

Tracing Activities by Experienced Organizations

Experienced relief organizations also took part in the search, such as the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* (AJDC), which had been founded in 1914 in the context of World War I. It had tracing offices all over Europe for clarifying the fates of missing persons and survivors of the Holocaust.

Many of its employees had been persecuted by the Nazis themselves. Searching for documents with information about Nazi crimes was another important activity which the organization carried out. Many documents from the AJDC later went to the ITS and are now preserved in the *Arolsen Archives*.

0137/_12

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
C O 618 Mil. Gov. Det.
(British Army on the Rhine)
HONNE-BELSEN CAMP

Date: 21. 1. 1946

Enquire / Nadawka / Anfrage

Name/Name: **BURGENTHAL Mrs** First Name / Imię nazwisko: **GERDA** Nationality / Nationalita: **Czech**

Place of Birth / Miejsce urodzenia: _____ Date of Birth / Data urodzenia: _____

Name of parents / Nazwa rodziców: _____ Occupation / Zawód: _____

Present Address / Obecny adres: **Oettingen, Wagnerstr. 6** Relation / Powiązanie: **Keiner**

Original Home Address / Oryginalny adres: _____

The recipient desires news of the addressee.
Podatnik pragnie wie o adresacie.
Der Adressierte verlangt die neue Anschrift.

**Particulars of Person Sought
Angaben fehlender Personen**

Name/Name: **BURGENTHAL** First Name / Imię nazwisko: **TOMMY**

Place of Birth / Miejsce urodzenia: **Lubchew/C.S.R.** Date of Birth / Data urodzenia: **11.7.24** Married Status / Stan mat. / zam.: _____

Father's name / Nazwa ojca: _____ Mother's name / Nazwa matki: **Mrs. BURGENTHAL Gerda**

Date of Immigration or Deportation / Data przyjazdu lub wyjazdu: _____

Original Home Address / Oryginalny adres: _____

Last known Occupation / Ostatni znany zawód: _____

Date of last Communication / Data ostatniej wiadomości: **January 1945**

Last known Address / Ostatni znany adres: _____

Further useful Particulars / Dalsze użyteczne dane: **Mother has seen photo of her son in Hardeverscher Kurier dated 13 July 1945, crossing street in Berlin with British M.P. and two fat boys. One was, Peter ROCHENBERG, his friend, is known to be now in Palestine.**

The addressee reply to be written on the reverse side.
Odpowiedz odesłać:
Für die Antwort des Empfänger die Rückseite benutzen.

Inquiry Form for Thomas BURGENTHAL, AJDC Office in Belsen, August 4, 1946

Thinking she had seen her missing son Thomas in a newspaper photo, Gerda BURGENTHAL, who lived in Göttingen, intensified her search for him. One of her inquiries reached the AJDC tracing office near the former Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. She had last seen her son in January 1945.

Telephone: REGENT 6944-5

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

MP/E 199, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1. ENGLAND

Oct. 23, 1946. 0137/_58

TO: A. J. D. C. BELSEN.

FROM: A. J. D. C. LONDON.

RE: YOUR LETTER 1.10.1946 RE TOMMY BURGENTHAL.

With further reference to your letter as above, we have to-day received the following report from Warsaw Office in reply to the cable sent at your request:-

"We beg to notify you, that the Manager of the Orphanage in Otwock wrote us, that Tommy BURGENTHAL was informed by cable of the location of his mother just before receipt of the J. D. C. Letter. Tommy BURGENTHAL lives in this Children's Home since 7.11.1945. He was in a camp in Sachsenhausen; after the liberation he was taken by the 1st Division of the Polish Army as a regiment's child and was brought by a soldier to us. He went through many hardships. Tommy is a nice, pleasant, good and brave boy and is very liked by his teachers and colleagues. Simultaneously his uncle from the USA takes an interest in Tommy. To his mother and uncle, Tommy will write himself."

Faithfully yours,

Margot Peis,
A. J. D. C. LONDON.

Tommy's parents appear to be located at 55 Search Bureau, Göttingen. B. G. O. R.

Tel 4254
Göttingen
Burgenthal's

Letter from the London AJDC Office to the AJDC Office in Belsen, October 23, 1946

Nearly two months later, the London tracing office of the AJDC confirmed Thomas BURGENTHAL was alive. He was freed from Sachsenhausen concentration camp at the end of the war. A Polish soldier eventually took him to an orphanage in Otwock, Poland, where he learnt that his mother was looking for him.

