



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.

Series I: Wexner Heritage Foundation, 1947-2004.

Subseries 1: General Files, 1949-2004.

Box
68

Folder
3

Wannsee Conference (1942). 1988.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.



The Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns
Jewish Studies Program
at Indiana University

2002 Samuel and Lillian Solotkin
Memorial Lecture in Jewish Studies

**"Auschwitz in the
Courtroom:
Episodes from the
Irving-Lipstadt Trial"**

by

Professor Robert van Pelt

Author of *The Case for Auschwitz*

Wednesday, February 6, 2002

7:30 p.m.

Congregation Beth-El Zedeck Chapel

600 West 70th Street

Indianapolis, Indiana

Professor Robert Jan van Pelt's most recent book *The Case for Auschwitz* (Indiana University Press, January 2002) stems from his role as a key witness in the high-profile libel case brought by the British historian David Irving against Penguin Books and Professor Deborah Lipstadt of Emory University. Irving charged that Lipstadt's book *Denying the Holocaust* (1993) falsely labeled him a Holocaust denier. In connection with their defense, Penguin and Lipstadt engaged van Pelt, an architectural historian, to prepare an expert report for the British high court trial. Owing in part to Professor van Pelt's testimony, the trial was won by Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt.

Van Pelt's new book presents the compelling historical evidence for the existence and operation of the gas chambers at Auschwitz contained in his original expert report. It also analyzes why Auschwitz has become central to Holocaust denial and details the way in which the case for Auschwitz played out at the trial.

*You are cordially invited to a dessert reception
immediately following Professor van Pelt's lecture
at Beth-El Zedeck.*

*If you have a disability and need assistance,
arrangements can be made to accommodate most
needs. Please contact Melissa Deckard at
(812) 856-6014 or via email at lujsp@indiana.edu*



Professor van Pelt is a faculty member in the School of Architecture, University of Waterloo, Canada. He is co-author (with Debórah Dwork) of *Auschwitz: 1270 to the Present*, winner of a National Jewish Book Award (1996), and of the Spiro Kostof Award of the Association of Architectural Historians (1997), and co-author (with Carroll William Westfall) of *Architectural Principles in the Age of Historicism*.

Professor van Pelt will also speak on

"Auschwitz Beyond a Reasonable Doubt:
Proving the Obvious and the not so Obvious
in the Irving-Lipstadt Trial"

Thursday, February 7, 2002

2:30 p.m.

State Room East, Indiana Memorial Union
Bloomington, Indiana

THE WEXNER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Herbert A. Friedman
President

January 26, 1988

Leslie H. Wexner
Chairman of the Board

Mr. Allen J. Green
Films Inc.
5547 N. Ravenswood Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640-1199

Dear Mr. Green:

I have now received the video tape on the Wannsee Conference from you and the presentation book from Mr. Wexler. I shall look at the tape at my earliest convenience within the next few days.

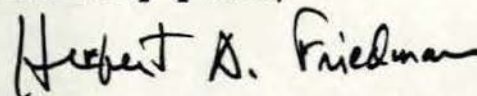
The question I have concerns what it is that you want me to consider. The specific phrase which struck my eye was "buy a quantity of these tapes".

The function of this Foundation is to conduct educational seminars with small groups of top leaders. We are now working with approximately 150 persons in nine cities. We do buy educational material, such as books, brochures, maps, to provide to the students. We have a very large overhead expense of providing faculty for the bi-weekly seminars, as well as travel expenses to bring all the students together semi-annually. We do not make grants for any purpose whatsoever. We simply spend a lot of money on our own program. If, therefore, you are talking about our purchasing a number of tapes to provide to each of our students, that is an approach which I would be happy to explore as to its feasibility. The maximum number in that instance, would be 150.

If, on the other hand, you are talking of providing thousands of these tapes as a grant to schools and libraries throughout the country, I know that such an act is not within our competence.

Please let me have your reaction, and we will see where we go from here.

Sincerely yours,



(Rabbi) Herbert A. Friedman

HAF/jf

cc: Richard Wexler

551 Madison Avenue / New York, New York 10022 / 212-355-6115
41 South High Street, Suite 3710 / Columbus, Ohio 43215 / 614-464-2772



January 19, 1988

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
Executive Director
The Wesner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

I have a copy of Richard Wexler's letter to you earlier this week regarding THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE.

We are very proud to be associated with this film. The scrapbook I put together which Richard sent, I believe, speaks for itself. I am also forwarding a 1/2 inch tape for you to screen and for you to make your own judgment.

It is our idea to find one or more Jewish philanthropist or charitable foundations who would be interested to buy a quantity of these tapes, which we can make up and provide for around \$20 each, to donate to schools and libraries. Of course, there can be a billboard on the tape attesting to the donor's generosity. In this manner, the evidence is there for tomorrow's generations to judge for themselves not only what happened, but how it came about.

In all likelihood the film will play on the PBS network in 1988 and eventually it will be out on home video. We can provide public performance licenses with these tapes, which will enable the schools, libraries, temples, and community groups, whatever, the legal capacity to have public showings under the Copyright Law.

Richard told me you might be able to help us accomplish this. Either Max Rosenberg, who found and brought the film to the U.S., or I would be glad to talk with you about this.

Cordially,

Allen J. Green
President
FI/Entertainment

rw

cc: Max Rosenberg

Corporate:
(312) 878-7300

Entertainment:
(312) 878-2600, Ext. 42

Education:
(312) 878-2600, Ext. 43

Business and Government:
(312) 878-2600, Ext. 44



January 21, 1988

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
The Wesner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022


Dear Rabbi Friedman:

Further to my letter to you earlier this week, I hope by now you have received the presentation book on THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE from Mr. Wexler and the videotape which was sent from here.

I thought you might also be interested, however, in the attached which concerns the screening of the film last night at the Kennedy Center in Washington including an on-the-scene report from a representative we sent from New York to be present at the screening in Washington. This is only the 3rd or 4th time since the Kennedy Center opened in the mid 70's that the scheduled show was sold out necessitating the auxiliary screening in the upstairs screening room as well.

I look forward to your response.

Best wishes.


