

Alleged Nazi Commando Is Deported to Australia

Associated Press

A man charged with serving in a Nazi commando unit that killed Jews and others during World War II has been deported to Australia, the Justice Department announced yesterday.

Konrads Kalejs, 80, of Winnetka, Ill., and St. Petersburg, Fla., was deported Friday because of his service as a member of the notorious "Arajs Kommando," an execution squad in Nazi-occupied Latvia, the department said.

The commando group was responsible for the murder of Jews, gypsies and other civilians during the war.

Kalejs was deported to Australia, where he obtained citizenship in the 1950s, said Justice Department spokesman John Russell.

Kalejs came to the United States in 1959, telling immigration officials he had been a farmer in Latvia during World War II. When questioned by the Justice

Department in March 1984, however, Kalejs admitted that he had lied about his war activities.

At his trial in 1988, Kalejs invoked his Fifth Amendment rights and refused to answer any questions.

Efforts to deport him began that year. He then left the country with \$350,000 in cash and assumed a new identity to avoid deportation proceedings, Russell said. He returned at some point and was later arrested in Florida, Russell said.

Kalejs was ordered deported following a 1988 trial. The decision was upheld on appeal, and on March 21 the Supreme Court denied his petition for a hearing.

The head of the Arajs Kommando, Viktors Arajs, was convicted of the joint murder of at least 13,000 people by a West German court in 1979. He died in prison while serving a life sentence.

WASHINGTON POST, APRIL 10, 1994



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, APRIL 11, 1994

OSI
(202) 616-2771
TDD (202) 514-1888

ILLINOIS NAZI KALEJS DEPORTED TO AUSTRALIA

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Department of Justice announced today that Konrads Kalejs, 80, of Winnetka, Illinois, and St. Petersburg, Florida, was deported to Australia on April 8, 1994.

Kalejs was ordered deported by a United States immigration judge in Chicago because of his assistance in Nazi persecution as a member of the notorious "Arajs Kommando," an execution squad in Nazi-occupied Latvia responsible for the murder of Jews, Gypsies and other civilians during World War II. The deportation case was litigated by the Office of Special Investigations in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice and the deportation was carried out by the Chicago office of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Kalejs immigrated to Australia from Germany after World War II and became a naturalized Australian citizen in the 1950s. He immigrated to the United States in 1959. Efforts to deport Kalejs began in 1984. With knowledge that deportation proceedings would be initiated against him, Kalejs left the country with \$350,000 in cash and assumed a new identity, to avoid deportation proceedings. He was arrested in Florida after

(MORE)

a six-month manhunt. Kalejs was released after posting bond of \$750,000 in cash, which remained in effect until his deportation.

Trial was held in 1988 before Immigration Judge Anthony Petrone and Kalejs was found deportable based on his assistance in acts of Nazi-sponsored persecution. This finding was upheld in appeals to the United States Board of Immigration Appeals and to the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

The head of the Arajs Kommando, Viktors Arajs, was convicted of the "joint murder of at least 13,000 persons" by a West German court in 1979 and died in prison while serving a life sentence. The Seventh Circuit's decision of November 17, 1993, noted that the Arajs Kommando assisted in the "systematic annihilation of the 70,000 Jews in Latvia." Kalejs was a first lieutenant and company commander, supervising 100 or more men in the Arajs Kommando between July 1941 to at least June 1944. "He was a key officer in a unit that...killed tens of thousands of innocents..." the court said.

In addition, the court said that "Kalejs and his unit had two other duties besides killing Jews in the Riga [Latvia] ghetto...the Arajs Kommando joined the German SS in so-called anti-partisan activity, which was little more than a cover for arresting and murdering civilians...the Arajs Kommando under the leadership of Kalejs served as guards at the Salaspils concentration camp [outside Riga]...the conditions there were brutal...the Arajs Kommando was charged with guarding work

(MORE)

details and preventing escapes at Salaspils." The court also found that Kalejs had made important misrepresentations on his immigration documents concerning his wartime activities.

On March 21, 1994, the U.S. Supreme Court denied Kalejs's petition for a hearing. The weeks between that denial and Kalejs's deportation were spent in litigation of numerous last-minute motions.

Kalejs is the 41st Nazi persecutor removed from the U.S. since the establishment of the Office of Special Investigations in 1979.

