lietuvos vyskupų konferencijos protokolai 1926-1944* [Minutes of the Lithuanian Bishops' Conference, 1926-1944]

corroborating this position in Skvireckas' diary: "It fell to us to support some action of sorts on behalf of Jewish Catholics."²³ No concessions were made for those baptized later. In the spring of 1942, the Church hierarchy reminded the clergy: "There are decrees of the civil government that prohibit the population – thus, also clergymen – from associating with Jews."²⁴

[...] "For reasons known to everyone, rules binding on prisoners of war apply to persons of Jewish nationality. The civilian population is forbidden to associate with them in any way. The clergy of this archdiocese is warned to strictly observe this prohibition."²⁵

At the other conference, held in October, Bishop Brizgys informed the participants "about his... conversation [on October 8 – V. B.] concerning the Jewish question with the Chief General Adviser, General Kubiliūnas, from whom it became clear that the Germans had reserved the solution of the Jewish question exclusively for themselves."²⁶ The later minutes of the bishops' meetings no longer mentioned the Jews.

The fate of most Jews had already been sealed in 1941. Those who had survived in the ghettos or who had escaped from them and were hiding could hope for compassion or assistance only from individual ordinary Lithuanians or clergymen. Indifference to the fate of the Jews is also attested by a fragmentary survey of the activities of other Church institutions. Thus, at the meetings of the Kaunas Metropolitan Chapter, which met eleven times during the war, i.e. starting on August 2, 1941, and ending on April 28, 1944, the Jewish question was not discussed even once. At these meetings, which were attended by the Chairman of the Chapter Prelate Kazimieras Šaulys, Bishop Vincentas Brizgys, the prelates Povilas Januškevičius, Blažiejus Čėsnyš, and others, opinions were exchanged about the real estate that had been nationalized by the Soviet government and was being returned to the Chapter, about matters relating to the Chapter library, and about the commemoration of the anniversary of the Lithuanian Ecclesiastical Province, and annual financial reports and other questions were considered.²⁷

(copies of documents), Vytautas Magnus University Library, Emigration Study Center, Inventory no. 82502. Incidentally, it should be noted that, in the hope of escaping death, some Jews accepted baptism even after the war had begun. This fact is attested by Fr. Petras Lygnugaris' testimony during an interrogation after the war. He maintained that the Bishop of Telšiai, Justinas Staugaitis, had obligated him in a letter to baptize Jews, but only those "who want it and agree to it" [...] Unfortunately, the acceptance of a new faith did not save anyone's life. Lygnugaris could promise only that baptized Jews "would get eternal happiness, i.e. paradise." See Minutes of Petras Lygnugaris' interrogation, October 24, 1950, in *LYA*, Criminal case no. P-12309, l. 19-21.

23 Juozapas Skvireckas' diary, entry of August 13, 1941, LNM, D-41, l. 267.

24 A letter of March 20, 1942, from the Vicar General of the Curia of the Archdiocese of Kaunas to the deacons of the Archdiocese of Kaunas, in *LVOA* (Archives of Lithuanian Public Organizations), f. 3377, ap. 55, b. 263, microfilm no. 1.

25 A letter of April 8, 1942, from the Vicar General of the Curia of the Archdiocese of Kaunas to the parish priests and church rectors of the Archdiocese, in *LVOA*, f. 3377, ap. 55, b. 263, microfilm no. 1.

26 Minutes no. 5 of the Bishops' Conference, held on October 7-8, 1941, of the Lithuanian Ecclesiastical Province, loc. cit.

27 Minutes of the meetings of the Metropolitan Chapter of Kaunas, in *KAKA*, b. 155, l. 148-174.

The Jewish question was not considered at the deacons' conferences of the Archdiocese of Kaunas either. [emphasis added – J. L.] [...]

Undoubtedly, the main question that interests us in this context is this: would the fate of the Jews have turned out differently if the position of the Church hierarchy had been not conformist, but civic-minded, uninfluenced by mass stereotypes? Regrettably, we cannot answer in the affirmative. [...] For the Church, however, as an essentially moral institution, to engage in a rational search for arguments for or against a protest is, it seems, excessively pragmatic.

