

The Jewish Police

On 1st May 1940, with the blessing of the German *Schutzpolizei*, a body named “IRU” (*Inspekcja Ruchu Ulicznego* [Inspection of Street Traffic], in Polish) was formed as part of the *Judenrat*. To the headquarters of this body were chosen Commander-in-Chief - M. Galster; aides - A. Helman, Borzykowski, J. Lande, M. Cederbaum, Z. Jaroczynski and J. Sztarkman. At the beginning, there were forty-five officials and, a couple of weeks later, seventy-two⁶³.

To begin with, the IRU engaged in regulating the movement of the Jews in the streets. They did not permit people to stroll about in the city’s main streets, to sit on the benches in the *Aleje*, to gather in the streets, to stand in the streets in larger groups and so on. Later, they began to regularly patrol twenty-four designated points - in ten streets of the area with a dense Jewish population, and in fourteen departments of the *Judenrat*⁶⁴.

The functionaries were also employed in escorting the [shipments of] food products for Jews, maintaining order, while these products were being distributed, watching over the sanitary conditions and prices in the Jewish shops, keeping an eye on the order in the concentration points for refugees (“shelters”), assisting in evacuating and relocating Jews from their residences, ensuring that Jews should not be found in the ghetto streets when the Russian prisoners of war were being led through, as well as carrying out all the orders of the presidium and the *Judenrat*⁶⁵.

The attitude of the Jewish populace towards the IRU was one of disregard, and to Galster, the chief of IRU, the attitude was particularly contemptuous. Jews would joke, “Nu, we already have autonomy...” and they would add – “Woe to the autonomy that one receives from the Germans!”

The activity of the IRU began to look different the moment the ghetto was established and the IRU was turned into a Jewish “*Ordnungsdienst*” [Order Service].

On 21st April 1941, *Stadthauptmann* Wendler sent out an ordinance (to the *Schutzpolizei*, the Polish *Granatowa Policja*, the *Sicherheitspolizei**, the 310th Battalion and the IRU) under the title *Service Directives for the Jewish Ordnungsdienst in the Jewish Residential Area in Częstochowa*. This ordinance commences with these words:

“In connection with the implementation of a Jewish residential area in the city of Częstochowa, these Jews must see to the peace and order there themselves. O this end, a Jewish Ordnungsdienst has been formed. The Judenrat is responsible for the equipping and maintenance of this body.”

⁶³ Statistics Book of the *Judenrat*, Vol. I, pp.42-43.

⁶⁴ Statistics Book of the *Judenrat*, Vol. I, pp.42-43.

⁶⁵ Statistics Book of the *Judenrat*, Vol. I, pp.42-43.

* [TN: Ger., lit. “Security Police” – the state political and criminal investigation security agencies in the Nazi era, made up by the combined forces of the Gestapo and the *Kriminalpolizei* (criminal police; Kripo).]

Following this introduction come nine clauses, in which he lists the powers, duties and responsibilities of the *Ordnungsdienst*, as well as the uniforms and ranks. The rank of each serviceman could be recognised from the number of stars, or buttons, which he wore on his cap and yellow armband. The chief wore four silver stars; his deputy – three; a district leader – two; and his second-in-command – one silver star. A division leader wore three yellow metal buttons; a unit leader – two yellow buttons; and a regular serviceman – one yellow button⁶⁶.

At first, the policemen were embarrassed to show themselves in their police uniforms and caps, and the vast majority of them would try to be as least conspicuous as possible in this “*strój*” [costume]. As soon as one of them appeared in the street in such a “*strój*”, children would run after him, as they would have chased Purim *spielers** in the good old times. Adults, on their part, would mostly meet them with mocking smiles. This attitude gradually disappeared. The *Ordnungsdienst* became a regular phenomenon. People came to terms with the idea that they, too, were to some extent a power which one had to take into account. The policemen, themselves, also became accustomed to their role. They felt that they also possessed a little power, and this strongly affected many of them.

Besides the duties which the IRU had previously had, the *Ordnungsdienst* also needed to stand guard at the ghetto’s border points and guard that Jews should not leave the ghetto without special permits. They also engaged in seeking out and handing in those who would worm their way out of forced labour, in forcing people to pay the taxes imposed by the *Judenrat*, in affecting arrests when furniture was requisitioned - be it by the Germans or the *Judenrat* - in arresting people during relocations and in carrying out special operations to seize, for labour, those people who did not work regularly at “*placówki*”.