###

BRISBANE, Australia, April 11 (Reuter) - Australia's war-crimes unit had investigated but decided not to prosecute an Australian citizen deported from the United States for service in a Nazi death squad, Attorney-General Michael Lavarch said on Monday.

Lavarch said The unit did not find grounds for a prosecution of Konrad Kalejs.

"The case was examined by the war-crimes unit and it concluded that in a large number of cases there may have been allegations with some substance," Lavarch said, but added the unit did not find sufficient evidence to charge Kalejs.

Australia's war-crimes unit was disbanded in 1993 after three unsuccessful prosecution attempts.

Lavarch said the matter was now with the Australian Federal Police, but an AFP spokesman refused to comment.

Australia's Jewish organisations have called on the government to commit Kalejs to trial.

Kalejs was deported from the United States after an immigration judge in Chicago found he had served in Nazi-occupied Latvia as a company commander in the Latvian Auxilary Police, a unit that murdered unarmed civilians.

Kalejs has denied he was a Nazi officer.

Kalejs, a native of Latvia, fled after the war to Australia, where he became a citizen. He entered the United States in 1959 claiming to have been a farm labourer during the war.

REUTER

Alleged Nazi Commando Is Deported to Australia

Associated Press

A man charged with serving in a Nazi commando unit that killed Jews and others during World War II has been deported to Australia, the Justice Department announced yesterday.

Konrads Kalejs, 80, of Winnetka, Ill., and St. Petersburg, Fla., was deported Friday because of his service as a member of the notorious "Arajs Kommando," an execution squad in Nazi-occupied Latvia, the department said.

The commando group was responsible for the murder of Jews, gypsies and other civilians during the war.

Kalejs was deported to Australia, where he obtained citizenship in the 1950s, said Justice Department spokesman John Russell.

Kalejs came to the United States in 1959, telling immigration officials he had been a farmer in Latvia during World War II. When questioned by the Justice

Department in March 1984, however, Kalejs admitted that he had lied about his war activities.

At his trial in 1988, Kalejs invoked his Fifth Amendment rights and refused to answer any questions.

Efforts to deport him began that year. He then left the country with \$350,000 in cash and assumed a new identity to avoid deportation proceedings, Russell said. He returned at some point and was later arrested in Florida, Russell said.

Kalejs was ordered deported following a 1988 trial. The decision was upheld on appeal, and on March 21 the Supreme Court denied his petition for a hearing.

The head of the Arajs Kommando, Viktors Arajs, was convicted of the joint murder of at least 13,000 people by a West German court in 1979. He died in prison while serving a life sentence.

WORLD

Sunday

April 10, 1994



IN BRIEF

A Look Around the World

Alleged Nazi Deported

The United States deported Konrad Kalejs, 80, who was accused of being an officer in a Nazi squad in Latvia that executed Jews, Gypsies and other civilians during World War II, the Justice Department said. Kalejs, a native of Latvia who became a naturalized Australian citizen and came to the United States in 1959, was deported Friday night to Australia, the department said. The U.S. Supreme Court on March 21 denied an appeal by Kalejs, who fled to Australia after the war, then entered the United States claiming to be a farm laborer.



EMBASSY OF AUSTRALIA
COUNSELLOR IMMIGRATION
1601 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. NW
WASHINGTON, DC, 20036-2273

ADDRESSEE:		ORIGINATOR:	
BETTY SHAVE		Christopher Smith Counsellor (Immigration)	
FAX NO: 202 616-2491		FAX NO: (202) 797-3328	
PH NO: 616-2497		PH NO: (202) 797-3278	
13 April 1994	PAGES: 6	FILE:	
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN NEWS CLIPPINGS			

11/4/94

Ex-nazi deported

CANBERRA: An 80-year-old man deported from the US for serving in a World War II German army unit that killed civilians will be free to return to Australia.

Konrads Kalejs, who had been living in Illinois and Florida, was deported to Australia on Friday because of his service in a Latvian execution squad during the German occupation.

An Australian Federal Police spokesman said Kalejs was an Australian citizen and entitled to return to this country, but would not discuss whether the AFP was considering investigating him under Australian laws.

