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The Story of Josef Lainck: From German Emigrant to Alien Convict and Deported Criminal to Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Inmate

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Abstract

Josef Lainck, a German national emigrated to Canada in July 1927. He arrived in Quebec City and travelled west to Edmonton, Alberta where he became a burglar and shot a police officer. Lainck was arrested in November 1927 and deported to Germany in 1938, upon arrival he was arrested and interned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp until April 1945. This article will examine Lainck's emigration to Canada, arrest and deportation to Nazi Germany. Lainck's case is illuminating as it reveals information on deportations from Canada and the Third Reich's return migration program and how undesirables were treated within Germany. The Third Reich's return migration plan encouraged returnees to seek their deportations as a method of return. Canadian extradition procedures cared little for the fate of foreign nationals expatriated to the country of their birth regardless of the form of government or the turmoil that plagued the nation. This work will compare Canadian to American deportation rates as an illustration of Canada's harsh deportation criterion. In this article, the policies and practices of immigration and deportation are discussed within a framework of insecurity as a key driver for human mobility in the first half of the 20th century.

Keywords: *Emigrant; deportation; concentration camp; Nazi; 'habitual/career criminal'.*

Understanding Josef Lainck: Fleeing Insecurity

Josef Lainck was born March 31, 1907 in Ochtrup, Westphalia, Germany. On July 6, 1927 in Hamburg he boarded the *Empress of Scotland* a steamship owned by the Canadian Pacific company bound for Canada. He arrived in Quebec City on July 16 and travelled west on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) to be employed as a farm labourer for Herman Guhle, another recent German-Catholic emigrant farming near Strome, Alberta (LAC Canadian Immigration Service Sheet, No.32).

In this article, the policies and practices of immigration and deportation are discussed within a framework of insecurity as a key driver for human mobility in the first half of the 20th century. Human insecurity is defined as a key driver for migration (Sirkeci, 2009; Cohen and Sirkeci, 2011). The story of Josef Lainck examines one young adult who had left the old continent in search of economic security elsewhere in the face of an economic downturn in Europe in the 1920s. Lainck was confronted with the tightening immigration legislation in the United States of America (USA), a worsening economic situation in Germany and after January 1933 an oppressive Nazi administration bent on suppression of undesirable elements.

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Immigration policy and practice in North America: Primary destination for Europeans

After World War One (WW I) the USA was the most popular destination for European migrants. In 1921 the American Congress opted for numerical quotas based on specific national groups. American immigration numbers became rigidly set and enforced with newcomers entered not to exceed 358,000 annually. The number of immigrants was reduced to 150,000 in 1924. Under the ‘national origins formula’ immigration was restricted to the existing ethnic proportion of the white population in the USA. This legislation intended to maintain the ethnic mixture of the 1920s based on the census of 1910. Every national origin group was allowed to enter the country to a maximum of 3 per cent of their proportion according to the 1910 census (Martin and Midgley, 1994). The original figure set for Germany in 1921 was 67,607 for the time period of July 1, 1921 to June 30, 1922. In order to preserve the status quo, security and well-being of the nation the ethnic mix of American immigration was altered to the census of 1890 resulting in the number of Germany emigrants being lowered to 51,544 by 1924 (BAB, R1501/1792). The quota for Germans fell to 47,151 in 1927, 45,504 in 1928, 24,908 in 1929. Canadian immigration policy was influenced by American legislation, the imposition of the American quota system forced potential emigrants to consider other countries such as Canada (Wirtschaft und Statistik, 1929).

It was not until April 7, 1923 that German emigration to Canada was officially allowed. On this date “enemy alien” restrictions for German nationals were deleted allowing a restrictive immigration of German farmers, farm labourers, female domestic servants, and a wife or a child under 18 years of age. On January 8, 1927 all restrictions for German emigrants entering Canada were lifted and Germans were classified as “preferred” immigrants, subject to normal Canadian immigration requirements. German nationals needed guaranteed employment or sufficient funds to support themselves upon entry until employment was found. From 1927 to 1930 Canada was the second-most-popular destination for German emigrants because of the limits imposed by the American quota system as well as economic hardships in South America. The USA remained the preferred country of German emigration, with Argentina third and Brazil fourth. Due to the Canada’s prosperity between 1923 and 1930, combined with a liberal immigration policy, allowed a steady entry of European immigrants; Lainck was part of this voluntary migratory movement to Canada (Grams, 2010).