These “special operations” were particularly felt in the last months leading up to the great deportation, which took place in the second half of 1942. The police would execute these “special operations” upon notification from the Jewish Employment Bureau which, by orders of the German Employment Bureau or other German organs of power, was required to supply a certain number of workers for local “*placówki*”. The police would mostly conduct such special capture operations at night. But the police did not always succeed in these operations, for many Jews already had their hideouts, to which they would disappear at moments of such “visits”.

The year 1942 was rich in such operations. On 27th June 1942, seventy-nine policemen took part in one such operation, and they delivered 107 Jews; on 2nd July, thirty policemen delivered thirty-one men; on 8th July, sixteen policemen delivered one worker; on 10th July, twelve policemen delivered sixteen men; on 11th July, nine policemen delivered nine men; on 16th July, twelve policemen delivered sixty men; on 17th July, ten policemen delivered thirty men; on 22nd July, four policemen delivered a certain number of hostages without distinction of gender for those who had hidden, escaping from *placówki*; on 30th July, fifteen policemen delivered seventy-six men; on 1st August, thirty policemen delivered twenty-five men; on 4th August, twenty-four policemen delivered seventy-two men; on 12th August, all the police reserves delivered fifty-one men; on 13th August, those same reserves delivered sixty-five

⁶⁶ Service Directives for the Jewish *Ordnungsdienst* by Stadthauptmann Dr Wendler.

* [TN: Jesters wearing disguises who made merry on Purim, akin to circus clowns.]

men and, on 14th August, twenty-eight policemen delivered fifty-two men⁶⁷. After 16th August such operations already no longer took place, because, due to the mood of uneasiness which had spread in the ghetto, each individual strove, of his own will, to be employed in some *placówka*, in order to be counted among those who were needed as a workforce.

At the request of the *Judenrat*, the police would also seal off the dwellings of Jews, who hid from work or because they had not paid the taxes or fines imposed upon them. Between 18th June and 16th August 1942 alone, orders were issued to seal off seventy-six residences⁶⁸. At the request of the *Judenrat's* Commerce & Craftsmanship Department, the Jewish police would also seal off the shops of those Jews who had not paid rent on time, or other debts which that department demanded of them. Due to the increased number of duties, the number of police functionaries grew from 72 to 150 and, in the year 1942, to 250⁶⁹.

At the moment the ghetto was established, there were not many who were eager to become policemen. But this situation gradually changed to such an extent that, in order to be accepted into the police force, people paid increasingly larger sums of bribery - as being a constable meant being exempt from paying various taxes, and being freed from forced labour, terror and various other tortures and humiliations. Although not all the policemen fulfilled their duties zealously, nevertheless, the previous attitude of the Jews of indifference and later mockery towards the constables turned into one of open hatred and derision. There were increasingly more cases of policemen being publicly assaulted and insulted.

September 1942. As soon as the murderous liquidation of the Jews in Częstochowa began, all the policemen, with their wives and children, were let into the quarantine zone at ul. Garibaldiego 18, where the Jewish doctors with their wives and children were also allowed (they were not permitted to take any other family members with them). Here, they needed to wait out all the "selections", thus avoiding the deportations. Only a small group of policemen, with a few members of the *Judenrat*, were allowed to assist, while the "selections" were being carried out.

After the first "selection", some of the policemen were transferred to the HASAG munitions factory, where they ceased to be policemen and took over the functions of foremen. Some were also sent away with the transports to Treblinka. Only fifty policemen were left, who had a special preferential treatment from the Germans or from the officers of the *Granatowa Policja*. These fifty constables, on the orders of *Hauptmann* Degenhardt, took part in the forthcoming "selections". They also went throughout the ghetto's courtyards and called out the hiding Jews from the bunkers. On these occasions, a few of them found concealed Jewish property in the bunkers and, most importantly, valuables [such as] jewels and, in this manner, became wealthy. Nevertheless, there were, all in all, several exceptions among the fifty policemen, who did not pursue riches and endeavoured to be of assistance during the "selections", so that Jews would be able to get over to the side that was designated not to be sent away. But they did this mostly for relatives and people whom they knew well.

⁶⁷ Daily reports in the police ledger.

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⁶⁹ Written notification from the police commandant.

The majority of the fifty policemen rolled down into the abyss following the whole deportation, when a new ghetto, which was called the "Small Ghetto", was created for those remaining. Intoxicated by the drive and possibilities of becoming rich from the hidden Jewish property, in the belief that they and their families were sure to remain alive if only they served the Germans loyally, they became true servants of the *Schutzpolizei* at the expense of the several thousand Jews who were still left. During the "*akcje*" on elderly Jews and mothers with children in the "Small Ghetto", they zealously sought out, dragged out and delivered the number of victims that the *Schutzpolizei* demanded of them.