Valentinas Brandišauskas

THE POSITION OF THE LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE RESTITUTION OF JEWISH PROPERTY

The position of the Church, which is usually considered the moral authority for society, and her view of the tragedy of the Jewish nation are indirectly revealed by studying the papers read during the war at various deans' conferences on the fate of surviving Jewish property. As we know, the Church has always respected private property. Even during the war, her hierarchy stressed this position more than once. Thus, in early 1943 Juozapas Skvireckas and the other Lithuanian bishops wrote a letter which parish priests and rectors had to read to the faithful instead of a sermon "on the first Sunday after they receive it." In this letter, while discussing the first year of Soviet rule in Lithuania, they stated: "It is true that there were evils earlier, too, but they proliferated especially during the Bolshevik period, when Bolshevik laws to destroy our way of life were proclaimed, including the abolition of private property."¹ Unfortunately, the clergy's attitude toward the private property of the Jews (to be sure, for the most part, they had already been killed) was not unambiguous and respectful. [...]

We will quote some excerpts from speeches given by priests at different conferences:

"On the black market, one can get all kinds of goods. Where do they come from? Clearly, a large part of them has been acquired by illegal means. How eagerly and even with what envy Jewish property was looted; with what an easy conscience the goods of the exiles were appropriated; how quickly the military equipment left behind by the Bolsheviks was destroyed.

This entire set of circumstances has completely dulled the sensitivity of the human conscience to respect other people's property. People no longer care at all to whom a thing belongs. They take because they can.

It is no secret that in this war the Jewish nation has been struck by a great misfortune. Their nation is being killed, and their property is being abandoned to be divided between Lithuanians and Germans."²

As for property appropriated from living Jews, it was stated that if somebody took their things, "he will be obligated to make restitution, even if he bought them at an auction or otherwise from profiteers." However: "things taken by the partisans [from the Jews – V. B.], including even life

1 A letter of January 1943 from Juozapas Skvireckas and the other Lithuanian bishops to parish priests and rectors, in *LVOA*, f. 3377, ap. 55, b. 263, microfilm no. 1.

2 A paper by the Stačiūnai Church Administrator Fr. Jurgis Jasukaitis, "Restitucijos klausimas mūsų dienų sąlygose" [The Question of Restitution Under Current Conditions], read at the Siauliai Deans' Conference on July 12, 1942, in *KAKA*, b. 269.

itself, may be regarded as retribution for their actions, and restitution should not be demanded. But if somebody looted too much, he should be obligated, even if the things taken are ownerless, according to his means, to help the poor or otherwise allot something for charitable purposes. The principle here is that the Jews acquired this property by living among Lithuanians and cheating them in all possible ways; therefore, one person must not appropriate too much to the detriment of others. Of course, here one must distinguish those who became partisans not because they were led by love for the Fatherland or were shocked by the Red Terror but only because they wanted to loot Jewish things. Their leading motive is other people's things, which make their consciences completely insensitive to the law of justice. They are the ones who have looted Jewish things the most. Therefore, they must be especially warned to allot at least a large part of the things they have taken for charitable purposes."³

These ideas were expounded at the Šiauliai Deans' Conference on July 12, 1942, by the Stačiūnai Church Administrator Jurgis Jasukaitis. Various opinions were expressed after this paper was read. We present the most important ones:

Fr. Bernardas: "Who should get the property left by the Jews is difficult to decide. This property clearly does not belong to the soldiers because they receive wages. St. John mentions in his Gospel that soldiers must be satisfied with the wages they get; therefore, they may not plunder or cheat. If the Germans appropriate this property, maybe that is better for us because they are assuming responsibility for these actions."⁴

Fr. Mikalojus Katinas (Kurtuvėnai Church Administrator): "There have been incidents in which German soldiers themselves have given people clothes or some other things; in such a case, the conscience of the person who accepted them may be at peace, but if he took wagonloads of cement or kerosene for three or four days and has a huge supply, he must make restitution...."⁵ [...]

We present one more excerpt, which reflects the logic of the thinking and argumentation:

"What is to be done with the property of thousands of Jews, which people have looted? Restitution ought to be made. But here, a question arises – make restitution to whom? To the State, to the Church, or *in piis causis*? To the State would be awkward and inadvisable because by doing so you might end up in jail because they will ask what you are making restitution for. [...]

Now, the question arises – what should be done by those who stole and looted Jewish property out of greed? Such people should look around to

3 Loc. cit.

4 Loc. cit.

5 Loc. cit.

see if there aren't people living near them who don't have anything or live in great poverty and help them. If there aren't any such people, then make donations to the Church. If you can't make one big donation, then make recompense in small amounts over several years.