237

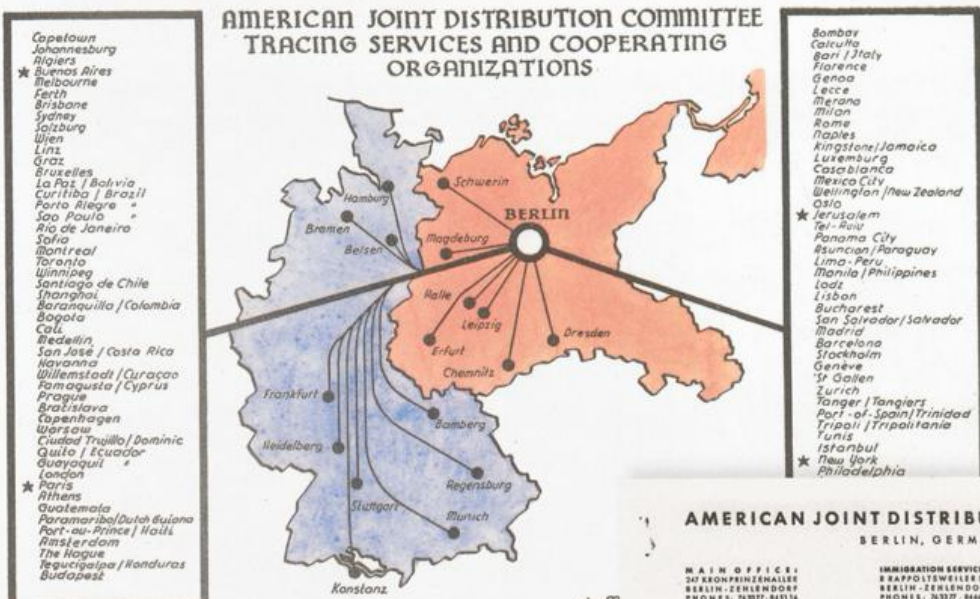
Transportliste

237

Lfd. Nr.	Name	Vorname	geb. am	Ort	Beruf	Wdg	verh.	Alter	schulb. Bg	Wohnung	Strasse	Postleitzahl	Immatrikulation	Bemerkungen
1	Neon geb. Fraysuder	Itta Luta	5.5.02	Wysogrod	ohne		ja	60	ja	N. 54, Grenadierstr. 25	Pol. P. 97839/1/38	6471		✓
2	Knaemitzky	Margarete Siew	13.3.06	Gleiwitz	ohne	ja		56	ja	Kw. Kottengstr. 8	1125074	6530		✓
3	Anschel	Horitz Leewi	16.1.77	Gornitz	ohne	ja		65	n	Charl. Kais. Friedrichstr. 70	A333341	9070		✓
4	Friedberg	Anni Siew	5.8.95	Berlin	ohne	ja		47	ja	G. P. Grenienburgerstr. 26	I/5696J	10138		✓
5	Auerbacher geb. Auerbacher	Karoline Siew	22.2.96	Hilpenheim	ohne		ja	46	ja	Wald., Prinzenbogenstr. 6	A448964	11249		✓
6	Leas geb. Czarlinski	Meta Siew	6.7.91	Siechtin	ohne	ja		51	ja	N. 56, Lybenerstr. 26	00053	11604		✓
7	Leukowicz	Kliefried Siew	11.9.50	Berlin	ohne	ja		12	ja	obsh. Allee 162 Helm		11891		✓
8	Leukowicz	Benjamin Siew	16.7.35	Berlin	ohne	ja	n	7	n	eto.		11892		✓
9	Leukowicz	Wolf Daniel Siew	17.2.38	Berlin	ohne	ja		4	n	eto.		11893		✓
10	Vortrefflich geb. Ungar	Ryka Siew	15.2.04	Turnow	ohne	ja		56	ja	N. 54, Lottustr. 13	P102787/1	13543		✓
11	Loewenthal geb. Croner	Elfrida geb. Ella Siew	14.9.00	Lobes	ohne	ja		62	ja	N. 54, Weinbergsweg 6	A00002	13560		✓ V. Aufgang
12	Krotoschiner geb. Kron	Berline Lydia J.	6.3.89	Berlin	ohne	ja		53	ja	N. 63, Kleiststr. 29	A534280	13681		✓
13	Simon	Olla Siew	26.12.79	Sysohoff	ohne	ja		65	ja	Charl. Sybelstr. 15	A371019	13640		✓
14	Königsberger geb. Janssen	Lydia Siew	26.11.00	Breslau	ohne	ja		62	ja	Charl. Bendinestr. 97	A494496	13733		✓
15	Goldberg geb. Lichtenstein	Charlotte J.	11.6.84	Breslau	ohne	ja		58	ja	Wald. Brandenburgischestr. 43	A427743	13736		✓
16	Speyer geb. Meyer	Luise Siew	13.8.79	Berlin	ohne	ja		63	ja	N. 30, H. F. Rosenstr. 4	A4480579	13918		✓
17	Meyer Dr.	Hugo Siew	9.11.77	Dresburg	ohne	ja		65	ja	Wald., Holerottstr. 6	A445521	14764		✓ V. Aufgang
18	Meyer geb. Kaiser	Ella Siew	26.5.02	Berlin	ohne	ja		60	ja	eto.	A445527	14765		✓
19	Königsberger	Martin Siew	19.11.06		ohne	ja		56	ja	Charl. Rosenstr. 3	A049614	15104		✓
20	Steinberg	Eli Siew	29.6.06	Berlin	ohne	ja		36	ja	C. 2, Heidingerstrasse 4	A045178	15410		✓

Transport List of Jews Deported from Gestapo District I, September 5, 1942

The Gestapo documents found by the AJDC in the Berlin Finance Department included transport lists like the one shown here. They reveal the names of Jewish men and women from Berlin who were deported to Theresienstadt, Riga and "the East." Most transports went to Auschwitz.