Allen J. Green
rw

Corporate:
(312) 878-7300

Entertainment:
(312) 878-2600, Ext. 42

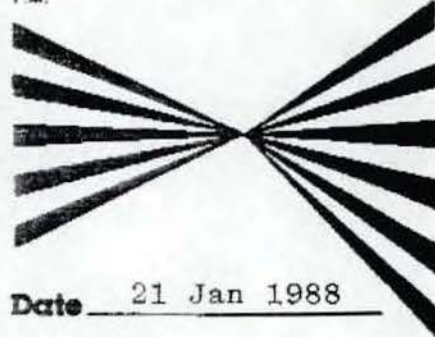
Education:
(312) 878-2600, Ext. 43

Business and Government:
(312) 878-2600, Ext. 44

Films Incorporated

Interoffice Correspondence

T.M.

**To** ALLEN GREEN**Date** 21 Jan 1988**From** MARY RUNSER**Subject** WANNSEE CONFERENCE AFI Screening

The screening and discussion last night went tremendously well. The show sold out and overflow patrons were accommodated in a smaller upstairs screening room by bicycling the print.

The introduction by Ed Cochran of AFI and Isaiah Kuperstein of the US Holocaust Memorial concentrated mostly on the historical background of the actual conference. They made special mention of the generosity of Films Inc. in making the evening possible.

The question and answer session following the screening was enlightening. The audience was composed mainly of people affiliated in some way with the DC Jewish Community Council, so they were asking intelligent, specific questions about the outcome of various situations in the film. There were a couple of questions about the US and European distribution of the film and the audience response, and a question to Aviva Kempner (the PARTISANS OF VILNA producer) about Manfred Korytowski was answered extremely well, based on her thorough reading of the press kit.

Both of my contacts at AFI said this was easily one of their most successful screenings ever. I should mention that they also gave us several plugs for the theatrical opening at the Biograph, stressing the importance of telling all their friends that this is an important movie that must be seen by concerned members of the Jewish community.



5 January 1988

Dear Friend,

Films Incorporated and Rearguard Pictures are proud to announce a special screening of our film,

THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE

IN GERMAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

Wednesday, 20 January 1988


6:30 pm

American Film Institute Theatre
Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

The screening is co-sponsored by Films Inc., the A F I, and the District of Columbia Jewish Community Center. The film will be introduced by Isaiah Kuperstein of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Following the screening, there will be a discussion led by Mr. Kuperstein and Aviva Kempner, producer of the film THE PARTISANS OF VILNA.

THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE will open on Friday, 29 January, at the Biograph Theatre, 2819 "M" Street NW. Please call (202)333-2696 for showtimes and further information.

Sincerely,



Mary Ray Ruxser

Mt. Vernon
(800) 223-6246

in New York
(914) 667-0800

Films Incorporated
35 South West St.
Mt. Vernon, New York 10550

LAW OFFICES
SACHNOFF WEAVER & RUBENSTEIN, LTD.

CONNECTICUT OFFICE
Sachnoff Weaver Rubenstein
Schatz & Wolf
CityPlace--27th Floor
Hartford, Connecticut 06103-3402
(203) 275-6860

30 South Wacker Drive, 29th Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60606-9611
Telephone (312) 207-1000 Telecopier (312) 207-6400

FLORIDA OFFICE
5500 North Federal Highway
Kingsbridge Sq. Professional Park
Boca Raton, Florida 33431-4042
(305) 997-7454

Richard L. Wexler
(312) 207-6416

January 18, 1988

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
Executive Director
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Herb:

Thanks for your recent note on my comments in The Jerusalem Post! Your comments were appreciated especially in light of the bombardment I received from, among others, our Consul General, a mission group we had in Israel at the time, etc. I have apparently "made amends" by reason of the Op-Ed letter that appeared in the Chicago Sun-Times, a copy of which I enclose.

I have a favor to ask. I don't know if you have had an opportunity to see the production of the film "The Wannsee Conference" as yet. Our clients and friends at Public Media, Inc., are seeking to distribute the film both commercially and, should appropriate support be available, to Jewish organizations, temples, synagogues, libraries and schools. By copy of this letter, I am asking Allen Green, President, FI/Entertainment, to send you a copy of the videotape. I am enclosing a book put together by Allen that details the critical acclaim which the piece has received.

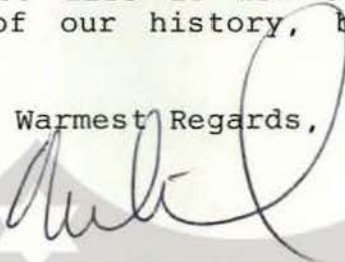
I am hoping that there might be funding available through the Foundation, Herb, to sponsor a distribution of this important film to our Jewish Mishpacha. It is so critically important that part of our history and the film itself is so startling and well-made (being an almost in haec verba dramatization of the actual event). My first thought was that the Foundation might be the appropriate, if not the best, source.

SACHNOFF WEAVER & RUBENSTEIN, LTD.

Page 2
January 18, 1988
Rabbi Herbert Friedman

If there is any interest, Herb, I know that both Allen Green and Max Rosenberg whose life is now committed to the distribution of this part of our history, be delighted to meet with you to discuss it.