Why to the Church? Why will there be restitution by donating to the Church? [...]"

We have presented long quotations in order to graphically expose the psychology behind the thinking and the motivation for the behavior, to reveal the maneuvering between compassion and the rationalization of behavior; however, what is perhaps most important is that **the speakers condemned not the fact itself of the massacre but the bungled manner of looting, the scale of appropriating other people's property** [emphasis added – J. L.].

This dispassionate consideration of the looting of other people's property ought to be assessed, we would think, as an instance of the undermining, through a failure to suitably use, of the Church's tremendous moral authority. This discussion of restitution only further reinforces the Pope's thought, expressed when he spoke about the tragedy of the Jewish nation during World War II, that "the spiritual resistance and specific actions of Christians were not such as might have been expected from the followers of Christ."⁶

And that this looting did take place – and took place on a massive scale – is attested by other surviving archival documents. Thus, the General Secretary of the Lithuanian Nationalist Party, Zenonas Blynas, wrote in his diary: "That day V. Lukauskas 'bought' a large carpet for fifty roubles. From apartments... abandoned by the Jews? Now, he has brought in a table, two sofas – in the old style – also from Jewish apartments. Probably from the apartments of those Jews who have fled...."⁷ In Rokiškis, a commission was set up to auction off Jewish property. It was chaired by Vladas Minkštimas,⁸ who held this post from June 27, 1941, to August 20 of the same year.⁹ Other surviving documents tell about who got what Jewish property and how much – who a pillow, who a blanket, who a pair of shoes, a jacket, etc.¹⁰ And where are the other twists and turns involved in the purchase and sale or simply in the division of real estate...?

In conclusion, it would be worthwhile to turn our attention to what remains another very sensitive and painful subject in need of discussion –

6 "Mes atsimename: Šoa apmąstymas" [We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah], *Bažnyčios žinios*, 1998, no. 6, p. 5.

7 Zenonas Blynas' diary, entry of July 10, 1941, in *LVOA*, f. 3377, ap. 55, b. 235, l. 49 (on the back).

8 A note of July 7, 1941, from the manager of the Rokiškis Jewish Concentration Camp to the head of the Rokiškis district, *LNM*, D-3104.

9 A certificate of August 21, 1941, in *LNM*, D-3104.

10 A list of September 10, 1941, of the division of Jewish property among the members of the Kyviškės defense squad, in *LNM*, F-3210.

the appointment of military chaplains and their activities in the Lithuanian battalions. It is not clear whether it will be possible, after researching this question, to limit ourselves to the moderate apprehension expressed by John Paul II.

CONCLUSIONS

[...] The Nazis provided the impetus and created the system for the massacre of the Jews. However, Lithuanians and, in part, the Church also contributed to the creation of the needed atmosphere. The diary Archbishop Juozapas Skvireckas kept during the first few months of the German-Soviet war also helps reveal his view of the tragedy that had befallen the Jewish nation. The thoughts expressed in this diary may be identified, in part, with the attitude of the Church hierarchy toward the Jews. An analysis of this diary allows us to conclude that the stereotype "Jew = Communist," which was entrenched in the consciousness of the masses, was not foreign to the Archbishop. He defended his unwillingness to intercede for the Jews as an avoidance of political statements in order to protect the Church from Nazi disfavor.

During the war, the conferences held by Lithuanian bishops and deans and the meetings of the Kaunas Metropolitan Chapter usually did not consider the "Jewish question." And even if it was touched upon in passing, that was done only to state that this question belonged exclusively to the competence of the Germans. This view specifically affected only baptized Jews, but that concern did not save them from death.

In 1942, the deans' conferences considered the fate of Jewish property; papers were read on "The Question of Restitution Under Current Conditions." According to the speakers, the return or nonreturn of appropriated Jewish property depended on many conditions: who appropriated it, how much, whether he risked his life by doing so, etc. One thing is obvious: what was condemned was not the massacre itself but the excessive scale on which other people's property was appropriated and the inadequate motives for this behavior.¹¹

Valentinas Brandišauskas

11 From Valentinas Brandišauskas' article "Holokaustas Lietuvoje: istoriografinė situacija ir pagrindinės problemos" [The Holocaust in Lithuania: The Historiographic Situation and the Main Problems], in *Lietuvos katalikų mokslo akademijos metraštis* [Yearbook of the Lithuanian Catholic Academy of Science], vol. 14 (Vilnius, 1999), pp. 147-152.