The Network of AJDC Tracing Offices and Cooperating Partners, circa 1948

This image, produced by the AJDC office in Berlin highlighted here, illustrates the worldwide search for missing persons and documents conducted by a single established organization like the AJDC. However, this work was not fully coordinated: the individual AJDC offices used varying approaches to carry out their search activities.

**AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
BERLIN, GERMANY**

MAIN OFFICES:
247 KRONPRINZENALLEE
BERLIN-Zehlendorf
PHONE: 74377-34033

IMMIGRATION SERVICES:
8 RAFFAELISWEELE ST.
BERLIN-Zehlendorf
PHONE: 74377-34033

WAREHOUSE:
32 HAGELBERG ST.
BERLIN-Neudorf
PHONE: 74377-34034

HOSPITAL:
38 CARSTENSTR.
BERLIN-Lichtenberg
PHONE: 10193

TRACING OFFICE:
8 RAFFAELISWEELE ST.
BERLIN-Zehlendorf
PHONE: 74377

Sehr geehrte Herren,
wie Ihnen bekannt sein dürfte, war es uns möglich den Besitz der vor der Gestapo seinerzeit angelegten Kartei über die aus Berlin erfolgten Deportationen von nahezu 126 000 Juden zu selbigen. Dadurch sind wir in die Lage versetzt, den Transport sowie den Tag der Deportation von fast allen Berliner Juden anzugeben.

Auch von den Überlebenden dieser Transporte, d.h. von den aus der Deportation Zurückgekehrten, haben wir vollständige Listen vorliegen.

Es ist uns aber auch bekannt, dass viele Juden sich in anderen Gemeinden niederlassen ließen, um auch darüber unterrichtet zu sein, benötigen wir von sämtlichen Gemeinden Deutschlands Listen, aus denen diejenigen Personen ersichtlich sind, die dort zugezogen sind, und wir bitten Sie, uns solche Listen, welche die genauen Personalien, die letzte Anschrift vor der Deportation und die jetzige Adresse enthalten müssen, zuzusenden.

Ausserdem benötigen wir auch eine Liste sämtlicher Gemeindeglieder mit genauen Personalien und jetziger Adresse. Auch die inzwischen ausgewanderten Mitglieder bitten wir noch zu vermerken.

Wir hoffen, dass es Ihnen möglich ist, uns recht bald solche Listen zuzusenden und sehen Ihrer Rückmeldung entgegen.

Hochachtungsvoll
LARRY LUBETSKY
Tracing Officer
AJDC Berlin

Suchabteilung
11 778

ARMY ADDRESS: APO 742A-4, POSTMASTER NEW YORK, N.Y.

Circular from Larry Lubetsky about Documentation Efforts, Berlin, June 5, 1947

In 1946, the AJDC found Gestapo documents in the Berlin Finance Department which proved the deportation of Jews from Berlin. In this circular addressed to Jewish communities in Germany, Larry Lubetsky from the Berlin AJDC office asked for support in the further documentation of Nazi crimes.

Thomas Buergenthal

* 1934

After the liberation, Gerda Buergenthal searched for her son. She also asked an AJDC tracing office for help. Thomas Buergenthal was born in Czechoslovakia in 1934, one year after his parents had fled from Germany. The family went to Poland in 1939 where the Germans arrested them. They were then deported from the Kielce ghetto to Auschwitz. The family was separated. In 1945, the father died in Buchenwald. In December 1946, mother and son were reunited. At the end of 1951 they emigrated together to the USA, where Thomas Buergenthal studied law and became a judge.



Thomas and Gerda Buergenthal, Shortly before Emigrating to the USA, Location Unknown, circa 1951

Thomas Buergenthal documented his family's persecution by the Nazis and the dramatic search after 1945 in his autobiography *A Lucky Child: A Memoir of Surviving Auschwitz as a Young Boy*.



Thomas Buergenthal as a Judge at the *International Court of Justice*, The Hague, circa 2003

Thomas Buergenthal specializes in human rights and international law. He was co-founder of the *Inter-American Court of Human Rights* and has taught at many universities in the USA.



Buergenthal Family, Czechoslovakia, circa 1937

It was through the ITS that Buergenthal discovered his father's place of death: he died in January 1945 in Buchenwald concentration camp. For Buergenthal the *Arolsen Archives* are a "memorial of my father. There are no others, not even a marked gravestone in a cemetery."