THE JACKET FROM DACHAU: ONE SURVIVOR'S SEARCH FOR JUSTICE, IDENTITY AND HOME



THE JACKET FROM DACHAU: one survivor's search for justice, identity and home

The exhibit opened on October 5, 2016 at The Harriet and Kenneth Kupferberg Holocaust Center (KHC) at Queensborough Community College (QCC), CUNY

View the exhibition online at https://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/jacket/

Exhibition Curators and text written by:

Cary Lane, Ph.D., Curator-in-Residence, KHC Associate Professor, English Department, QCC

AND

Dan Leshem, Ph.D., Director, KHC (2015-2018)

CURATORIAL INTERNS AND FELLOWS:

Peter Bandziukas, Kaitlyn Cicciariello, Gillian Farnan, Abigail Jalle, Alejandro Leal-Pulido, Daniel Nussdorf, and Nitya Ramanathan

This exhibition was made possible, in part, due to the generous support of the Queens Delegation and specifically New York City Council Members: Karen Koslowitz, Elizabeth Crowley, Dan Dromm, and Barry Grodenchik. We would like to acknowledge and thank: Marisa Hollywood, Associate Director of the KHC; Yad Vashem; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; USC Shoah Foundation; Claire Friedlander Family Foundation; Jillian Eisman; Dr. Eva Fogelman; Kat Griefen; Dr. Geoffrey Megargee; Dr. Saulius Sužiedelis; Sam Widawsky; Lorre Zullo and Michael Peres for testimonies, historical information, fact-checking, documents, images, and films that helped contextualize the artifacts in this exhibit. We also wish to thank Henry Schein, Inc. and Henry Schein Cares for their invaluable mentorship and support.

Copyright © 2016 Queensborough Community College. All Rights Reserved. Second printing: May 2024.





CURATORS' STATEMENT

Survivors of the Holocaust frequently attribute their ability to avoid death to one main variable: luck. For Benzion Peresecki, the 15 year-old son of a delicatessen owner from Radviliškis, Lithuania, surviving the Holocaust was indeed fortunate, but came at an immense cost.

Within a span of 10 years, Benzion's father died from a stomach ulcer, his brother was murdered by the Nazis, he was forced into a ghetto, and was imprisoned, beaten, and subjected to forced labor at the Dachau concentration camp. After liberation, Benzion spent five years in a displaced persons camp with his

mother, Chiena, who herself survived a death march at the Stutthof concentration camp.

After immigrating to the United States, Benzion fought to re-establish his identity, find justice for his family's suffering, and create a new home. Throughout his postwar years, no matter where he lived and how many times he moved, he always kept his jacket from Dachau.

Benzion never explained to his family or friends why he brought the jacket with him to New York; in fact, he never told his children that it even existed. However, keeping his jacket is consistent with other resilient actions on his part: his immigration to the United States; his search for a new, meaningful identity despite underemployment and several iterations of his name (he formally changed his name to "Ben Peres" soon after his immigration); his courage coping with the emotional and psychological stress from his traumas; his tenacious search for justice through a decades-long reparations campaign with the German government; and, his determination to support his wife, mother, and two children in New York.

On July 4, 2015, Ben's jacket, which had been in his closet for 65 years (and 37 years after his death), was discovered at the estate sale of his home in Bellmore, Long Island by a vintage clothing collector named Jillian Eisman. Ms. Eisman's grandfather served in the Soviet army during World War II, and her brother was killed on 9/11; so, she immediately recognized the jacket as an object of pain, understanding, comfort, and reflection with which the public should engage. She subsequently donated the jacket to the Kupferberg Holocaust Center (KHC) to ensure that students and the broader community could view the jacket and understand its significance.

New York, a city of immigration, determination, tragedy, and perseverance, also plays a role in this story. Ben and his mother lived and worked in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan after their immigration. They also both received medical treatment from several New York doctors for physical and psychological injuries sustained during the Holocaust. In 1968, with modest reparations payments awarded by the German government more than 20 years after their liberation, Ben and his mother, Chiena, along with his wife, Chaya, and two children, Lorrie and Michael, were finally able to buy a permanent home in Bellmore, NY. Ben lived there until his death in 1978.

This exhibit was compiled from over 1,500 documents, films, and photographs left by Ben Peres and his family that contextualize his search for justice, identity, and home after he was torn away from his Lithuanian home. The curatorial team for the exhibit included Queensborough's own students and KHC interns: Peter Bandziukas, Kaitlyn Cicciariello, Gillian Farnan, Abigail Jalle, Alejandro Leal-Pulido, Daniel Nussdorf, and Nitya Ramanathan.

1

- Cary Lane, Ph.D., Curator-in-Residence, KHC, Associate Professor of English
- Dan Leshem, Ph.D., Director, KHC (2015-2018)



2

THE LITHUANIA YEARS (1900-1941)

VIEW OF RADVILIŠKIS, LITHUANIA

JEWISH CULTURE IN PRE-WAR LITHUANIA

The ancestors of the mostly Yiddish-speaking Lithuanian Jews (Litvaks) primarily hailed from Poland and Germany. While there is evidence of earlier Jewish settlement, the first known charters granting residency privileges were issued to Jews living in Trakai, Grodno, Brest, and Lutsk, Lithuania in 1388-1389 by Grand Duke Vytautas.

By the end of the 18th century, an estimated 250,000 Jews lived in what is now Lithuania and Belarus. The 1897 Russian imperial census counted nearly 1,500,000 Jews in the lands of the former Grand Duchy.

The Lithuanian government census of 1923 counted over 154,000 Jews in the Republic, constituting seven percent of the population, the largest national minority in Lithuania. However, this number did not include the Jews living in the parts of Lithaunia that were part of Poland from 1920-1939, including the all-important center of Jewish culture in Vilnius (Vilne). It was only in October 1939 that Vilnius and its environs were placed under Lithuanian control, which also included refugees from Poland (which had been occupied by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union). This increased the number of Jews in Lithuania from an estimated 168,000 to nearly 250,000.

On the eve of the Nazi invasion of Lithuania, its largest cities—Vilnius, Kaunas, and Siauliai—were centers of Jewish learning, culture, and commerce. Vilnius alone had 100 Jewish organizations, including dozens of Yiddish-speaking schools, 40 synagogues, four Hebrew high schools, a Jewish hospital, and hundreds of Jewish-owned businesses.

THE PERESECKI FAMILY OF RADVILIŠKIS, LITHUANIA



CHIENA LEVIN PERESECKI, BORN 1900



MOSCHE AHARON PERESECKI, BORN 1895



BENZION PERESECKI, BORN 1926



LEVI-ICHAK PERESECKI, BORN 1924

According to the 1931 Lithuanian government census, there were 42 shops and businesses in Radviliškis. 76% were owned by Jews, including three by Moshe Peresecki (Benzion Peresecki's father).

Type of Business in Radviliškis, 1931	Total	Owned by Jews
Groceries	9	7
Flax and crops	5	5
Butcher shops and cattle trade	5	3
Restaurants and taverns	6	3
Food products	1	1
Drinks	2	2
Clothing, furs and textiles	4	3
Footwear, leather and shoemaking	2	2
Haberdashery and house utensils	1	1
Medicine and cosmetics	2	0
Radios, sewing machines and electrical equipment	1	1
Tools and iron products	1	1
Lumber and heating materials	1	1
Paper, books and stationery	1	1
Miscellaneous	1	1



THE RADVILIŠKIS RAILWAY STATION, CIRCA 1930.

