

PRESS RELEASE

The Office of Special Investigations (OSI), Criminal Division announced today the permanent departure from the United States of two individuals who were ineligible to enter this country because of their assistance in persecution of civilians in conjunction with the Nazi regime during World War II. The two men are Juozas Kisielaitis and Paul Bluemel.

Neal M. Sher, Director of OSI said that Kisielaitis had been charged with serving during World War II in a Lithuanian Military Battalion (known as the Schutzmannschaft). In a deportation proceeding filed against Kisielaitis last year in Boston, OSI alleged that Kisielaitis, as a member of the Schutzmannschaft, assisted the Nazis in the persecution of persons because of their race, religion, national origin, or political opinion. Kisielaitis concealed his service in the Schutzmannschaft when he entered the United States in 1963.

Sher stated that Kisielaitis, who holds Canadian citizenship, fled to Canada rather than face the charges brought by OSI.

The Lithuanian Battalion to which Kisielaitis belonged was under the command of German Police Major Franz Lechthaler, of the German 11th Reserve Police Battalion, a Nazi police detachment sent to occupied territories to exterminate Jews. Kisielaitis' unit assisted the German battalion in these exterminations.

After the war Lechthaler was tried and convicted in West Germany for war crimes committed by these units in Belorussia during the fall of 1941.

Evidence of this Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion's participation in atrocities comes from a variety of sources, including a contemporaneous Nazi report captured by the United States military at the end of World War II. The report was used at the Nuremburg trials and details the "indescribable brutality" with which the "liquidation of all Jews *** in the town of Slutsk" was carried out by the German and Lithuanian units.

Evidence of Kisielaitis' membership in the unit is found in Lithuanian language war documents captured by the Soviet military near the end of the war. These documents demonstrate Kisielaitis' membership in the unit. Moreover, in 1982, Kisielaitis confirmed the validity of these Soviet documents when he admitted his membership in the unit during his sworn testimony in the denaturalization case of United States v. Jurgis Juodis, Civ. No. 81-1013-CIV-T-17, United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida. Juodis was an officer of the Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion, the Juodis case is still pending in Tampa.

In obtaining his visa to enter the United States, Kisielaitis misrepresented and concealed from immigration authorities his wartime service in the battalion. Members of this organization were ineligible to receive visas to the United States.

Denaturalization and deportation cases have been initiated and are still pending against five other former members of the Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft who immigrated to the United States following World War II.

Paul Bluemel of Ocala, Florida permanently departed the United States yesterday after admitting to OSI officials that he was deportable under Section 241(a)(19) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which bars entry to the United States of anyone engaged in the persecution of civilians on account of race, religion, national origin or political opinion. Bluemel departed for West Germany at his own expense.

Bluemel was born October 8, 1902 in Breslau, Germany. He joined the Nazi party in Schweidnitz, Germany in approximately 1930 and joined the Nazi SS in approximately 1930 or 1931, several years before Hitler came to power. Prior to formally joining the Nazi party, Bluemel, who was a lawyer, served as a legal advisor to the SA (the Sturmabteilung or stormtroopers). He served as advisor to SA members, who physically assaulted opponents of the Nazis.

Bluemel became a Regiment Leader in the SD (Sicherheitsdienst, the security service of the SS) in approximately 1932. He achieved the rank of Sturmfuehrer (captain or company commander) in the SA in approximately 1934.

Bluemel was the Senior Mayor of the German city of Hirschberg from approximately 1934 to 1938. During this period, many of the Nazi decrees concerning persecution of the Jews (known as the Nuremberg Decrees) went into effect, and were enforced by the city administration as well as other authorities.

Subsequent to the Nazi invasion of the U.S.S.R., Bluemel was appointed a Gebietskommissar (District Kommissar) in the Ukraine. From approximately July 1941 to 1943, he was Gebietskommissar in Tschudnow, Ukraine; from 1943 to 1944 he served as Gebietskommissar in Retschitza, Ukraine. As Gebietskommissar, he was the highest civil authority in the District with authority over both the German police and indigenous Ukrainian auxiliary police.

During Bluemel's tenure as Gebietskommissar in Tschudnow, several thousand Jews were murdered by the German and Ukrainian police. In a sworn interview with the Justice Department on March 28, 1985, Bluemel acknowledged receiving the order from his superiors that all the Jews in his District were to be killed. These killings were carried out by Ukrainian forces; Bluemel admitted that he did nothing to stop the murder of Jewish men, women, children and babies.