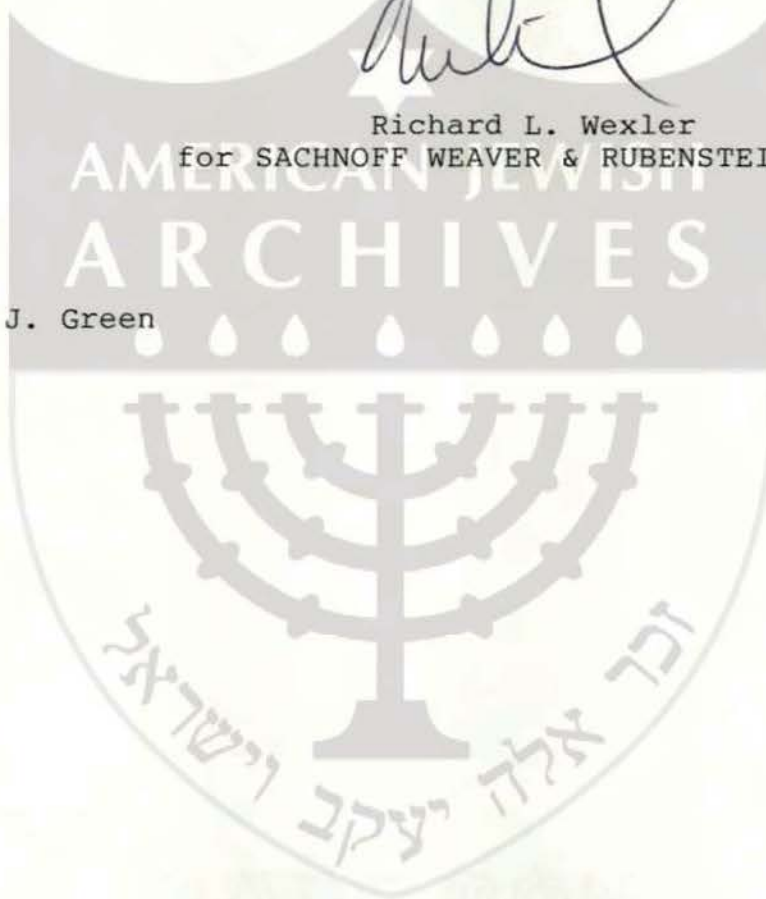
Warmest Regards,



Richard L. Wexler
for SACHNOFF WEAVER & RUBENSTEIN, LTD.

RLW/mb
Enclosure

cc: Allen J. Green



Mideast must break out of decades-old impasse

The first priority of all responsible parties must be the restoration of calm to the Israeli-administered territories so that future casualties can be avoided.

That clearly is Israel's primary objective. And so it must be. Those who have no interest in encouraging a cessation of the disturbances must come to understand that they

LETTERS cannot achieve their goals by encouraging or participating in riot and ruin.

The political limbo within which the residents of these territories live, and the resulting frustrations, resentment and even despair, produce fertile soil for incitement. However, this most recent turmoil invariably leads back to the central question, namely how to break out of an impasse that is decades old.

The Gaza tragedy was created by the refusal of the Arab states to accept the Partition Plan implemented in 1948 by the United Nations. The West Bank refugee camps are the result of a conscious decision by the Arab states 40 years ago to turn their backs to peaceful coexistence with Israel.

Instead, from its birth, the Jewish state has been fending off attempts to destroy it; and the three "noes" implemented by the Arab states in Khartoum are still in effect: no negotiation with Israel, no peace for Israel and no recognition of Israel's right to exist within secure borders.

The options for Israel are limited. Annexation is certain to be resisted by the Palestinians, even if Israel were willing to establish permanent rule over a colony of resentful Arabs, which it is not. Withdrawal will surely result in providing a perfect staging ground for future Palestine Liberation Organization attacks on Israel. The only realistic choice is to continue to work for a political solution, in the hope that West Bank and Gaza residents will recognize historic reality and demand that their leaders seek peace, not chaos or riot.

A long-range solution requires Israel's neighbors to come to the negotiating table. Israel is ready. Israel has proclaimed its readiness in word and in the deed that is Camp David. It needs only someone from the other side to respond to it for a peaceful resolution of the issue. The tragedy is that until that

How can he be proud of ruling that upheld handgun ban?

A Sun-Times news story Jan. 7 reported the resignation of Justice Seymour Simon from the Illinois Supreme Court. In reviewing his term on the court, Justice Simon said that of all the opinions he had authored, he was most proud of the one upholding the legality of the infamous Morton Grove handgun ban.

I would like Mr. Simon to know that I lost my gas station business after 18 years in Oak Park because of a gun ban copied directly from Morton Grove's. My "crime" was using a handgun to shoot back at armed robbers, in defense of my life, on my own gas station property. I was acquitted by a jury of my peers, but not until after almost a year of court hearings and official harassment from Oak Park officials.

Unlike Seymour Simon, who has accepted a lucrative position in a rich law firm, I am unemployed and broke. I would like to see him spend a midnight-to-eight shift alone in a high-crime area gas station, and then see how proud he is of casting the deciding vote to destroy our constitutional right to keep and bear arms for self-defense on our own property.

I hope his replacement will vote to restore our rights if given the chance.

Donald R. Bennett,
Hanover Park

happens, it appears that children will die because their elders refuse to talk.

Richard L. Wexler,
Chairman, Jewish Community Relations Council

Tell 'em, Joe Clark

Joe Clark, principal of the inner-city Eastside High School in Paterson, N.J., has been nationally acclaimed for vastly improving the

educational programs during his tenure at the school by utilizing a no-nonsense, get-tough policy.

Indeed, Mr. Clark has been praised by President Reagan as well as by Education Secretary William Bennett for his accomplishments at Eastside High, which is composed mainly of black and Hispanic students.

Mr. Clark recently came under fire by an unappreciative school board that took exception to the black principal's expelling 60 students who were chronically failing and making little progress toward attaining the credits necessary for graduation. The board voted in favor of drawing up charges of insubordination against Mr. Clark.

Mr. Clark, who enjoys broad community support, recently appeared on "Nightline," carried on Channel 7 in Chicago, to discuss his views on educating the young in America. I don't know how others reacted to his presentation, but at the conclusion of the program, I rose from my living room chair and shouted at the television screen: "Joe Clark for president."

Anthony Zanetello,
Near South Side

Du Page realities

Significant realities have been left out in the public discussion of the north-south transportation dilemma in Du Page County and elsewhere in the metropolitan area.

That is, that we must have efficient, viable, non-polluting means of transportation almost immediately, or at least as soon as we have additional or more imposing gasoline alleys. The governmental bodies (cities, towns, authorities and, perhaps especially, the county) must innovate and implement the alternatives now.

The nation's urban centers have already experienced mass parking lot phenomena and dangerous pollution levels on the roadways.

Put all those single drivers in cars (from Aurora to Itasca, Bolingbrook to Bloomingdale) traversing Park Boulevard, West Street, Main Street, President Street, Naperville Road, etc., on the "Metro System."

Bring in the monorail, streetcar, cable car, elevated, subway or whatever it takes! Show the world that Du Page County has some guts and is not succumbing to the obliteration of its landscape with asphalt. Richard A. Lund, Wheaton



Do we n taxicab

By Joseph L. B

Imagine the outcry that would be heard if someone limiting the number of taxis in Chicago to the that existed in 1968. Or if prices they charge and dishes they serve. Or require 80 percent of the restaurant operated by two companies by one family.