Benzion Peresecki's father, Moshe, passed away in 1937, at age 42, from a bleeding ulcer. These documents, authored by Benzion to support his reparations claims against Germany after the Holocaust, described the three retail stores the Peresecki family owned in Radviliškis, Lithuania before the war: "Peresecki's Little Meat and Fruit Store," "Peresecki's Photo Store," and "Peresecki's Wine Shop."

J.A. LEVENSON A. LEVENSON bbl 428 W. 259 ZAST. BEN PERES MUNCHEN 8. W. GERMANY COPT SEPT20,61 CHEN , GERMANY 428 W. 259 INST. BRUNX, MY. RIVERDALG N.Y. 14471 DEAR DR. LEVENSON FEB 19.66 EXELOSED REASE FIND ALL DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO MY MOTHERS DEAR DR. LEVENSON CLAIM FOR MEALTH DAMAGES. I BELIEVE YOU WILL FIND ALL PAPERS EXCEPT ONE EXTENSIVE THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER DATED AFFIDAUT OF A WITNESS VERIFYING MY MUTHERS INCLUESS I APPROCIATE YERY MUCH YOUR OFFORTS & AM SORRY FUR THE DURING HER STAY IN K.2. THIS AFFICANT WILL FOLLOW IN CONVENIENCE & THE EXTER WORK THAT I HAVE CAUSED YOU VERY SHORTLY. YOU WILL NOTE THAT WHENEVER POSSIBLE PAPERS ARE MADE I LEAVE ALL DESCRANS AS TO NOW TO PRESENT THY CASE DUT IN GERMAN, AS FOR PAPERS THAT NEED THANSIATION I UP TO YOU. I KNOW YOU WILL DO YOUR BEST & THAT WILL BE HAPPY TO REINDUEST TO YOU ALL SOCH NECESSARY TUS T. PLOTHSE NOTE THAT THE AMETEN LETEMEN OF ESTER ANCOLI (A WITNESS) IS 21256. AS FOR MOTHERS PRETEN RETENDENTED IS MORE THAN GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME. I WOULD LIKE , NOWEVER TO POINT OUT THAT THE YOU SURLY MAKE & WILL BE ABLE TO FILL IN INMEXEVER IT MAIN REASON FOR MY NOT FILLING OUT FORM "B" IS NOTESSAR ON THE ENCLOSED FORMS. WAS THE FACT THAT I WAS CONFUSED & STILL AM YERY IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE THATE HAVE AS TO WHO I SHOULD CLAIM SUPPORTED ME BEFORE NOT ANSWERED QUESTION IT ON PAGE 5 (FORM B) THE WAR, IN VIEW THAT MY FATHER DED IN 1937 AS IT WAS NOT CLEAR TO ME AS TO WHETHER THE & MAINLY IN VIEW OF MY MOTHERS PREVIOUS QUESTIONS PERTAIN TO MY FATHER OR BROTHER. CLAIM FOR THE DEATH OF MY BROTHER (I AM SURE AS YOU WILL REPALL MY MOTHER CLAIMED FOR THE XATH OF MY BROTHER PNOT FOR MY FOTTHER. YOU HAVE ALL THE PATA OF THIS OLD CASE) MY FATHER DEDIN 1937. TO HELP YOU PRESENT THE CASE, IN WHICHEVER IN ORDER TO NOT TO DERAY ACTION I AN GIVING WAY YOU MAY DECIDE, I AM GIVING YOU THE YOU INFORMATION PERTAINING BUTH TO MY FATTIER & FOLLOWING INFORMATION! MY BROTHER SO THAT YOU TOULD PERMAPS YOURSEEF FILL IN THE MISSING INFORMATION MY FATHER OWNED THREE STORES ALL THREE STORES IN RADWILLISHKI, LITAUEN PERTEINING TO FATHER PERTEINING TO BY BROTHER DELICATOTSICH STORE (ANDY, FRUIT & CROSORIOR) NAMED PRESECKIO (ANDY, FRUIT & CROSORIOR) NAMED STANDARD PREKIY REALTONCE. P ONE - A DELICATESSEN STORE LEVI -ICHAR PERESERI MUSHE AHARON PERESECKI BOEN 28 NOV. 1922 MARIED - 1922 DAED - 1937 OCCUPATIONS . TOOLMAKER PRESECKIO 2) ONE - PHOTO EQUIPMENT STORE - NAMED (FOTO APARATY KRAUTUUE APPROX INCOME 2400 LITAI OCCUPATION - BUSINESSMANN (KAUFMANNY LITHORMAN MINEY SCHOOL - SCHOOL OF (OMNERCE (PULAND) PERESECKIO I BELIEVE IT IS BEJT.) ONG - YING & LIQUER STORE - NAMED } GRADUATED - BEFORE WORD WAR I IF YOU TAKE THE INFORMATION VYNO PAROVOTUVE FIRMA - PERESECTI - PROTOCILIQUER, JOINT ESCOPEDALDING MY BROTHER FROM REAL - ESTATE PROVOUS RECEASS SURVICES TO THE PREVIOUS RECORDS SUBAITTED HIS TOTAL GARNING WERE ABOUT INCOME - APPROXIMPTE \$ 20,000 YOHRCY TO YOU FOR THE FT 100,000 "LITAI" A YEAR CASE. I NORE YOU HAVE 6 IN ADDITION HE OWNOT REAL GITATE

THE BEGINNING OF THE HOLOCAUST IN LITHUANIA



LEVI-ICHAK PERESECKI, KILLED BY NAZI AND LITHUANIAN FORCES IN A MASS SHOOTING IN JULY, 1941.

> MEMBERS OF AN EINSATZGRUPPE (GERMAN MOBILE KILLING SQUAD) MURDERING JEWS IN A PIT NEAR SIAULIAI, LITHUANIA.

6

PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, AND VIOLENCE SPREADS ACROSS NAZI EUROPE

Nazi propaganda and prejudiced attitudes towards Jews, the disabled, Roma and Sinti, homosexuals, and Jehovah's Witnesses began spreading across Europe after Hitler's rise to power in 1933. By 1935, the Nuremberg Race Laws established formal discriminatory policies in Germany; Jews were prohibited from using Christian businesses, marrying non-Jews, and lost their right to vote.

Lithuania fell under a Soviet sphere of influence as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (a non-aggression pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union) in August of 1939. By 1940, Soviet troops occupied Lithuania and the country was formally incorporated into the Soviet Union. After the Nazi invasion and occupation of Lithuania in late June of 1941, the increased political de-stabilization resulted in the rapid spread of antisemitism.

Despite their 700-year history in the country, Jews were now scapegoated as untrustworthy, Soviet sympathizers. Distrust, deportation, and violence against Jews rapidly commenced in an organized and scaled way.