In addition, Bluemel admitted that he had given orders to the police to execute Ukrainians caught trying to take food from supply trains. He acknowledged that his orders were carried out and that these persons were shot.

As Gebietskommissar in Retschitza, Bluemel was in charge of anti-partisan operations, and gave orders to the German and Ukrainian police to shoot any members of the anti-Nazi partisans who were captured. Bluemel was also responsible for rounding up forced laborers to work in Germany when he was Gebietskommissar in Retschitza.

Bluemel entered the United States on November 7, 1984 on a visa issued at the United States consulate in Munich, Germany. Bluemel had also filed an application for permanent residence in the United States. Bluemel has withdrawn his application for permanent residence and his visa has been cancelled.

Both Kisielaitis and Bluemel will be prohibited from entering the United States again, as their names have been placed on watch lists maintained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of State.

In addition to Kisielaitis and Bluemel, six other people have been permanently removed from the United States since April 1983.

In December 1984, Feodor Fedorenko, who had been stripped of U.S. citizenship by the U.S. Supreme Court because of his service as a guard at the Nazi Death Camp at Treblinka Poland, was deported to the Soviet Union. Fedorenko had himself selected the Soviet Union as his choice of country for deportation.

In April 1983 Hans Lipschis, a Lithuanian-born S.S. member who served at the Auschwitz Death Camp, was deported to West Germany. Lipschis was charged with persecution and murder while at the notorious killing center.

In July 1984, Anatoly Hrusitzky, who had been accused of acts of persecution while serving in the Nazi sponsored Ukrainian police, permanently departed the United States for Venezuela, where he had lived after World War II, and formally renounced his U.S. citizenship. In August 1983, OSI filed a denaturalization action against Hrusitzky alleging that he had participated in the persecution and murder of unarmed Jewish men, women and children living in and around Cherny Ostrov, Ukraine.

In August of last year, the notorious case of Viorel Trifa was brought to a successful conclusion with his deportation to Portugal. Trifa had been a leader and major figure in the Romanian Iron Guard, a violent, Fascist and anti-Semitic organization which was responsible for many deaths and acts of persecution during the war.

In October 1984 OSI announced an agreement it entered into with John Avdzej pursuant to which Avdzej permanently left the U.S. and renounced his U.S. citizenship. In exchange for his departure and renunciation, OSI agreed to refrain from taking legal action against Avdzej charging that he was subject to denaturalization and deportation because of his wartime activi-

ties as a collaborationist regional mayor under the Nazis in occupied Belorussia. It was alleged that Avdzej had participated in the persecution of unarmed Jewish and Polish civilians.

Also in October 1984, OSI announced that Arthur Rudolph, the former Chief Operations Director of the Nazi's V-2 missile production site at the Mittelwerk underground rocket factory in Germany. The allegations against Rudolph were that he participated in the persecution of forced laborers, including concentration camp inmates, who were employed at Mittelwerk under inhumane conditions. Rudolph conceded that he could not contest those allegations in court proceedings. After permanently departing the country, Rudolph renounced his U.S. citizenship.

The Kisielaitis case was litigated by OSI trial attorneys Ronnie L. Edelman and Alan Held.

The Bluemel matter was handled by OSI trial attorneys Jeffrey Mausner and Betty Shave.

Mausner
for file

2 More Reputed War Criminals Leave U.S. to Avoid Charges

Washington

Two men who allegedly helped the Nazis persecute Jews and other civilians during World War II have left the United States permanently rather than face charges, the Justice Department announced yesterday.

Juozas Kisielaitis, 64, of Shrewsbury, Mass., and Paul Bluemel, 83, of Ocala, Fla., are the seventh and eighth alleged Nazi war criminals permanently removed from the United States by the department's Office of Special Investigations since it was established in 1978 to track down Nazis in this country.

Neal M. Sher, director of the office, said Kisielaitis, who holds Canadian citizenship, went to Canada recently rather than face charges

brought by the department in a deportation proceeding filed last year. The government charged that he assisted the Nazis in persecuting Jews while he served in the Schutzmannschaft, a military battalion in his native Lithuania.

Kisielaitis, who entered this country in 1963, allegedly concealed his service because members of that unit were ineligible to obtain visas.

Sher said Bluemel left Thursday for West Germany after conceding that he could be deported under federal law barring entry by anyone who has persecuted civilians.