Can you hear the roar of disapproval?

Now imagine how skeptical cagoans would be if these conditions were advanced and by the very companies that control 80 percent of the taxis! Imagine, finally, would laugh if they predicted sorts of terrible things would happen if just anyone were allowed to open a restaurant in Chicago.

Of course, no one is proposing such ridiculous regulations are currently forced against taxicab companies here. And, unfortunately, laughing at Yellow Cab and Checker Taxi—the two companies fending the rules.

To operate a taxicab in Chicago, one must first obtain a license (or "medallion") from the city. The number of licenses by the city hasn't changed since 1968. Think about that!

Moreover, because of the agreement between the city and the owners of Yellow and Checker, 80 percent of the licenses available must be reserved for those two companies. The city just \$200 a year for a license, then lease them to the drivers for \$6,000 or more a year. The real victims of this scheme—have been doing a boil over this injustice for years but lack the political influence to change it.

PHOTOPINION: Do you believe in the right to die?

THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE

IN GERMAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
PRODUCED BY INFILM - A REARGUARD PICTURE



On Tuesday, January 20, 1942, at a house in the quiet Berlin suburb of Wannsee, a meeting was held.

Fourteen key representatives of the SS, the Nazi Party and the government bureaucracy attended at the invitation of Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Security Police and Secret Service.

The meeting lasted eighty-five minutes. There was only one item on the agenda.

MANFRED KORYTOWSKI

Manfred Korytowski, the producer of "THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE," specializes in television drama, commercials and documentaries, but is best known as the producer of "PUMUCKL," the most successful children's program in the history of German television. He has produced more than twenty films to date.

Manfred was born in East Prussia on December 31, 1936. His family moved to Brazil in 1937, where he lived for sixteen years. In 1953, he went to Israel, where he spent two years in the army. In 1958, he returned to Germany to visit his father who was ill, and he stayed. He refers to himself as "a German-speaking Israeli" and maintains residences in both countries.

Manfred has two children. He considers himself "an old-fashioned filmmaker."



**AN EVENING WITH
MANFRED KORYTOWSKI**

Dunbar Saturday, June 14 9:30
with The Wannsee Conference

Manfred Korytowski is the producer of *The Wannsee Conference*, and, by the way, of the most successful children's series in German history, *Pumuckl*. Born in East Prussia in 1936, he was moved by his family in 1937, far away from the Nazi terror to Brazil. The genesis of *The Wannsee Conference* began when Mr. Korytowski travelled to Israel on the 25th anniversary of the Eichmann trial. There he learned of the Wannsee Conference and began the extensive research that would result in a remarkable real-time reconstruction of an incomprehensible but all too real event. "I wanted simply for this film to be a document to leave behind for the future so everybody would know what had happened. I do not want the problems of the past to be forgotten by people today. Nobody should forget this."



Dunbar June 14 9:30

Canadian Premiere

**THE WANNSEE
CONFERENCE**

Die Wannseekonferenz

Director: Heinz Schirk West Germany 1984 87 mins.

Principal Cast: Dietrich Mattausch, Gerd Bockmann,
Friedrich G. Beckhaus, Gunter Spoerle, Martin Luttge,
Peter Fritz

Print Source: Rearguard Productions

The Wannsee Conference is a seriously and startlingly mounted recreation of a meeting that occurred in a pleasant Berlin suburb on January 20, 1942. In attendance were such Nazi leaders as Adolph Eichmann (head of the Jewish Dept. of the Gestapo), Reinhard Heydrich (head of Security Police and Secret Service) as well as fifteen other state officials. Their purpose: to decide upon and implement the so-called "final solution". The fate of six million Jews was sealed. The film's producer, Manfred Korytowski, obtained the original secretary's notes from archives in Israel and spent six years meticulously recreating the meeting in virtually real time. The film has won many awards since and we are glad to announce that Mr. Korytowski has graciously accepted our invitation to attend the screening.

"My intention in making this film was to create a record for the future. I don't want the past to be forgotten."

Sometime after the 1962 Eichmann trial, Korytowski went to Israel to produce a film about it. His goal was to interview some of the witnesses who had testified. While doing his research at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Archives in Jerusalem, he read about the Wannsee Conference. This led to six more years of intensive research on the subject.

Korytowski located the secretary's original notes at Yad Vashem, and these, together with letters from Himmler and Goering, Eichmann's own testimony, the interviews with people who had been at Eichmann's trial and documents he obtained from Kempner, one of the U.S. prosecutors at the Nuremberg Trials, formed the basis for the screenplay.

He also discovered that the Wannsee Conference lasted eighty-five minutes, which is the precise length of the film.

The secretary kept meticulous notes. Even when Heydrich, Muller and Eichmann met privately during the conference, Eichmann later recounted their discussion to her, and she wrote it down.

Fourteen men attended the conference at the invitation of Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Security Police and Hitler's designated successor. One came from Lapland to see a friend, and he was completely disinterested in the proceedings. Another came to Berlin on a shopping trip. Most could not have cared less about the Jewish question. Only Heydrich, Eichmann and one or two others knew or cared about what was going to be done.

Concentration camps had existed and executions had been carried out before the conference, but the extermination of the Jews ("The Final Solution") did not become the official policy of the Third Reich until the Wannsee Conference, for the real purpose of the meeting was to legalize the murder of six million Jews. Eichmann confirmed this at his trial.

Heydrich wanted to get the backing of the various government ministries. He did not expect everyone in the room to agree with him and was pleasantly surprised when they did.

There is a chilling contrast between the casual atmosphere of the meeting and the subject matter under discussion.