CUŽIAI

AD YASHEM PHOTO ARCHIV

NAZI PHOTOGRAPH OF JEWS DIGGING PITS IN THE KUŽIAI FOREST NEAR SIAULIAI, LITHUANIA. THE EINSATZGRUPPEN (NAZI KILLING SQUADS) WOULD USE THESE PITS TO BURY MURDERED JEWS OF SIAULIAI.

THE CONCENTRATION AND MASS MURDER OF JEWS BEGINS IN LITHUANIA

By 1941, violence against Jews across eastern Europe had sharply increased as the Nazis moved east. In their wake, dozens of mobile Nazi mass-killing units called Einsatzgruppen conducted mass shootings across Nazioccupied countries, including Lithuania. The killing squads in Lithuania were assisted by anti-Soviet partisans and auxiliary police units created at the outset of the German occupation, including some supporters of the so-called Lithuanian Activist Front. People often referred to the local collaborators as "white arm-bands." The killings in Radviliškis were among the earliest organized massacres of Jews in the country.

On July 11th and 12th, 1941, four days after all the Jews of Radviliškis, Lithuania (including the Peresecki family) were forced from their homes and concentrated in the old Radviliškis army barracks, Nazis and members of the Lithuanian Activist Front led all Jewish men aged 16 or

older to the grove next to the Jewish cemetery. There, about 300 Jews were shot and buried by Nazis and local collaborators.

One of the victims of the Radviliškis massacre was Levi-Ichak Peresecki, Benzion Peresecki's 17 year-old brother.



A MONUMENT COMMEMORATES THE MASSACRE SITE IN RADVILIŠKIS, LITHUANIA.



AFFIDAVITS RELATING TO THE DEATH OF LEVI-ICHAK PERESECKI:

JULY 12, 56 CH. PERESECKI 1337 ST. JOHN'S PC. BROOKLYN 13,N.Y.

DEAR DR. LEVENSON

death.

MUNCHEN 22, REITNORSTR. 12/0

DR. J. A. LEVENSON

ATTORNEY AT LAW

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER DATED JUNE 30 TH, 56. I AM VERY SORRY TO INFORM YOU THAT, AT THE PRESENT, I CAN NOT & FIND ARYONE WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE KILLING OF MY SOM.

17 SEEMS TO ME 17 15 RIDICULOUS TO

Ask for such a statement nince anyone present at the

was ober

Dr. J. A. Levenson Attorney at Law München 22, Reitmerstr. 12/e

Munich, June 30th, 1956 Liebigstrasse 28 1/f

Mrs. Ch. Peresecki 1354 St. Johns Pl.

Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

Sehr geehrte Mrs. Peresecki:

Thre Entschaedigungsangelegenheit habe ich nunmehr soweit vorwaarts bringen koennen, dass von der zustaendigen Behoerde die Entscheidung in Aussicht genommen ist.

Es handelt sich lediglich noch um eine Beweis-Auflege, die ich Innen nachstehende bekannt gebe:



Als Todesnachweis fuer Ihren Sohn Lewi-Ichek Peresecki liegen mur die Erklæerungen der Zeugen Mekel und Bekin-Ancoli vor. Aus ihnen geht jedoch nicht hervor, ob sie Augenzeugen des Todes ihres Sohnes waren. Es ist daher notwendig, dass Sie von Augenzeugen bestaetigen lassen, dass ihr Sohn am II.7.1911 in Rdwilischki/Litauen erschossen wurde.

Um Ihren Anspruch zu einem erfolgreichen Abschluss zu bringen, liegt es in Ihrem eigenen Interesse, wenn moeglich fuer die Bestaetigungen – in der ueblichen Form – von Augenzeugen besorgt zu sein und mir die se ehestens zugehen zu lassen.

Inzwischen verbleibe ich mit den besten Gruessen auch an Mr. Peresecki,

"DEAR DR. LEVENSON, THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER DATED JUNE 30TH, 1956. I AM VERY SORRY TO INFORM YOU THAT, AT THE PRESENT, I CAN NOT FIND ANYONE WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE KILLING OF MY SON.

IT SEEMS TO ME IT IS RIDICULOUS TO ASK FOR SUCH A STATEMENT SINCE ANYONE PRESENT AT THE SHOOTING WAS SHOT TO DEATH."

THE GHETTOS OF LITHUANIA

Before deportation to concentration camps, European Jews who were not murdered by mobile killing squads were forced to move to ghettos, which were cordoned-off sections of cities with cramped living spaces, little food, few civil rights, and limited employment. Ghettos were guarded by armed Nazi troops, local troops, or Jewish police.

In Lithuania, ghettos were established after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June, 1941. Ghettos were located in or near most major cities in Lithuania, including Vilna, Siauliai, Kovno, and Svencionys. Siauliai was the largest ghetto in northwest Lithuania.



JEWISH WOMEN WASHING CLOTHES WITH SOLDIERS IN THE BACKGROUND, SIAULIAI GHETTO, 1941. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY NAZI AIRMAN SCHRODER, WHO WAS STATIONED IN LITHUANIA IN 1941. AN INSCRIPTION NEXT TO THE PHOTOGRAPH READS, "OUR JEWISH WOMEN...."

BENZION AND CHIENA PERESECKI'S MOVE TO THE SIAULIAI GHETTO

On August 26, 1941, the Jews living in Radviliškis, Lithuania were told that the barracks were needed for the German army and that the Jews would be moved to Žagarė, a small ghetto north of Radviliškis near the Latvian border. Jews with children (including Chiena and Ben Peresecki) were able to move to the Siauliai ghetto, with special permission from the town's authorities.

The majority of remaining Jews in the barracks of Radviliškis were moved to Žagarė where, on October 2, 1941—the day after Yom Kippur—all Jews in the ghetto were murdered.



JEWS AND GERMAN SOLDIERS IN THE SIAULIAI GHETTO, 1941.



A MAN BEARING A YELLOW STAR IN THE SIAULIAI GHETTO.



JEWISH CHILDREN AND NAZI SOLDIERS IN SIAULIAI, 1941.

PRESENT-DAY MAP OF EUROPE INDICATING SIGNIFICANT SITES OF THE HOLOCAUST AND THE PERESECKI FAMILY'S MOVEMENT





NAZI AND LITHUANIAN FORCES MURDERED APPROXIMATELY 85% OF LITHUANIAN JEWS, ONE OF THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGES IN EUROPE. IN ALL, ABOUT 66% OF EUROPEAN JEWS WERE KILLED.







BENZION'S MOVE TO DACHAU & KAUFERING (1944-1945)



DACHAU AND KAUFERING

In August of 1941, the Nazis deported the remaining 10,000 Lithuanian Jews still in captivity, including Benzion and Chiena Peresecki, to concentration camps in Germany – primarily Dachau and Stutthof.

In August 1944, Benzion Peresecki arrived at Kaufering where he remained until liberation on April 27, 1945.

Dachau, a major Nazi concentration camp near Munich, Germany, had over 30 subcamps; at least 11 of these sub-camps were named Kaufering for a railroad outpost 30 miles west of Dachau. There, Jewish and political prisoners built and worked in subterranean munitions and

cement factories, insulated with 10-feet thick concrete walls in order to protect against allied bombing and fire.