Josef Lainck’s Migration from Germany to Canada

It appears Lainck emigrated through the Verein Deutsch Canadier Katholiken (Society of German-Canadian Catholics - VDCK), a German-Catholic immigration society affiliated with the CPR. German-Catholic farmers requiring extra labour hired German farm labourers through the VDCK connection with the St. Raphaels Verein zum Schutz Katholischer Deutscher Auswanderer (Saint Raphaels Society for the Protection of Catholic Emigrants – SR, Hamburg, Germany). SR did not encourage emigration but aided and advised those German nationals that decided to leave Germany. Between April 1923 and May 1930, the VDCK with its CPR affiliation settled 10,000 - 12,000 German speakers in western Canada (Grams, 2013).

Throughout the inter-war time period, the CPR and its European agents were financially engrossed with emigration and emphasised the opportunities in Canada despite being legally bound not to discuss living conditions, work opportunities, wages or cost of living expenditures. In spite of these legal barriers, CPR agents repeatedly discussed all the above with potential German emigrants. CPR representatives in Germany were accused of encouraging emigration and violating



German migration laws by illegally dispensing information. Through the illegal dispersal of information by CPR's agents, Lainck may have been enticed to emigrate to Canada. German emigration authorities attributed increases in German migration to Canada on CPR propaganda work and their affiliation with German-Canadian religious immigration boards such as the VDCK (BAB R1501/1794). Historian Tara Zahra also noted the CPR's financial motives in fostering European migration to Canada (Zahara, 2016).

Although Lainck had an Uncle in Chicago, Illinois, he emigrated to Canada. Lainck's reasons are unknown but the United States quota for German nationals may have indeed played a role. It is speculative if Lainck intended to remain in Canada permanently (Thug Shoots Constable Adams, Edmonton Bulletin, Nov.14, 1927). Ludwig Kempff, German Consul General in Canada, 1921 to 1937 knew that some Germans emigrated to Canada without the intention of remaining and would register with the local American General Consulate shortly after arrival. After waiting one year to two years in Canada, these Germans could qualify for residence in the USA. Kempff documented that 42 Germans in 1921, 110 Germans in 1922 and 128 Germans in 1923 moved to the USA after initial migration to, and residence in, Canada (BAB, R1501/1794). Between 1923 and 1930, about 1,500 German nationals migrated to the USA after a brief residence in Canada (Bassler, 1983). Kempff stated in 1933 that ca. 2,100 Germans migrated to the USA after initially settling in Canada. The Canadian government knew that a portion of German immigrants only came to Canada because of the restrictions imposed by the American quota system, but it was powerless to stop immigrants from moving to the USA (PAAA, R60033).

At this time, there were perceived insecurities entrenched within migration (Sirkeci, 2009). Migration is dynamically shaped and reshaped by insecurities (i.e. quota not permitting entry to the USA; the financial crisis in South America) in the country of origin, and in destinations and in transit countries. It is illustrative of how people choose destinations and how these choices may change in relation to economic, political, or sociocultural insecurities. Lainck and other potential European emigrants may have perceived the economic challenges as actually being more severe than problems in the USA; considering the times in which they lived with limited communication potential migrants were likely to be reliant on migration and success myths rather than accurate economic comparisons at the time. One of the vibrant emigrant illusions spreading throughout Europe in the 1920s was that emigration was exciting and success awaited the daring and adventurous with the challenges of leaving one's country of birth, establishing a career, acclimatising to a new culture and learning a language not being mentioned (Würmann 2006; Gassert 1997).

At the time of Lainck's emigration to Canada, Germany appeared to be undergoing a time of relative progress and stability. The victors of WW I acknowledged that Germany could not pay the debts heaped upon it from the Treaty of Versailles (1919). In 1924 foreign investments helped German industry modernise under the American Dawes Plan and gave Germany favourable reparation terms. The Locarno Treaty of 1925 secured post WW I borders between the victorious allies and eastern and central European countries. Germany was admitted to the League of Nations in 1926. In 1927 the Allied Military Administration for Germany ended and a French-German trade agreement was signed. Although suspicion and fear in Europe did not end Germany's isolation some negative implications of WW I were dissipating. This period of German stability was financed largely through America loans. Yet these superficial changes that did not successfully camouflage



all of the troubles bound within Germany (Kimmich, 1976; Carr, 1981). In 1927 there was a lack of investment capital in Germany which hampered economic activity and caused monetary instability nationwide. These forces may have adversely affected Lainck, and his family members encouraging his emigration to Canada (Balderston, 1983).