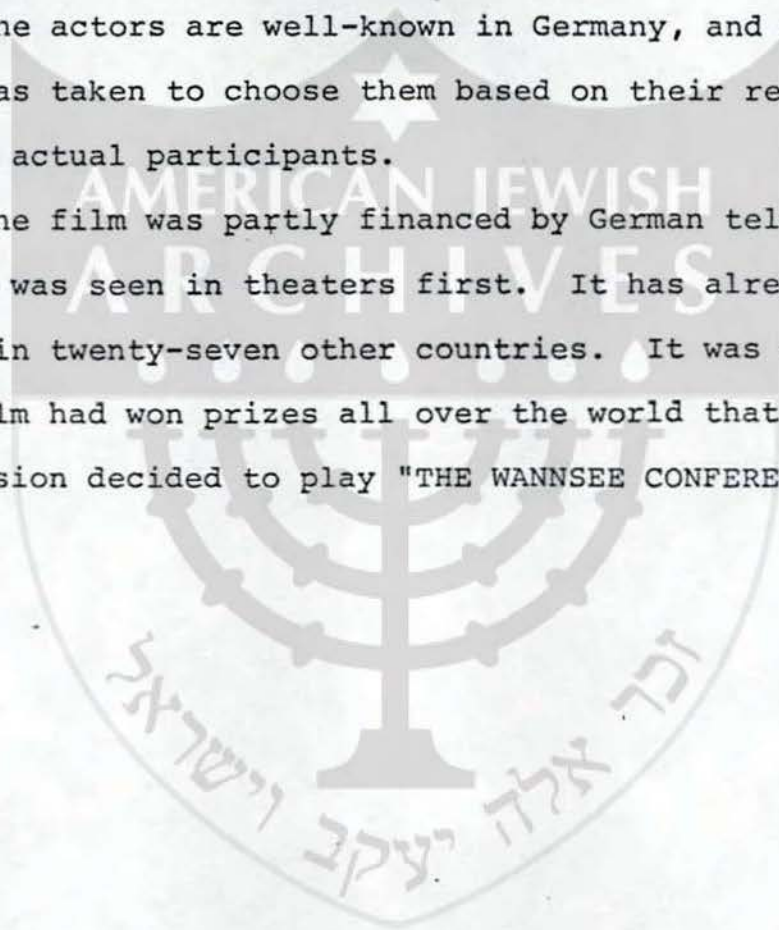
Three who attended the conference still live in Germany. Korytowski attempted to interview all of them, including the secretary, and in every case they

refused.

The exterior scenes were shot at the actual house where the meeting took place in Berlin, which is a kindergarten today. The interiors were filmed at a studio. The costumes were original; even the wrist-watches and pens were original.

The actors are well-known in Germany, and great care was taken to choose them based on their resemblances to the actual participants.

The film was partly financed by German television, but it was seen in theaters first. It has already been shown in twenty-seven other countries. It was not until the film had won prizes all over the world that German television decided to play "THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE."



CREDITS

Screenplay by PAUL MOMMERTZ

Historical Advisor SHLOMO ARONSON, University of Jerusalem

Featuring:	ROBERT ARTZORN	Hofmann
	FRIEDRICH BECKHAUS	Müller
	GERD BÖCKMANN	Eichmann
	JOCHEN BUSSE	Leibbrandt
	HANS W. BUSSINGER	Luther
	HARALD DIETL	Meyer
	PETER FITZ	Stuckart
	REINHARD GLEMNITZ	Bühler
	DIETER GROEST	Neumann
	MARTIN LÜTTGE	Lange
	ANITA MALLY	Secretary
	DIETRICH MATTAUSCH	Heydrich
	GERD RIGAUER	Schöngarth
	FRANZ RUDNICK	Kritzinger
	GÜNTER SPÖRRLE	Klopfer
	RAINER STEFFEN	Freisler

Make-Up HELGA GLÄSSER

Costumes DIEMUT REMY

Art Direction ROBERT HOFER-ACH

BARBARA SIEBNER

Sound Engineer SIGBERT STARK

Editor URSULA MÖLLINGER

Director of Photography HORST SCHIER

Production Manager JOCHEN RIEDEL

Network Coordinator NORBERT BITTMANN

Executive Producer SIEGFRIED B. GLÖKER

Directed by HEINZ SCHIRK

A Co-Production of

INFAFILM GmbH MUNICH
MANFRED KORYTOWSKI

and

AMERICAN JEWISH
AUSTRIAN TELEVISION - O.R.F.
ARCHIVES

and

BAVARIAN BROADCASTING CORP.

(c) 1984 INFAFILM GmbH MUNICH

A REARGUARD PICTURE



The following men were at the Wannsee Conference:

HEYDRICH: Head of Security Police and Secret Service;
Deputy Protector of Bohemia and Moravia

MULLER: SS Gruppenfuhrer (Lieutenant General), Head
of Office IV of the Gestapo

EICHMANN: SS Obersturmbannfuhrer (Lieutenant Colonel),
Head of the Jewish Department of the Gestapo

MEYER: Gauleiter for Occupied Eastern Territories

LEIBBRANDT: Reichsamtsleiter for Occupied Eastern
Territories

STUCKART: Reich Minister of the Interior

NEUMANN: State Secretary, responsible for the Four
Year Plan

FREISLER: Reich Minister of Justice

BUHLER: State Secretary, Governor Generalship (Poland)

LUTHER: Undersecretary, Foreign Office

KRITZINGER: Minister, Reich Chancellery

HOFMANN: SS Obergruppenfuhrer, Race and Settlement
Office

SCHONGARTH: SS Oberfuhrer, Commander-in-Chief of the
Gestapo in Governor Generalship (Poland)

LANGE: SS Sturmbannfuhrer (Captain), Commander of the
Gestapo for Latvia, Representative of the Gestapo in
the Eastern Territories



REINHARD HEYDRICH (1904 - 1942)

Considered in inner Nazi circles as a likely successor to Hitler. Critically wounded by a hand grenade thrown by the Czech Resistance, on May 29, 1942, he died a week later. As revenge, Hitler executed the entire population of the village of Lidice.

ROLAND FREISLER (1893 - 1945)

President of the Volksgerichtshof (Nazi People's Court) from 1942 to 1945. He was known for his merciless cross-examination of the White Rose leaders. He died in his courtroom during an air raid on Berlin on February third, 1945.

ADOLF EICHMANN (1906 - 1962)

Kidnapped by Israeli agents in Argentina in 1960 and smuggled to Israel for public trial. He was hanged in Jerusalem in May, 1962.

WILHELM STUCKART

Only defendant tried at Nuremberg for attending the Wannsee Conference -- sentenced to three years and ten months, he was released early.