The prisoners at Dachau and Kaufering worked long and grueling hours producing bullets, bombs, flak, cement, and other armaments including the V-2 rocket. Prisoners were given meager rations, were often beaten, and were frequently forced on death marches by Nazi troops. Thousands of prisoners died of starvation, disease, execution, and exhaustion.





BUNKERS AND BARRACKS AT KAUFERING IV WERE BUILT UNDERGROUND TO PROTECT AGAINST ALLIED BOMBING RAIDS AND SECURE MUNITIONS PRODUCTION.

PRISONERS INSIDE THEIR BARRACKS AT KAUFERING IV.

CONCENTRATION CAMP UNIFORMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Prisoners of the more than 44,000 identified Nazi concentration camps and incarceration sites across Nazi-occupied Europe were frequently issued uniforms, especially in larger camps. Prisoners in death camps or smaller incarceration sites were often not issued uniforms.

Uniforms were usually manufactured in sewing workshops within larger concentration camps, such as Dachau, Ravensbrück, and Sachsenhausen. Prisoners with backgrounds in textile trades or tailoring were often forced to work in uniform production, which may account for the surprising quality of sewing, stitching, pockets, and buttons of Benzion Peresecki's Dachau uniform.

Made of various blends of cotton and wool, most uniforms had a vertical striped pattern with shades ranging of purple to navy blue with various tones of grey and beige. Male prisoners were provided articles including jacket, pants, and a cap, while women were often issued a dress or skirt and jacket as their uniform. All prisoners were given the same uniform, no matter their political, social, or religious designation.

There were multiple numbers, symbols, colors, and badges sewn on uniforms to identify the types of prisoners. Identification badges were displayed on the left pocket of prisoners' jackets, and occasionally on sleeves and pants. Triangles of various colors communicated different classifications:

- Yellow for Jewish prisoners
- Red for political prisoners
- Green for criminals
- Blue for Emigrés/emigrants (Jews or political exiles who fled Nazi Germany in 1933 but returned within the 1930s)
- Purple for Jehovah's Witnesses and pacifist religious groups
- Pink for "Homosexuals" (primarily queer men and trans women)
- Black for "Work-Shy" and Asocial prisoners (e.g., mental disease, addiction, lesbians, and trans men)
- Brown for Roma and Sintii
- Colored bars for prisoners with multiple classifications
- Yellow triangle with an outlined black triangle for male Jewish "race defilers" (sex with an Aryan German)

- Yellow triangle with a solid black triangle for female Jewish "race defilers" (sex with an Aryan German)
- Red non-inverted triangle for POWs and deserters
- Red dot for a prisoner suspected of escaping





Kaufering

Many uniforms had identification numbers printed onto their uniforms; some were handwritten. Benzion Peresecki's jacket from Kaufering (pictured left) also had an inside pocket that was hand stitched later, clear from different thread and uneven stitches.

Birkenau

Birkenau, a subcamp of Auschwitz, was known as Auschwitz II, opened in 1941. Auschwitz and its three subcamps was one of the largest camps to work and kill prisoners. This jacket, worn by female prisoner Malka Polak-Adler, displays no identification number or badge. The jacket has thin vertical stripes and pockets. Many uniforms were not in the best conditions and would need alterations, usually done by prisoners themselves. This jacket has tears underneath the arms, some holes in the collar and is missing some buttons.

Gross-Rosen

Gross-Rosen, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen, was a forced labor camp located in western Poland. This jacket, worn by an unknown inmate, has light blue and cream vertical stripes and a handwritten identification number in black ink. Below the identification number is a red triangle with a "P," identifying the prisoner as Polish.

Below the identificat with a "P," identifying

Buchenwald

This jacket was worn in Buchenwald, one of the largest concentration camps located near Weimar, Germany. The vertical stripes are much thinner and lighter than other uniforms. This particular uniform has a post-liberation badge that denoted the survivor's experience in the Holocaust. Many times, these patches were created by the survivors themselves or by a survivor organization.



Kaiserwald

Some prisoners, especially women, were given overcoats as part of their issued uniform. This long-sleeved coat was issued to Esther Kessler Begeil at Kaiserwald, a labor camp in Latvia. The identification number was handwritten with a 6-pointed star. The yellow triangle, identifying Begeil as a Jew, was an alternative to the traditional yellow star displayed on many garments and uniforms.

Sachsenhausen

This uniform was worn by Dr. Julius de Clercq Zubli, a non-Jewish doctor from the Netherlands imprisoned at Sachsenhausen for "resistance activity." Sachsenhausen was a large system of concentration camps located north of Berlin, and primarily housed political and criminal prisoners before interning other types of prisoners in 1943. The identification badge and number of Dr. Zubli is hand-drawn in ink with an "H," for "Hollander" next to the number. Note the armband, identifying Zubli as an "härt arzt," or "prisoner doctor."



Unidentified Camp

This jacket, worn in an unknown location, has three pockets and five large, black buttons.



This jacket was worn by Matthaeus Pibal, an inmate at Dachau. Likely manufactured in the same facility as Benzion Peresecki's jacket, this uniform differs in its style of stamped numbers, absence of pockets, and a purple triangle, identifying Pibal as a Jehovah's Witness.

© ITS BAD AROLSEN

LIBERATION

The Kaufering IV sub-camp of Dachau was liberated on April 27, 1945 by the 12th Armored Division of the United States 7th Army.

On that day, Johann Eichelsdorfer, the last Nazi commandant at Kaufering (pictured below), was forced to stand among the corpses that were laid out prior to burial.

Eichelsdorfer was convicted of war crimes and was hanged at Landsberg prison, a few miles from the Kaufering camp, on May 29, 1946.







AN AMERICAN SOLDIER WALKING THROUGH THE GATES OF KAUFERING (LANDSBERG) CONCENTRATION CAMP ON THE DAY OF LIBERATION.



A SURVIVOR OF KAUFERING IV WITH AMERICAN SOLDIERS AFTER LIBERATION.



AMERICAN SOLDIERS VIEW BODIES OF VICTIMS OF KAUFERING APRIL 30, 1945.



US TROOPS FORCE GERMAN CIVILIANS TO VIEW VICTIMS AT KAUFERING IV, APRIL 29–30, 1945.



TWO SURVIVORS OF KAUFERING. APRIL 27, 1945.



MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL DETACHMENT OF COMBAT COMMAND A, 12TH ARMORED DIVISION, XXI CORPS, US 7TH ARMY, VIEW THE BURNED CORPSES OF VICTIMS AT KAUFERING IV. LANDSBERG-KAUFERING, GERMANY, APRIL 28, 1945.

CHIENA PERESECKI'S CONCENTRATION CAMP AND LIBERATION

Chiena Peresecki, Benzion's mother, was separated from her son in August of 1943 and was transported to a temporary labor camp in Lithuania named Linkaičiai.

In July 1944, Chiena was moved from Linkaičiai to the women's section of the Stutthof concentration camp, near Gdańsk, Poland.

Approximately 85,000 of the 110,000 prisoners brought to Stutthof were murdered and it was the last concentration camp to be liberated by the allies on May 9, 1945. With the Allies approaching quickly, Chiena as well as the other inmates in the camp were marched towards Germany. The cold and harsh conditions of the march killed many.

After her liberation, Chiena Peresecki reunited with her son, Benzion, in the Landsberg, Germany displaced persons (DP) camp.