At the end of June 1943, after the liquidation of the "Small Ghetto", some of the fifty policemen with their wives and children were sent over, along with other Jews from the "Small Ghetto" who had been left alive, to the HASAG camp, which was set up in the Pelcery munitions factory. The rest were left at the disposal of the *Schutzpolizei*, in order to work in clearing the murdered and also to clear out the few remaining Jewish property and goods in the "Small Ghetto".

On 19th July 1943, during the "selection" which was conducted on the Jews in the HASAG-Pelcery camp, all the policemen with their wives and children - without exception - were thrown into a bunker, along with several other hundred Jews (only the wife of one policeman, Kohn, hid with her year-and-a-half-old son). On the following morning, they were killed, along with about 300 other Jews in the Jewish cemetery, where a large mass grave had already been prepared in advance.

Armeesoberkommando.
Der Chef der Zivilverwaltung.

Tschenstochau (Kreisbehörde).
den 15. September 1939.

An
die Herren Landräte
und Oberbürgermeister
des Gebietes.

IV. Wirtschaft:

Behandlung der Juden.

Ziel der Behandlung der Juden im Wirtschaftsleben muß sein, sie für die Zukunft restlos auszuschalten und ihre Betriebe in arische Hand zu überführen.

a) Für jüdische Unternehmungen der Industrie und des Großhandels werden Treuhänder eingesetzt, gleichviel ob die Besitzer geflüchtet sind oder nicht" die Verordnung vom 9.9.1939 über die Beschlagnahme von Wirtschaftsgütern gilt hierzu die Grundlage.

Ausgenommen von der Treuhändereinsetzung bleiben bis weiteres Unternehmungen, deren Inhaber Angehörige eines mit Deutschland nicht im Kriege befindlichen Landes sind.

b) Die Einsetzung von Treuhändern unterbleibt grundsätzlich für jüdische Handwerks- und Einzelhandelsbetriebe; soweit die Inhaber solcher Betriebe geflüchtet sind, bleibt der Betrieb geschlossen, es sei denn, daß dadurch die Versorgung der Bevölkerung unmöglich oder gefährdet wird. Wenn hiernach der Betrieb geschlossen bleibt, sind Waren und sonstige Vorräte sicherzustellen und zur Linderung bestehender Notstände der minderbemittelten Bevölkerung zugänglich zu machen. Wird der Betrieb mit Rücksicht auf die Versorgung der Bevölkerung wiedereröffnet, so ist er einem geeigneten Arier zu übergeben, der die vorhandenen Waren und Vorräte nach Menge und Wert feststellt, und den Betrieb auf eigene Rechnung weiterführt.

Rüdiger
Verteiler: Abt. Im II, III einschl. Polizei je 3 Abdrücke
I 1 1 Abdruck,
I 1 a 1 "
Sondergerichte,
ACK,
Geh. Staatspolizei.

rot. L. KUS2NIR

Army High Command
The Chief of the Civil Administration

Częstochowa (District Authority)
15th September 1939

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To

The Messrs District Administrators

and Lord Mayors

of the area:

IV. Economics:
Treatment of the Jews

The aim of the treatment of the Jews in economic life must be to fully resist them in the future and to transfer their businesses into Aryan hands.

a.) Trustees are [to be] appointed for Jewish industrial and wholesale companies, regardless of whether the owners have fled or not; the ordinance of 9th September 1939 on the confiscation of economic goods provides the basis for this.

Until further notice, companies, whose owners are nationals of a country not at war with Germany, are exempt from the appointment of a trustee.

b.) The appointment of trustees is generally omitted for Jewish handicraft and retail businesses; if the owners of such businesses have fled, the business will remain closed – unless this makes the supplying of the population impossible or jeopardizes it. If the business remains closed after this, goods and other supplies must be secured and made accessible to the underprivileged population to alleviate existing emergencies. If the business is reopened with a view to supplying the population, it must be handed over to a suitable Aryan, who will determine the quantity and value of the goods and supplies available and continue the business at his own expense.

Rüdiger [hand-signed]

Mailing list: Depts. I, II, III, including the police, three copies each
I1 – one copy
I1a – one copy
Special Court
Army High Command
Secret State Police

Photocopy: L. Kusznir [handwritten]