Reichsmarshall of the Greater
German Reich
Commissioner of the Four Year Plan
Chairman of the Cabinet Counsel
for the Reich's Defense

Berlin, July 31, 1941

To: Chief of the Security Police and
the Security Service,
SS-Gruppenfuhrer Heydrich

In addition to the tasks already assigned to you under the ordinance of January 24, 1939, to direct the Jewish Question to a favorably optimal solution according to the current situation, I hereby authorize you to initiate the preparations regarding the organizational, actual and material concerns necessary for the Total Solution of the Jewish Question within the realm of German influence in Europe.

As far as the authority of other central offices is concerned, they are to be included.

Furthermore, I instruct you to provide me, as soon as possible, with a total draft of the organizational, actual and material preparations for the realization of the intended Final Solution of the Jewish Question.

(signed Goering)

Chief of the Security Police
and the Security Service

Prague, January 8, 1942

To: Undersecretary Luther
- Foreign Office -
Berlin

Dear Party Comrade Luther,

The conference on the Final Solution of the Jewish Question, which was planned for 12/9/1941, had to be cancelled at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances and the claims thus caused on the availability of certain invited dignitaries.

Since the questions to be discussed can no longer be postponed, I, therefore, invite you anew to a

conference concluding with lunch
on January 20, 1942, at 12:00

Berlin, Am Grossen Wannsee 56-58

The list of invited participants from my last invitation remains unchanged.

Heil Hitler!

Yours,

(signed Heydrich)

Chief of the Security Police
and the Security Service

Berlin, January 25, 1942

To: Chief of the SS Head Personnel Office,
SS-Gruppenfuhrer Schmitt

Re: Final Solution of the Jewish Question

Attached: 1 photocopy

Dear Schmitt,

As an attachment, I am sending you a copy of a letter of appointment from the Reichmarshall of the Greater German Reich/Commissioner of the Four year Plan and Chairman of the Cabinet Counsel for the Reich's Defense dated July 31, 1941, and request acknowledgment and consideration.

According to this, I am authorized to initiate the preparations regarding the organizational, actual and material concerns necessary for the Total Solution of the Jewish Question within the realm of German influence in Europe.

The preliminary work has begun.

Heil Hitler!

(signed Heydrich)

Protocol of the Wannsee Conference, January 20,
1942

Reich Secret Document



Protocol of Conference

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

Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and Reich	Reich Ministry for the Occupied
Office Director Dr. Leibbrandt	Eastern Territories
Secretary of State Dr. Stuckart	Reich Ministry of the Interior
Secretary of State Neumann	Plenipotentiary for the Four Year Plan

Secretary of State Dr. Frösler	Reich Ministry of Justice
Secretary of State Dr. Bühler	Office of the Governor General
Undersecretary of State	Foreign Ministry

Dr. Luther	Party Chancellery
SS Oberführer Klopfer	Reich Chancellery
Ministerial Director Kritzingen	Race and Settlement Main Office
SS Gruppenführer Hofmann	

SS Gruppenführer Müller	Reich Security Main Office
SS Obersturmbannführer	Reich Security Main Office
Eichmann	

SS Oberführer Dr. Schöngarth,	Security Police and SD
-------------------------------	------------------------

Commander of the Security Police and the SD in the Government-General

SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange, Security Police and SD

Commander of the Security Police and the SD in the Generalbezirk Latvia as representative of the Commander of the Security Police and the SD for the Reichskommissariat for the Ostland

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

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

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

The most important elements are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

These consisted of the following:

From January 30, 1933:	from the <i>Altreich</i> [Germany before 1938]	Approx. 360,000
From March 15, 1938:	from the <i>Ostmark</i> [Austria]	Approx. 147,000
From March 15, 1939:	from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	Approx. 30,000

The financing of the emigration was carried out by the Jews or Jewish political organizations themselves. To prevent the remaining

behind of proletarianized Jews, the principle was observed that wealthy Jews must finance the emigration of the Jews without means; to this end, a special assessment or emigration levy, in accordance with wealth owned, was imposed, the proceeds being used to meet the financial obligations of the emigration of destitute Jews.

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

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

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

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

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

Country	Number
Austria	131,800
Bohemia	43,700
Eastern Territories?	420,000
Government-General	2,284,000
Bialystok	400,000
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	74,200
Estonia—free of Jews,	
Latvia	3,500
Lithuania	34,000
Belgium	43,000
Denmark	5,600
France: Occupied territory	165,000
France: Unoccupied territory	200,000
Greece	69,600
Netherlands	160,800
Norway	1,500
Bulgaria	48,000

England	330,000
Finland	2,300
Ireland	4,000
Italy, including Sardinia	58,000
Albania	200
Croatia	40,000
Portugal	3,000
Rumania, including Bessarabia	342,000
Sweden	8,000
Switzerland	18,000
Serbia	10,000
Slovakia	88,000
Spain	6,000
Turkey (in Europe)	55,500
Hungary	742,800
U.S.S.R.	5,000,000
Ukraine	2,994,684
Byelorussia, without Bialystok	446,484

Total: over 11,000,000

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

The influence of the Jews in all spheres of life in the U.S.S.R. is well known. There are about 5 million Jews in European Russia, and barely another 250,000 in Asiatic Russia.

The distribution of Jews according to occupation in the European area of the U.S.S.R. was roughly as follows:

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

Under appropriate direction the Jews are to be utilized for work in the East in an expedient manner in the course of the final solution. In large (labor) columns, with the sexes separated, Jews capable of work will be moved into these areas as they build roads, during which a large proportion will no doubt drop out through natural reduction. The remnant that eventually remains will require suitable treatment; because it will without doubt represent the most [physically] resistant part, it consists of a natural selection that could, on its release, become the germ-cell of a new Jewish revival. (Witness the experience of history.)

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

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

An important precondition, SS *Obergruppenführer* Heydrich noted further, for the carrying out of the evacuation in general is the precise determination of the groups of persons involved. It is intended not to evacuate Jews over 65 years old, but to place them in an old-age ghetto—Theresienstadt is being considered.

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

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

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

With regard to setting in motion preparations for the settling of the problem in Italy, SS *Obergruppenführer* Heydrich considers liaison with the Police Chief in these matters would be in place.