1944 NAZI ROLL BOOK arra hasili Prison Institution Institutio Institutio Institutio Institutio Institutio Inst LISTING CHIENA **PERESECKI IN** THE STUTTHOF CONCENTRATION •5•11 12•4•9 1909 1909 1914 CAMP, JULY 1944. 29. 273274444444 Schill Leibe Borne Borne Rolling West Con the Page 2 of 2 As the Soviet army approached, the nazis marched us toward Darever. On our way we suffered from extreme cold. Mrs Amolski'legs froze. As the Soviets came we took her to a hospital where both her legs had to be amputated. All the above statements made by me herein are true in each and every respect. **STATEMENT** chiena Seres FROM CHIENA Chiena Peres **DESCRIBING HER** SUFFERING. Sworn to before me This 31st day of Jan. 1977



AFTER THE HOLOCAUST: THE PERESECKI'S AT THE LANDSBERG DISPLACED PERSONS (DP) CAMP (1945-1949)

1

LANDSBERG DISPLACED PERSONS (DP) CAMP

ĩ.

EIII

21

THE LANDSBERG DISPLACED PERSONS (DP) CAMP

As part of the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe after the war, displaced persons (DP) camps became vital in the effort to house, heal, train, and repatriate Holocaust survivors after liberation.

Landsberg, about 30 miles from Dachau, was the secondlargest DP camp in postwar Europe and was where Benzion Peresecki reunited with his mother, Chiena. Situated in former military barracks, the Landsberg population ballooned to over 5,000 Jewish DPs by 1946. The populace of Landsberg was mainly comprised of Russian, Latvian, and Lithuanian survivors with a Russian-Jewish commander.

Landsberg had a strong Jewish life and culture, boasting a newspaper, radio station, synagogue (including a mikvah, Talmud, and Torah), as well as a small Yeshiva. The DP camp also had a sizable educational system, led by ORT (Society for Trades and Agricultural Labor) schools. Its programs were centered around engineering, technology, nursing, and basic job training. Benzion Peresecki received his high school graduate equivalency diploma through ORT.



JEWISH MEN IN A CARPENTRY WORKSHOP AT ORT SCHOOL (SOCIETY FOR TRADES AND AGRICULTURAL LABOR) IN LANDSBERG, GERMANY, CIRCA 1947.

DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE LANDSBERG DP CAMP

COMMITTEE

DVERNMENT MILITARY (**JEWISH FORMER POLITICAL** PRISONNERS COMMITTEE **Residence** A tilleriekaserne LANDSBERG/L. - BAVARIA za. Lech Landsbe **A** Certificate. Certificate No. 7 GO The Camp-Commandant by means of letters scripturel at disposition and examination occured WE SERTIFIE, THAT admits hereby Wir bescheinigen hiermit, dal BescheinDeung that Storeset 2Re FAMILY NAME Der Lager-Kommandaht bescheinigt hiermit auf Grund der vorgelegten Urkunden und der vorge-nommenen Feststellungen. SaßAkt. born 10 Familienname last civil lodging Je OTHER GIVEN NAME during german oppression was political prisonner (Häftling) before the occupation of this territory. Vorname Peresetski Dehrom BIRTHDATE 23. 2. 1900BIRTHPLACE geboren am 10.7.26 in Radvilisk. letzter Wohnsitz Schaulen: Concentration Camp of Dacham Geburtsdatum Geburtsplatz prisonner Nr. 57679 DURING GERMAN APPRESSION WAS KEPT IN NAZI-CONCENwährend der Deutschen Verwaltung in nationalsozialistischen Konzenwährend der deutschen Verwaltung vor der Be-setzung dieses Gebietes politischer Häftling geinto this camp. TRATION-CAMPS AND WAS BY ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY trationslagern gefangen gehalten und von Alliierten Truppen vom This card serves as personal identification of above wesen ist. FORCE FROM THE CONCENTRATION CAMP OF amed individual. Er kam hierher vom Konzentrationslager July 1945. Konzentrationslager Landsberg a L., 12 Dachai LIBERATED. Commanding ry Government befreit wurde. Häftlings-Nr. 84670 ps DPTA 12 PRISONNERS NO. Army Hartlieghti ANDSBER MOTHER AND SON RECLINE AT WISH FORMER POLITICAL PRISONNERS

LANDSBERG DP CAMP, CIRCA 1948.



REST AND RECOVERY AT THE LANDSBERG DP CAMP

IMAGES SHOWING BEN AND CHIENA'S LIFE IN LANDSBERG.



STANDING 5' 4" TALL (163 CM), BENZION PERESECKI PLAYED GUARD FOR THE LANDSBERG DP CAMP BASKETBALL TEAM.



For many Jews in displaced persons (DP) camps, education and job training were essential for re-entry into society. After Benzion passed his high school equivalency test, he began engineering training in nearby Munich, where he commuted from his barracks in Landsberg each day. The image below is his membership document for the Jewish Students' Union in Munich; at right is his high school equivalency diploma.

NAME Name	Ver	esecki		is member of the Union Jewish Students in Mun ist Mitglied der Vereinigung Jüdischer Student
Christian name Vorname	03	enzion		in München
Date of birth Geburtstag	10.	7. 1926,		H MARNICH Z
Born at Geburtsort	Radi	vilisekky	Liter	secretary Sekretär
faculty Fakultät	Ma	schinens	resta,	Date issued 21 Secenche, 194
term		3 4	5	1. Exprise It. Mars 1900
TG AM	1 0 1000 1	8 9 38	10	A Rome . 30 Hinn Asta
address: domicile Wohnort street Nr. Straße Nr.	F	*		Colligba 4. Expires Göltig bis

Nº 1/55 VERIFIKATIONS-KOMMISSION für Jüdische Hochschulkandidaten München.

Herr/Frau/Frl. Peresecki Benzion geb. am 10. VII. 1926 zu Radwilischkis der sein im Jahre 1942 an de m. Gymnasium in Schaulen erworbenes Reifezeugnis nicht mehr besitzt, hat durch Ablegung der Verifikations-Prüfung gemäß M. E. des Bayerischen riob und Kultus vom 9, 9, 1947 Nr. VI 39428 und vom 12, 4, 1948

1946

Der Vorsitzende der

mit Gesamturteil

"Bestanden"

die wissenschaftlichen Voraussetzungen für das Hochschulstudium erfüllt. Die Einzelergebnisse der Verifikations-Prüfung sind in dem nachfolgenden Auszug der Prüfungsniederschrift zusammengestellt.

München, den 28. 1. 1948

No= 36 - 46/F

Staatsminis

Nr. VI 20978 i

294

In 1946, Benzion Peresecki re-visited the Kaufering barracks and munitions factories from the nearby Landsberg displaced persons (DP) camp.











Documents chronicling Ben and Chiena's preparation for their move to the United States from the Landsberg DP camp.

One document is from Ben and Chiena's resettlement interview; the other is an affidavit from Ben's uncle in the United States, Izzy Doubler, offering to help Ben and Chiena resettle.

PERSONS

Shill: Student Individual Resettlement

(d) Assimilation yes - no Suffered

.

.

Annex C to Administrative Order 29.

English

nazi

Case No.