Kalejs came to Australia from Latvia in 1950 and lived near Albury and in Melbourne. He became an Australian citizen but moved to the US in 1959.

The US Government had been trying to deport Kalejs since 1984 when he admitted he had lied about his war service. Investigators claimed he was part of the Nazi murder squad Arajs Kommando.

In 1988, he was tried and ordered to leave the US. The decision was delayed until March 21 when Kalejs' petition for a hearing was rejected. He is expected to arrive in Australia this week.

S.A. 205.528

Nazi army man back in Aust p.9

SYDNEY: An Australian citizen who served with a German army unit that allegedly killed civilians in World War II flew into Sydney yesterday after being deported from the United States.

A spokeswoman for the Federal Immigration Minister, Senator Bolkus, confirmed 80-year-old Konrads Kalejs arrived in Sydney yesterday, but did not know his destination from the airport.

Kalejs, who had been living in Illinois and Florida, was deported last week because of his service in an alleged execution squad that operated during the German occupation of Latvia.

An Australian Federal Police spokesman said the force was considering reopening a war crimes case against Kalejs.

"We are considering whether or not to reopen the case - it is a matter of whether there is any prospect of lawful prosecution," he said.

The US Government had been trying to deport Kalejs since 1984 when he admitted he had lied about his war service when he entered the US in 1959.

The AFP spokesman said Kalejs was allowed entry into Australia because he held an Australian passport.

Kalejs became an Australian citizen in the 1930s.

HERALD
SUN 12/4/94

Probe on war claim unlikely p.7

THE Federal Government appeared last night to rule out ordering a fresh investigation into the activities of an alleged war criminal who arrived in Australia at the weekend.

Federal Attorney-General Michael Lavarch said it was for the Australian Federal Police to determine whether to reopen the case of Konrads Kalejs, 80, who arrived in Australia after being deported from the United States.

Mr Kalejs was deported after giving false information about his war activities on an application to enter the US in 1959. He is alleged to have served in an execution squad that operated during the German occupation of Latvia.

The Australian Jewish community asked Mr Lavarch to reopen Mr Kalejs' case after learning last week that he was bound for Australia.

AUSTRALIAN

12/4/94

Kalejs decision

THE Australian Federal Police will decide this week whether to investigate allegations of Nazi war crimes against Konrad Kalejs, who holds an Australian passport and arrived in Sydney on Sunday after being deported by the United States. The Attorney-General, Mr Lavarch, said yesterday.

Police study case of alleged Nazi

By MARTIN DALY

The Federal Police may reopen an investigation into the wartime activities of an alleged Nazi war criminal and former Melbourne resident, Mr Konrad Kalejs, who was deported from the United States to Australia on Sunday.

Mr Kalejs was in hiding last night as the Federal Police began a "reassessment" of his case to determine if an investigation would lead to a successful prosecution.

The 80-year-old businessman, who lost a 10-year deportation battle in the US, is alleged to have been a top commander of a notorious Latvian murder squad, the Arajs Kommando, that killed thousands of Jews during World War II.

His return to Australia led to calls yesterday for the reopening of Australia's war crimes investigations, which were closed down because they had become too costly.

The media liaison officer for the Federal Police in Canberra, Mr Brian Swift, said last night that police were assessing information, "some new and some old", to determine if they should reopen the case.

Mr Kalejs lived in Hawthorn, and worked for nine years at the Victorian Ministry of Water Supply and for the Department of Immigration. He became an Aus-

tralian citizen in August 1957. He migrated to the US in 1958, but allegedly lied about his past to get a visa.

Details of the Kalejs case are contained in a 600-page report sent more than a year ago to the Federal Government. The report has not been released but it does not recommend that Mr Kalejs be prosecuted.

Mr Robert Greenwood, QC, who headed the special investigations unit to examine war crimes allegations, said the Kalejs case had not been fully investigated at the time the report was written.

Mr Greenwood has said war crimes investigations were scrapped just as a prosecution was about to be lodged against another Melbourne man, who is alleged to have been guilty of mass murder as a member of the same Latvian commando group as Mr Kalejs.

Mr Greenwood said Australian investigators had been given evidence collected by the US Justice Department for use in the proposed case in Australia.

"It (the Kalejs case) was a matter of considerable substance, which was of great interest and would be of great interest now if the matter was to be taken further," Mr Greenwood said.