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

On this point, Undersecretary of State Luther stated that far-reaching treatment of this problem would meet with difficulties in some countries, such as the Nordic States, and that it was therefore advisable to postpone action in these countries for the present. In view of the small number of Jews involved there, the postponement will in any case not occasion any significant curtailment. On the other hand, the Foreign Ministry foresees no great difficulties for the south-east and west of Europe.

SS *Gruppenführer* Hofmann intends to send a specialist from the Main Office for Race and Settlement to Hungary for general orientation when the subject is taken in hand there by the Chief of the Security Police and the SD. It was decided that this specialist from the

Race and Settlement Main Office, who is not to take an active part, will temporarily be designated officially as Assistant to the Police Attaché.

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

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

1. Treatment of first-degree *Mischlinge*

First-degree *Mischlinge* are in the same position as Jews with respect to the final solution of the Jewish question. The following will be exempt from this treatment:

a) First-degree *Mischlinge* married to persons of German blood, from whose marriages there are children (second-degree *Mischlinge*). Such second-degree *Mischlinge* are essentially in the same position as Germans.

b) First-degree *Mischlinge* for whom up to now exceptions were granted in some (vital) area by the highest authorities of the Party and the State. Each individual case must be re-examined, and it is not excluded that the new decision will again be in favor of the *Mischlinge*.

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

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

2. Treatment of second-degree *Mischlinge*

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

a) Descent of the second-degree *Mischling* from a bastard marriage (both spouses being *Mischlinge*).

b) Racially especially unfavorable appearance of the second-degree *Mischling*, which will class him with the Jews on external grounds alone.

c) Especially bad police and political rating of the second-degree *Mischling*, indicating that he feels and behaves as a Jew.

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

3. Marriages between full Jews and persons of German blood

Here it must be decided from case to case whether the Jewish spouse should be evacuated or whether he or she should be sent to an

old-age ghetto in consideration of the effect of the measure on the German relatives of the mixed couple.

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

a) *Without children*

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

b) *With children*

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

5. *Marriages between first-degree Mischlinge and first-degree Mischlinge or Jews*

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

6. *Marriages between first-degree Mischlinge and second-degree Mischlinge*

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

SS *Gruppenführer* Hofmann is of the opinion that extensive use must be made of sterilization, as the *Mischling*, given the choice of evacuation or sterilization, would prefer to accept sterilization.

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

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

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

SS *Obergruppenführer* Heydrich pointed out that those Jews would not be evacuated in any case, in accordance with the directives approved by him for the implementation of the current evacuation *Aktion*.

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

supply would not hinder the course of this *Aktion*. Jews must be removed as fast as possible from the Government-General, because it was there in particular that the Jew as carrier of epidemics spelled a great danger, and, at the same time, he caused constant disorder in the economic structure of the country by his continuous black-market dealings. Furthermore, of the approximately 2½ million Jews under consideration, the majority were in any case *unfit for work*.

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

In conclusion, there was a discussion of the various possible forms which the solution might take, and here both *Gauleiter* Dr. Meyer and Secretary of State Dr. Bühler were of the opinion that certain preparatory work for the final solution should be carried out locally in the area concerned, but that, in doing so, alarm among the population must be avoided.

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

NG-2586-G.

1. *Reich Marshal Hermann Göring.*

2. *The reference is to the districts of western Poland annexed to the Reich.*

4

The Jewish Population Disbelieves Reports of the Extermination*

... The liquidation of the Jews in the Government-General began at Passover 1942. The first victims were the Jews of the city of Lublin, and shortly after that the Jews of the whole District of Lublin. They were evacuated to Belzec, and there they were killed in new gas-chambers that had been built specially for this purpose. The Jewish Underground newspapers gave detailed descriptions of this mass slaughter. But [the Jews of] Warsaw did not believe it! Common human sense could not understand that it was possible to exterminate tens and hundreds of thousands of Jews. They decided that the Jews were being transported for agricultural work in the parts of Russia occupied by the Germans. Theories were heard that the Germans had begun on the productivization of the Jewish lower-level bourgeoisie! The Jewish press was denounced and charged with causing panic.

* From a report by Yitzhak Cukierman in Warsaw in March 1944, and sent to London on May 4, 1944, through the Polish Underground.

formulated by the RSHA," he wrote, "I must ask you to reprint your instructions."

That was strong language to a Minister of the Reich, even from the head of the RSHA. Heydrich, by this time Reich Protector in Prague as well as head of the RSHA and chief of the Jewish extermination, was, however, far beyond being troubled by Reich Ministers. He was equally indifferent to the views of Frank, Governor-General of Occupied Poland, who was also interfering in the Jewish question and trying to take the matter out of the Gestapo's hands.

→ To end this constant interference Heydrich determined on a show of force. He decided he must demonstrate to all concerned his unchallenged authority. Towards the end of 1941, therefore, he summoned a meeting of all authorities in the Third Reich involved in the Jewish question at which he would lay down the law. On 29 November, he wrote to all the Reich Ministries announcing that the meeting would take place on 8 December. At the last moment, however, it was postponed because of "unexpected events".

The events were the Japanese attack on the United States fleet at Pearl Harbour and the invasion of Allied territory in South-East Asia, which took the top Nazis as much by surprise as it did the West.

For various administrative reasons the conference was delayed further and it was not until 20 January, 1942, that Heydrich summoned the representatives of all the Ministries concerned to a meeting in the former headquarters of Interpol at Grossen Wannsee No. 56-58, in the delightful south-western suburb of Berlin which bears the same name.

Eichmann, who carried out the preparations for the conference, has explained the background. Heydrich's fundamental aim was to impress upon the higher authorities of the Reich that he was now the sole person in charge of the Final Solution of the Jewish question. He therefore invited representatives of the central authorities at top level to request more co-operation in carrying out his task. The second reason for the conference was Heydrich's well-known personal vanity. He was known for his preening and self-worship, said Eichmann, and he wanted to emphasize that he had now become the uncontrolled ruler of all the Jews in the areas conquered by Germany and to demonstrate publicly the expansion of his influence. Heydrich also wanted to address the most important people in the Reich and by doing so realize certain of his own personal ambitions. "It was well known to all," Eichmann told his Israeli interrogator, "that Heydrich was never satisfied with what he had and always wanted to increase the scope of his power."