CMINO, 847362 ACTION SHEET

Name of Displaced Person or Refugee Peresechi Ben- Gion.

(a) Repatriation: yes - no dest all relatives in Lohnamia.

Reg. for U.S. A time Dec 1946

a students, will go to 4.5. A, where they has their only relatives, where he well be able to study. If it will not be predictions to go to U.S.S.

they will try emigration to Paletine.

Cone Camps - Hantering Bei Dercha

Area Team No. 62 Assembly Center - Landsberg

(b) Mass Resettlement U.S. A. or Palestine.

Tas in (e) Interviewer's Recommendation of young boy with his mother,

THE INTERVIEW RECORD **RECOMMENDING THAT BEN AND HIS MOTHER BE** ALLOWED TO IMMIGRATE TO EITHER THE UNITED STATES OR PALESTINE.

"SUFFERED VERY MUCH FROM GERMAN NAZIS. WAS IN CONC. CAMP. KAUFERING BEI DAUCHAU, DEUT."

"A YOUNG BOY WITH HIS MOTHER, A STUDENT, WILL

GO TO U.S.A, WHERE THEY HAS [SIC] THEIR ONLY RELATIVES, WHERE HE WILL BE ABLE TO STUDY. IF IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBILITIES [SIC] TO GO TO U.S.A. THEY WILL TRY EMIGRATION TO PALESTINE."

Individual Assurance by Relative HIAS
STATE OF NEW YORK CITY OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF NEW YORK
Issy Dobuler, Citizen residing at 482 Montgomery St.,
Brooklyn, N.Ybeing duly sworn, deposes and says:
I am the Uncle of Penjamin Peresecki
(state relationship)
aggoupanied by xthe right wige regulers ref. 9.2.xfemily-
residing at Rossmerkt 192, Lendsberg/Leob, Bavaria, Garmany U.S. Zone
who is making application for imm ration, under the provisions of the
Displaced Persons Act of 1948.
I hereby assure that the applicant will be suitably employed as
a Framer (Ladies Handbags) by Merti Lether Goods Co. (nature of employment) (name of employer)
at_ 14 E. 33rd Street, N.Y.C.,N.Y.
without displacing some other persons from employment, and that the
applicant will receive the provaliting rate of wages for such employment
in the community in which it will be undertaken.
I further assure that the applicant and the members of h_ family
upon arrival in the United States, will be provided with safe and
sanitary housing, will share a two room apertment with his mother Chiena (number of rooms) 482 Montgomery St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y., without requiring any other persons
to vacate the premises to be occurred.
I further assure that the applicant and the members of h_ family
will not become public charges.
I further assure that the applicant and the members of h_ family
will be met at the port of entry; that the inland transportation to
the ultimate destination will be paid for by me; and that he will
be met and received at the ultimate destination.
I make this affidavit in order that the above named applicant for
visas may be admitted to the United States under the Displaces Persons
Act of 1948
sworn to before me this berg & olite
Z. day of . October 10/8

7... day of ... Qataher...., 1948 . ever alexen

ANTER ABLANS Assay Tublic in the State of New York Residing in Kings County Residing in Kings County Residing in Kings County Certificates filed in Kings Co. Clk's No.334, Reg. No.251A-8 mission Expires March. 30, 1949

27

236

THE PERESEKI'S IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES



ESTABLISHING A NEW IDENTITY IN NEW YORK

By his 23rd birthday, Benzion Peresecki's name and identity had been established, modified, misspelled, or changed at least seven times. The original Lithuanian spelling of his name, "Benzion Peresecki," was later usurped by his Dachau prisoner number, "84679," as well as various spellings by liberating forces, including, "Bencion Peresetzki," "Benzijon Peresizki," "Benzion Peresetzki," "Ben-Cijon Peresecki," and "Benjamin Peresecki." In 1949, during his immigration to the United States, his name was changed one final time to "Ben Peres."

STATE OF NEW YORK) COUNTY OF NEW YORK) SS.: BEN PERES, being duly sworn, deposes and says: I understand both English and German and certify that the fore-going is a correct translation of my German certificate issued to me under my former name of BENZIJON PERESIZKI. I have shortened the spelling of my name in my declaration of in-tention for U. S. citizenship, and am using the name BEN PERES now only. Ben Pery Ben Peres Sworn to before me this 25th day of March, 1953.



TRUMAN'S RESPONSE TO THE UNITED STATES DISPLACED PERSONS ACT (JUNE 25, 1948)



HARRY S. TRUMAN, 33RD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (1945-53) Again, on January 7, 1948, I urged the Congress "to pass suitable legislation at once so that this Nation" may do its share in caring for homeless and suffering refugees of all faiths. I believe that the admission of these persons will add to the strength and energy of the Nation." The Congress did not act "at once."...

The bad points of the bill are numerous. Together they form a pattern of discrimination and intolerance wholly inconsistent with the American sense of justice. The bill discriminates in callous fashion against displaced persons of the Jewish faith. This brutal fact cannot be obscured by the maze of technicalities in the bill or by the protestations of some of its sponsors...

For all practical purposes, it must be frankly recognized, therefore, that this bill excludes Jewish displaced persons, rather than accepting a fair proportion of them along with other faiths. The bill also excludes many displaced persons of the Catholic faith who deserve admission. Many anti-Communist refugees of Catholic faith fled into the American zones after December 22, 1945, in order to escape persecution in countries dominated by a Communist form of government. These too are barred by the December 22, 1945, dateline...

THIS IS AN EXCERPT FROM TRUMAN'S 1948 RESPONSE TO A U.S. CONGRESSIONAL BILL: THE DISPLACED PERSONS ACT. TRUMAN ARGUED AGAINST THE DISCRIMINATORY NATURE OF THE BILL.

The bill reflects a singular lack of confidence by the Congress in the capacity and willingness of the people of the United States to extend a welcoming hand to the prospective immigrants...

I know what a bitter disappointment this bill is to the many displaced victims of persecution who looked to the United States for hope; to the millions of our citizens who wanted to help them in the finest American spirit; to the many Members of the Congress who fought hard but unsuccessfully for a decent displaced persons bill. I hope that this bitter disappointment will not turn to despair.



THE PERES'S SEARCH FOR A HOME

On May 1st, 1949, Benzion Peresecki, now Ben Peres, moved to his uncle's apartment at 482 Montgomery Street in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn.

He lived in at least three different locations in New York City between 1948 and 1968, including in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx.

He carried his jacket from Dachau with him during each move.



HOW BEN PERES MET HIS WIFE, CHAYA

In this diary entry, Chaya Peres, Ben Peres's wife, wrote about a family friend, Esther, who introduced her to Ben. Chaya said this introduction to Ben would "alter the course of my life."



every intention to return to Israel after completion of the one year program. Though I did not know anyone in this country, I did have the telephone number of a woman named Esther Ancoli. Esther was the sister-in-law of my Israeli classmate Yocheved. Yocheved and her husband Lusik, (Esther's brother) had requested that I contact Esther to send their regards. I gladly made the telephone call, not knowing that this call would alter the course of my life.

I first came to the United States in the Spring of 1960 as an Israeli exchange student. At that time, I had

From the very first time I spoke with Esther, I was struck by her warmth and generosity. She opened her heart and home to me; willingly offered her friendship; and made me feel that I had a home away from home.