However, the federal Attorney-General's Department said there were no plans to pursue Mr Kalejs

unless sustainable complaints were made about him and unless the cost of bringing a case could be justified.

The author of 'Sanctuary: Nazi Fugitives in Australia', Mr Mark Aarons, said: "Here we have this alleged collaborator in crime being kicked out of the US. Whatever the American courts have shown, they have shown he was a member of the Arajs Kommando — and we know another member of the Kommando that the war crimes investigators wanted to prosecute is in Melbourne."

The Arajs Kommando is described in US court documents on the Kalejs case as an "execution squad which travelled throughout Latvia, carrying out numerous mass murders of Jews and other civilians".

The American war crimes unit, the Office of Special Investigations, in support of an attempt to extradite Mr Kalejs to Australia, states that Mr Kalejs:

- Joined and was an officer in the Arajs Kommando, which persecuted and murdered thousands of unarmed Jews, Gypsies and other civilians throughout Latvia.

- Was stationed in Riga during a time when the Arajs Kommando murdered thousands of Jewish men, women and children in the forests around Riga.

Kalejs in death squad, says US

By NORMAN ABRAHAMSEN P3

The 80-year-old Australian deportee by the United States because of his wartime service with the Nazis in occupied Latvia and Russia took part in the burning of villages and the systematic starvation of Gypsies and Jews, according to evidence gathered in the US case against him.

Kornelis Kalejs, who arrived back in Australia on Sunday, was born in Latvia, found his way to Australia in the 1950s and became an Australian citizen.

He entered the US in 1959 and has been fighting since 1984 a deportation order against him for having lied about his war service.

According to a confidential US Justice Department report obtained by *The Canberra Times*, Kalejs joined the Latvian Military Academy as a cadet in 1935, graduated with distinction in 1937 with the rank of lieutenant and, after the German invasion of 1941, became a member of the Latvian Auxiliary Security Police.

This unit, according to the report by the Office of Special Investigations, was known as the Arnis Kommandos which helped the Germans in carrying out acts of persecution against Jews, communists and Gypsies as part of the Nazi program to annihilate these groups.

According to documented evidence, the unit was staffed by volunteers and the Germans "desired to utilize men who ... were reli-

No plans to initiate further action against US deportee

By JOCKE BROUEN

The Federal Government has no plans to initiate a new investigation into continuing allegations that an Australian citizen, deported from the United States last week, is a Nazi war criminal.

Attorney-General Michael Latham said yesterday that his department's war-crimes Special Investigations Unit had decided some years ago that there was not enough evidence against Kornelis Kalejs to warrant a prosecution.

A spokeswoman for Justice Minister Dawson Kerr said that it was up to the Australian Federal Police to investigate. It was evidence against Mr Kalejs came to light, but at the stage there was no new information before the police.

Zsuzsanna Reder of Australia's President, Mark Latham, said that it was important on the Government to investigate, and if there were evidence of a crime, to prosecute.

Mr Latham told ABC Radio that the Special Investigations

able, who would be willing to do the dirty work of shooting and who had no scruples about murder."

At the time that Kalejs joined the unit, it already had a reputation

assigned to very particular shooting operations, and because the shooting sections took place so frequently, all Latvian Auxiliary Security Police personnel were personally involved in the killings, even the staff of the supply department and the motor pool mechanics," according to the US report.

During the latter part of 1941 and early 1942, the Nazis deported 20,000 Jews from Germany, Austria, Bohemia and Moravia to Riga, the Latvian capital. To make room for the deportees, it was decided to annihilate the Latvian Jews already in the Riga ghetto.

Over a period of weeks from late November to early December 1941 about 27,800 Jews from the ghetto were shot in Rumbula Forest outside Riga, leaving only 2500 Latvian Jews still living in the city.

All available German and Latvian personnel were mobilized for the liquidation actions and, according to evidence, "it was well known in Riga that Arns was leading the killing of Jews and all Riga talked about the November 30 action."

Kalejs also served in the police outside Latvia with a unit called the Lokaja Detachment which went into Russia under the guise of so-called anti-partisan activity, making arrests, seeking suspects and killing Jews and Gypsies. It was also responsible for the burning of a village called Ussadachas and murdering all its inhabitants.