The list of participants, therefore, included leading personalities of Rosenberg's Ministry for the Occupied Territories in the East, and from the Departments of the Interior, Justice, Foreign Affairs and Economics. Others included representatives of the Party, Hitler's Chancellery, Himmler's Race and Settlement Office and the RSHA.

Eichmann, in cross-examination in Jerusalem in 1961, said that Heydrich wanted to "nail down" all the various authorities of the Reich and commit them irrevocably to the programme of the Final Solution. He was determined to establish his own supremacy.

The first part of the meeting was orderly. Heydrich delivered the principal speech, based on notes provided by Eichmann. He recalled Goering's authority to him. He established at the outset, in order to prevent any doubts, that it was his department that was responsible for the execution of the Final Solution everywhere, without any geographical limitations. After having outlined the steps taken so far "in the battle against this enemy" for the purpose of forcing the Jews out of the areas in which the German people lived and which constituted its Lebensraum, he stated that a halt had been called to this emigration. There would now begin, on the Fuehrer's orders, the evacuation of the Jews to the East with the goal of arriving at the Final Solution.

Heydrich listed the countries to be considered for this Final Solution, and arrived at a total of eleven million Jews who must be included.

The problem in this way, he said, would be solved: "Under suitable management, the Jews will be moved, in the course of the Final Solution, to labour units in the East. Those capable of working will be transported in long labour columns, men and women separate, to build roads in that region; as a result of which, no doubt, a large part of them will fall out through natural losses. Those who will ultimately remain, who will surely be those who will have great powers of resistance, must be given special handling, because they will constitute a nucleus for the rebuilding of a new Jewry (as history has proved).

"For the practical execution of the Final Solution, Europe will be combed from West to East. In the Occupied territories and the countries within our sphere of influence in Europe, the officer designated by the security police will operate in co-ordination with the appropriate representative of the Foreign Ministry."

The Economics Ministry asked that, for the time being, Jews working in vital war industries should not be evacuated, and Heydrich agreed. Buehler, representative of the Polish Government-

General, gave notice that there the Final Solution had already begun, and urged that the problem be solved with all possible despatch. Buchter declared that the majority of the Jews in his region, about two-and-a-half million, were incapable of work. He agreed that the implementation of the Final Solution be put into the hands of the RSHA and promised full support by the authorities of the Government-General. He asked only for the work to begin as rapidly as possible.

The final surrender of authority was made by Thierack, German Minister of Justice, who told the conference that in order to free the body of the German people of certain elements—including the Jews—he was prepared to transfer the punitive authority over them to the Reichsfuehrer SS—in effect Heydrich.

Thierack said he did this because he assumed that "judicial processes contributed but little to the extermination of these elements of foreign origin. There is no sense in keeping them in prisons or in internment centres. By handing over these people to the police—who will be unfettered by the criminal law—better results will be achieved." This was the final victory of Heydrich's anarchy over German justice.

National Socialism had arrived at the ultimate stage of degeneration. To destroy the Jews it finally surrendered the law itself—an act for which there is almost no precedent in juridical annals.

The speeches were listened to attentively at first and a stenographer, seated between Heydrich and Eichmann, noted everything. Thereafter the conference began to discuss methods of execution and rapidly degenerated into a drinking orgy. Waiters carried round trays of cognac and other drinks. The more the drinks circulated the more everyone spoke at the same time. "I do not want to say there was an alcoholic atmosphere," said Eichmann, describing the meeting at which he was one of the key figures. "It was, of course, an official meeting but not a very formal one when everyone spoke in turn." The shorthand-writer, however, took down this part of the proceedings as well but Heydrich, when he came to read the notes the following day, expunged all reference to the second half of the meeting from the official minutes.

Heydrich achieved his purpose. As a consequence of the Wannsee conference he had a free hand to carry out extermination of the Jews as he thought fit. In the months left to him, as he became ever more absorbed by the problems of the Czech Protectorate, the execution of his orders devolved increasingly on his principal subordinate for Jewish affairs, Adolf Eichmann. And it was Eichmann who was

given the task of carrying out the most sensational mission ever assigned, even to an officer of the Reichsicherheitshauptamt.

Even before the Wannsee conference Globocnik, on Heydrich's instructions, had already started on the Final Solution. In 1942 he had eliminated 150,000 or 250,000 Jews—Eichmann at his trial was curiously uncertain of the exact figure. Globocnik, having done Heydrich's dirty work, wanted an authority for his activities and Heydrich gave it to him soon after the Wannsee conference. Eichmann was despatched to Poland with what amounted to a post-dated cheque for two hundred and fifty thousand Jewish souls—a letter bearing Heydrich's signature authorizing him to exterminate the quarter of a million Jews who were already dead! This process was repeated from time to time as long as Heydrich lived.

During February Eichmann, on Heydrich's instructions, began to implement the decisions of the Wannsee conference, and by 2 March Heydrich was able to write that the conference "to the general satisfaction, revealed a complete unanimity of opinion concerning the practical steps to be followed in implementing the Final Solution". Four days later Eichmann took the practical steps.

On 6 March representatives of the RSHA department IVB4 were summoned from all over Occupied Europe to a conference in Eichmann's office at Kurfurstenstrasse 116 in Berlin. It was also attended by Rademacher, as representative of the Foreign Office. The minutes which have survived show that it was a straightforward administrative conference such as might have been held in any ministry anywhere. The only exceptional factor was that the raw material discussed consisted of human beings.

The main problems concerned transport, about which the German State Railways and the German High Command were tending to be increasingly difficult. When the German armies were advancing the High Command refused point blank to permit Heydrich's death trains to clutter up the strategic lines. And the State Railways also were less than co-operative. Eichmann, as Heydrich's personal representative for Jewish affairs, announced that the Final Solution was under way. The evacuations from Germany and from Poland had already started, while the evacuations from the western occupation countries were about to begin. The first evacuation would involve the deportation of six thousand Jews from France.

By this time Heydrich's operations as chief exterminator of European Jewry were a matter of comment at top Nazi level. On 27 March Goebbels noted in his diary: "Beginning with Lublin the Jews in the Polish Government-General are now being evacuated