The turning point in my life came when Esther asked if I was interested in meeting a wonderful man named Benzele (or Ben for short), who she knew from childhood. She described Ben as intelligent, generous, gentle and kind. I agreed to meet Ben, and quickly discovered that Esther was right about him. Ben had all of the qualities that Esther described and more. Ben and I were soon wed, and we decided to establish our home and family in America. From many years I experienced the joy of being married to a loving and devoted husband and father. For this gift, I am eternally grateful to Esther.

Over the years, Esther's deep friendship with my family has never faltered. It has been a blessing to know her. Esther treated my mother-in-law as her own mother, and my husband, like a brother. My children grew up knowing that Esther was incapable of forgetting a birthday. I came to realize that my close friendship with her was destined to last a lifetime.

Esther and I have shared so much over the years. There has been laughter and joy, as well as heartache and pain. We have attended more dinner parties than I can count, many of which were hosted by Esther. It is no secret that Esther is a consummate hostess, and that her table settings would put even Martha Steward to shame.

Esther was a pillar of strength to me when I lost my husband. Even long after Ben's death, Esther continually reached out to me, ensuring that I remained connected and involved with our mutual friends.

It is difficult to imagine a more caring, loyal and trustworthy friend than Esther. My bond with her is exceptionally strong and has withstood the tests of time and distance. I know that she will remain an integral part of my life.

Happy birthday Esther! May you live to be 120 (and after that we'll negotiate for more).

Love always,

Chaya

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TOLL OF NAZI OPPRESSION

For millions of survivors of the Holocaust, the emotional and psychological toll of Nazi torture was devastating.

As part of his reparations effort, Ben Peres itemized the medical care and associated costs treating the psychological and physical damage inflicted during the Holocaust.



In 1967, Ben was not pleased with one of his psychiatrists, describing how Dr. Boem and his secretary "acted exactly like Nazis." Ben was required to see this particular psychiatrist commissioned by the German government to verify his injuries.



THE PERES'S REPARATIONS EFFORT

In an effort to seek justice for their pain, suffering, and associated health costs, many survivors of the Holocaust sought restitution from the post-war German government.

Holocaust reparations cases, most often international legal efforts, took years to compile, file, and adjudicate.

The Peres family actively sought reparations in a multi-decade effort using a lawyer in Munich, Germany, Dr. J.A. Levenson.

DEAR DR. My NAME IS BETICIAL PERSIECE AND I AM A REMOVENT OF BRUKYN, N.Y. USA. HAVE BEEN IMPERSANED IN THE GUATTO OK SCHAULEN SND-14 THE CONCENTRATION COMP. OF POSTAN DE AT ATOTAL OF APPECK. & Vores. 1 HAVE ALPERDY RECEIVED A COMPENSATION TOR IMPROVINENT TROUGH URO, HOWEVER 1 AN TOLO THAT MAN DERSON WHO WER IN JULY 1941 AT THE AGE OF 14 TO THE CONCENTRATION CAMP REPERSU TOR AT A TOTAL OF APPROX. 14 4 YORC HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED MY COMPENSATION FOR INPRISONMENT MIRCOGH URO. HAS HOWEVER IAM TOLD THAT PETESONS WHO ENTERED WERE ARESTED AS MINORS (or MINDERJACIES) AND REWERE HATER PREVENTED FRAM OBTAINING THEIR EDUCATION ARE ALSO ENTITLED TOR A COMPELSATIONS, I WOULD BE NERY HAPPY IF YOU WOULD ACCEPT MY CASE. MY AKTEN ZEICHEN 15 HOPING TO HEAR FROM YOU SOON



	b/_1
Dr. J. A. Levenson	02-1
Addressed at LOW	Octer 12, 1955 1/m
München 22, Reitmorstr. 12/0	00 Ber 12, 1999 1/m
Munich.September 14,1955	
Minich, September 11, 1999	
lire Chiena Feresection 1331, St. Hohns File	
NROUKLYN 13,W.X,	Mr. Benzion Perssecki
	1334 St. John's Pl.
Dear Urs Fereneoki :	Brooklyn 15, N.Y.
- Dear MrD + CI Green A	
I thank you wary migh for your interste without any shinget a blob and I shall be plassed to take care of your interste without any shinget a blob of the second se	Dear Mr. Peresecki:
	I thank you very much for your kind letters, duted September
<pre>alarso i am objection which has to be signed and filled out (Whis will be mapping</pre>	14 and 19, 1955 the contents whereof was carefully noted.
for filing a slaim for your meaner therease you	I shall certainly be pleased to take care of your personal
ublon;	interests and I am therefore forwarding to you the following
ubless 2/1 Four as is seen which has to be signed and the signature workfine by a model or German Constitution on as each as you and.	forms:
malie or German Consulter;	1) 1 Power of Attorney which has to be signed and your
3/ 1 Justiones, which has to be reast out as exact so you can.	signature verified by Notary Public.
	2) 1 Questioned as shirt in the second set of the
1/ 1 decision while any one way only. As you are a good friend it my set 2 seasing which has so we you are solved to you are a good friend it my season are not been been by the instead to yourly 7 1/2% from the mounts we good and the season of the form the mounts.	 2) 1 Questionnairs which has to be filled out. Although the problem of setting compensation for minors is quite
2/ 1 2 dealer wind for fee why be insted los, only 71/2% from the anounts	difficult and the Law is not favourable I shall see
meningipa.	what I can do for you in this respect. After receiving
They is no need for you analyting to URC heating on shall manage everything	the forms I shall try to check your file and then I shall return to this problem in question.
without been,	
You can rast amound that I shall start working on your case ismediately upon	As regards the case of you in the meantime obtain
receipt of the above mentioned papers,	proof about the death of your father who perished as a
By wife Taibars remembers you and your non asgeale well and she is sending you	result of the Suzi parageution. Will you give me also
her love,	all details about this problem and I shall start working on the case without any delay,
for a happy and Prosperous New	on the case without any delay.
for a happy and Prosperous haw ponting the ponting rid and and the	I hope to hear from you very soon and with best regards
sincurely yours	to you and your mother also from my wife Taibele
the second second	to both of you, I am
a coorney at Lak	young very sincerely
	W X
	KUIRUK
	Attorney-at-Law
	The second se

