

Maikovskis Ordered Deported

Board rules Mineola man aided Nazis and hid activities

By Joye Brown

The federal Board of Immigration Appeals has ordered the deportation of accused Nazi collaborator Boleslavs Maikovskis, overturning a ruling that would have allowed the Mineola resident to remain in the United States.

In a decision handed down in Washington, the board concluded that Maikovskis assisted in the persecution of some 300 Latvian villagers during World War II and, after the war, concealed his activities to gain entry to the United States.

"We have found, by clear, unequivocal, and convincing evidence that [Maikovskis] is deportable on four separate grounds because he assisted in the persecution of persons based on their political opinion, and because his immigration visa was procured by willful misrepresentation of material facts," the board concluded in a 41-page decision.

The board denied Maikovskis' requests for asylum or any other remedy that would allow him to remain in the country. It did, however, grant his request for deportation to Switzerland.

The ruling ended the Justice Department's eight-year fight to deport Maikovskis, a resident alien who is now 80 years old. Last year, U.S. Immigration Judge Francis J. Lyons concluded that the government's case — which included videotaped testimony from witnesses in Latvia — had not been enough to convince him that



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Boleslavs Maikovskis in 1981

Maikovskis should be deported. The decision was appealed to the immigration board.

Yesterday, no one answered the door at the the retired carpenter's

home and a spokesman for his attorney, Ivars Berzins, said Berzins would have no comment. Maikovskis has the option of appealing the board ruling to federal court.

Meanwhile, immigration officials began proceedings to formally ask the Swiss government whether it would accept Maikovskis. If the government refuses, U.S. officials could then order Maikovskis deported to the country of their choice, said Neal M. Sher, acting director of the Justice Department's office of special investigations, which prosecuted the case.

The five-member board's decision — which came on the heels of the deportation of another accused Nazi collaborator, Valerian Trifa — was hailed by representatives of Jewish groups.

"It sends a very clear message to those Nazis awaiting prosecution and those in hiding that efforts to ferret them out will not stop," said Abraham Foxman, associate national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

For the past several years, Maikovskis and his wife have lived on a tree-lined street in Mineola where demonstrators frequently march, throw rocks and, sometimes, firebombs. In 1965, Maikovskis was sentenced in absentia by a Soviet court to death for allegedly collaborating with the Nazis in the deaths of 20,000 Jews in Latvia, which is now part of the Soviet Union. In 1978, he was shot in the

leg by a gunman who fired through Maikovskis' front window. A year later, one of his friends was shot and stabbed by a man masquerading as a reporter. The man had mistaken the friend for Maikovskis.

Maikovskis immigrated to the United States in 1951, when he claimed to have been a railroad bookkeeper in Latvia during the war years. After deportation efforts began, he said he had been a temporary "keeper of order" in Rezenke County during the German occupation but denied ever being on the Latvian police force.

Later, however, Maikovskis acknowledged that he had been police chief in the county's second district. He said he had ordered the arrest of an entire village in 1941 after hiding Soviet sympathizers shot and killed two fellow officers. He also acknowledged that one month later he ordered the entire village burned. He said he had no choice in the matter and had been acting on the orders of German superiors.

But Maikovskis said he was singing in church when 30 villagers were publicly executed in the Rezenke market square. He said he had no knowledge that remaining villagers had been trucked to another location in his police district and shot to death.

Although Maikovskis admitted his involvement in the arrests and burning of the village, he has denied collaborating with the Nazis in the deaths of 20,000 Latvian Jews.

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