Bluemel joined the Nazi Party about 1930 and the Nazi SS that year or the next year, Sher said. He also was active in the SA, the Sturmabteilung or brown-shirted storm troopers, and the SD, the Sicher-

heitsdienst, or security service of the SS.

He was mayor of Hirschberg, Germany, from 1934 to 1938 when many Nazi decrees concerning persecution of the Jews went into effect and were enforced by the city administration.

After Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, Bluemel was named a district kommissar in the Ukraine, the highest civilian authority in a district, ranking over the German police and Ukrainian auxiliary police.

Sher said that from July 1941 to 1943, while Bluemel was district kommissar at Tschudnow, several thousand Jews were murdered by the German and Ukrainian police.

Bluemel entered the United States on Nov. 7, 1984.

Associated Press

APRIL 30, 1985

Former Nazi quits U.S. on being found in Ocala

ELLEN HAMPTON
Miami News Reporter

A former Nazi SS officer who admitted to overseeing the executions of thousands of Jews in Germany and the Ukraine agreed to leave the United States after he was discovered vacationing in Ocala, according to U.S. Justice Department officials.

Paul Bleumel, 83, had been staying with relatives in the Central Florida town since Nov. 7 and had applied for permanent residency, spokesmen for the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI) said yesterday.

When questioned by investigators, Bleumel admitted to Nazi activities during World War II and agreed to leave the country rather than face deportation. He left Thursday for his home outside Munich, said Mike Wolf, OSI deputy director.

Bleumel said he joined the Nazi party in 1930 and became active in the *Sturmabteilung*, or storm-troopers, and then the *Sicherheitsdienst*, or security service. He was mayor of Hirschberg, Germany, from 1934-38, when Nazi decrees

on the persecution of Jews — known as the Nuremberg decrees — were enforced by the city administration, according to an OSI statement released yesterday.

When the Nazi Army invaded southern Russia, Bleumel became district *kommisar*, the highest civilian authority over police, a post he held in the Ukraine republic of Soviet Russia from 1941 until 1944. Bleumel acknowledged having received orders from his superiors to kill all Jews in his district, the OSI statement said. Ukrainian police carried out several thousand murders, and Bleumel told the OSI investigators he did nothing to stop them.

OSI Deputy Director Wolf said Bleumel has been investigated for the war crimes by West German authorities but has not been prosecuted there. He is the eighth person forced to leave the United States because of war crimes since the OSI in 1979 began investigating former Nazis residing here, Wolf said. An amendment to immigration law passed in 1978 provides for the deportation of anyone who has persecuted others on the basis of race, sex, religion or

political beliefs.

"We knew about him by virtue of investigations that had gone on in the office," Wolf said. "When it came to our attention that he was in Florida, we contacted him."

Bleumel was in the United States on a 1981 tourist visa obtained in Munich that did not require renewal. He agreed to leave and not return to this country, Wolf said. Wolf declined to say how the OSI became aware of Bleumel's presence here.

"My understanding is he used to come here for the winter," Wolf said. "I think he had been here before."

Another former Nazi collaborator, Juozas Kisielaitis, also was found in Shrewsbury, Mass., and agreed to leave the country, Wolf said.

Last week, the OSI arrested Konrads Kalejs, 71, a former Nazi SS officer, and charged him with violating U.S. immigration law by lying about his past to obtain an entry permit in 1958. Kalejs, arrested in Miami Beach, is being held without bond at Krome Detention Camp, pending a hearing May 15.

Former Nazi, 83, in Ocala forced to return to Germany

From Herald Staff and Wire Services

WASHINGTON — An 83-year-old man living in Ocala was forced to leave the United States after admitting his part in Nazi atrocities during World War II, the Justice Department said Monday.

Paul Bluemel, once a member of the Nazi party and the SS, was in charge of police in the Tschudnow district of the Ukraine from 1941 to 1943, when several thousand Jews were murdered in a purge.

A Justice Department statement said Bluemel acknowledged during questioning that he had received the order to kill all the Jews in Tschudnow, now a part of the Soviet Union. That order was carried out.

Bluemel had been in America since November, having entered on a visitor's visa issued in Munich. He was living with relatives in Ocala and had applied for

permanent residence. He returned to West Germany last Thursday.

AROUND THE NATION

Two Flee Legal Action

■ Juozas Kisielaitis, 64, and Paul Bluemel, 83, who allegedly helped the Nazis persecute Jews and other civilians during World War II, have left the United States permanently rather than face legal action, the Justice Department said.

From news services and staff reports