Dr. jur. J. A. LEVENSON Rechtsanwalt	8 MÜNCHEN, den Dec. 19, 1967 Reitmorstr. 14 Telefon 220369	591	
			Law Offices Jeannos A. Levanson München, Liebigsinste 28
Mr.Nen P e r e s 428 West 259th Street DRONX, N.Y.10471 U S A			
My dear Mr.Peres!			Mr. Ben Peres 652 W. 163rd St. Apt. 2 New York 32, N.Y.
	f Nov.24,1967 I am very happy to in- difficulties I could accomplish the your favor.		USA
ted a total amount of DM 4 ated pension payments and due DM 17.130 which I have	ed decision passed you have been grant- 20,950 (capital compensation, accumul dental damages).From said amount are a already collected.For the expenses I		Dear Mr. Peres:
	that I have forwarded to you through DM 16.695I am surg that the balance ming of 1968!		I am today returning to should like to inform you the interests again before court
can learn all particulars	ne original decision from which you pertaining to the subject matter.	27	on the following basis: For the time from 1 Jan
instructions and as soon a bills in compliance with	where I am forwarding to you the offic: na you will have obtain the necessary the insetructions will you submit the alate General and notify me about it		will be granted a monthly per and for the time from 1 April may not be found needy anymous pension in the amount of DM be adjudged a capital compen
	ear from you soon again, and with all from Taibels and our son to all of corplially yours		for the time from 1 August 1 For the time from 1 January pension will be granted to h nother's income was above th so-called Existenz-Minimum.
	Attorney at Law		for the time including April Please let me know by r
Thank you very much fo the enclosure!	r your wery kind letter of Dec.7 with		is in agreement with the abo the court until 24 April 196 not think that better result the requirements by the law.
	13	E.	At any rate I am please and looking forward to heari kindest regards to you and M
	MARCH PL		
	15 Martin		

Munich, 24 March 1960 J/k REPARA RACCORDING ACCORDING A

we the living standard based on the imm. Altogethers the will resolve April 1960 an amount of DN 33,900---the store descino so that is will inform 1960 accordingly. I personally do would sould be obtained considering balance will

At any rate I am pleased to inform you of such good results and looking formard to hearing from you by return mail I am with kindest regards to you and Mrs. Peres

yours very truly,

REPARATIONS RECEIVED:

"According to the enclosed decision passed you have been granted a total amount of DM 28.350.-(capital compensation, accumulated pension payments and dental damages). From said amount are due DM 17.130 which I have already collected. For the expenses I have deducted DM 435.- so that I have forwarded to you through my bank the equivalent of DM 16.695.-I am sure that the balance will be paid at the beginning of 1968."

Ubersenden wir Ihnen anbei Scheck Nr. we hand voo enclose deeue No. 5054663	Im Auffrage von/By order of/Par l'ordre de A.A.Kto. 214 499 RA Dr.jur J.A.Levenson München	Mr. Ben Peres 428 West 259th Stree Bronx N.Y.10471
Restitution payment DM 16.695, less charges à 3.9931	we hand you enclosed cheque No. nous vous remettons ci-joint chèque No. 5054663 wegen/concerning/concernant	\$ 4.173,70 Z470/8380











A HOUSE, IF NOT A HOME

In the summer of 1968, with enough money from their German reparations effort, Ben and his mother put a down payment on a newly built, four-bedroom ranch house with a single-car garage at 920 Siems Court, North Bellmore, Long Island.

Ben, his mother Chiena, his wife Cheya, his son Michael, and his daughter Lorrie all lived in this house.





BEN'S JACKET HUNG IN THE BEDROOM CLOSET OF THE BELLMORE HOME.



BEN PERES'S DEATH

After surviving the Holocaust and finally settling down in his new home, Peres died on June 23, 1978 after suffering a stroke during his daughter's bat mitzvah ceremony. He was 52 years old.

THE JACKET'S LEGACY

Seventy years after Ben's liberation from Dachau, his prisoner's jacket still hung in the back of a closet in his North Bellmore home. With Chaya's (Ben's wife) health deteriorating, she moved in with her son, Michael and put her house up for sale. An estate sale was held at the house in July of 2015. It was at this sale that Ben's jacket once again saw the light of day.

Jillian Eisman, a vintage clothing dealer, was shopping at the estate sale when she spotted distinctive blue stripes on a clothing rack. Once she saw the prisoner number on the left breast she knew what she had found. Jillian purchased the jacket along with a few other articles of clothing for \$10. A few days later, Jillian contacted the Kupferberg Holocaust Center's (KHC) Associate Director, Marisa Hollywood, whom she had known since high school, to share her discovery. Jillian graciously donated the jacket to the KHC and the Center began extensive research.

A little research revealed that prisoner number 84679 had belonged to Benzion Peresecki, a prisoner at Dachau/Kaufering: clearly, the same person as the Ben Peres who owned the house in Bellmore. Dr. Dan Leshem, the KHC's then Director, was able to get the contact information for Ben's daughter Lorrie who was completely unaware of the jacket's existence. Eager to help, she and her brother donated over 1,500 documents, artifacts, photographs, and home movies to the KHC in order that the Center would be able to tell the story of her father's journey through the Holocaust.

The jacket, assigned to a young prisoner from Radviliškis, Lithuania, stayed with Ben throughout his life, and even outlived him. This artifact, from a concentration camp liberated over 70 years ago, tells the story of Ben's search for justice, identity, and home.



QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A College of The City University of New York 222-05 56th Avenue, Bayside, New York 11364-1497

THE HARRIET AND KENNETH KUPFERBERG HOLOCAUST CENTER

Dr. Diane B. Call, President of the College Rosemary Sullivan Zins, Vice President for Institutional Advancement

ADVISORY BOARD

Harbachan Singh, Chairperson Diane Cohen, Vice-Chair Manfred Korman, Secretary Janet Cohen Abe Dyzenhaus, D.D.S. Jan Fenster Hanne Liebmann Jainey Samuel Barbara Schultz Eun Chung Thorsen I. David Widawsky Steve Wimpfheimer Ellen Zinn

PAST CHAIRPERSONS

Martin Seinfeld Joseph Sciame Sandra Delson Ed.D. Owen Bernstein, Ph.D. May D. Ladman Anne B. Morse

BOARD EMERITI

Mel Dubin Gerdi E. Lipschutz Alfred Lipson Adam Mandelblatt Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld Jeffrey Silbiger, M.D.

Dan Leshem, Ph.D., Director (2015-2018)

Marisa Berman Hollywood, Associate Director



QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE | CUNY

Telephone: 718-281-5770 • Email: khc@qcc.cuny.edu • Website: https://khc.qcc.cuny.edu/

EXHIBIT CURATED AND TEXT WRITTEN BY:

Cary Lane, Ph.D., KHC 2016-2017 Curator-in-Residence

Dan Leshem, Ph.D., KHC Director (2015-2018)

KHC VOLUNTEERS

Elena Berkovits Jane Keibel Hanne Liebmann Linda Ramirez Kimberly Roma Barbara Vinitz

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Phil Roncoroni Nicholas Caccese Stephen Di Dio Alice Doyle **DESIGNER / COVER ART** David Arroyo

WALL TEXT / CUSTOM DESIGNS AND PRINTING Linda D'Avino

PHOTOGRAPHY Leo Correa

ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHER Cesar Cabezois

GERMAN LINGUISTS AND TRANSLATORS Jean Campbell Jim Cohen Carla DiFranco

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE EXHIBIT

Jillian Eisman Michael Peres Sam Widawsky Lorrie Zullo

This publication is funded through the generosity of organizations and individuals. If you would like to make a donation so that more educational material may be printed and circulated, please make a donation to the:

QCC Fund, Inc./Kupferberg Center Queensborough Community College 222-05 56th Ave., Bayside, NY 11364-1497

The mission of the Harriet and Kenneth Kupferberg Holocaust Center is to use the lessons of the Holocaust to educate current and future generations about the ramifications of unbridled prejudice, racism and stereotyping.

Copyright © 2016 Queensborough Community College. All Rights Reserved.