At the time of Lainck's entrance to Canada, he gave his profession to immigration authorities as a locksmith, although an Edmonton newspaper article referred to Lainck as a "student of engineering". Either profession would ultimately prove to be very important for Lainck (Thug Shoots Constable Adams, *Edmonton Bulletin*, Nov.14, 1927; LAC, RG76). After he landed in Quebec City on July 16, 1927, his next mention in documents was on November 12 in Edmonton, over 3 months of Lainck's existence in Canada is unknown. In Edmonton, Lainck booked a room in a downtown hotel, where he was robbed. Lainck notified Edmonton Police the morning of November 12, 1927 and reported his hotel room had been burglarised. The interviewing officer, Horace C. Reynolds spoke fluent German and remembered when Lainck wrote his crime report listing his stolen possessions "Lainck pulled out his fountain pen and pushed back his hat on his head". Reynolds distinctly remembered a grey camel-hair plush hat and a unique fountain pen being in Lainck's possession (PAA, GR1983.1/5829).

During the late evening of November 12, 1927, in the vicinity of Lainck's hotel, Police Constable Thomas Adams began making his rounds in downtown Edmonton. Early in the morning of November 13, he noticed something suspicious at the Robinson Tailoring Company store located on 10024 Jasper Avenue. At 1 a.m. Adams entered the store and surprised an intruder. A struggle ensued and Constable Adams was shot twice - once in his right chest and a second time through his stomach into in his lower abdomen. After other officers were summoned to the crime scene, a fountain pen and brown felt hat were discovered. The hat recovered at the crime scene was made in Germany and had the initials J.L. Officer Reynolds was one of the officers called to the clothing store, he immediately recognised the pen and hat as belonging to a German immigrant that he had questioned a mere 12 hours earlier. Reynolds accompanied by other policemen went to the hotel Lainck resided and arrested him at 3 a.m. November 13 (*Edmonton Bulletin*, Nov.14, 1927).

In Lainck's pants pocket, empty cartridges were found for the same make and model as the handgun in question but the weapon itself was never found. The bullet casings found at the crime scene were made in Germany. Lainck also had a small wound on his forehead indicating a recent struggle or accident had taken place (Evidence to Link up Joseph Lainck with Attempted Murder, *Medicine Hat News*, Jan 24, 1928). After Lainck's arrest, Edmonton Police were anxious to ascertain if he had a criminal record in Germany and if he immigrated with a pistol, or purchased this weapon in Canada. Although Lainck had not been imprisoned in Germany, he had experienced brushes with German law enforcement as "Lainck was convicted once in Germany for non-observance of game laws, and also punished for a breach of passport regulations" (*Life History of Lainck Discovered*, *Edmonton Journal*, March 2, 1928).

During the police investigation, it was discovered that Lainck had broken into various homes, businesses and McDougall United Church in downtown Edmonton between September and November 1927. Certainly, his stated career of locksmith would have given knowledge of the weaknesses of doors, locks and bolts and furthered his crime spree. Six charges of burglary were filed against Lainck, plus attempted murder. During the subsequent trial, lasting two days, the jury deliberated for only one hour before finding Lainck guilty of all charges. Lainck initially pled not guilty to all crimes but on January 26, 1928, he altered his plea to guilty for unknown reasons. He



did not appeal his conviction (PAA GR1983.1/5805; PAA GR 1983.0001/5829; PAA GR 1983.001/5805). Although Edmonton police officer Thomas Adams recuperated from being shot twice and returned to work after a thirteen week hiatus the injuries took a toll on his body. He never fully recovered and in 1932 Adams was relegated to become a ‘turnkey’ – in charge of prisoners in police cells. Adams retired in June 1941 and died on September 21, 1958 (CEA, File Adams).

Deportations

From Edmonton, Lainck was sent to the Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Sask. Pen.) located at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1928 to serve a twenty-year sentence. In 1930 Lainck’s deportation was actively discussed among Canadian authorities. Lainck’s case was submitted as a candidate for deportation as “inmates of Saskatchewan penitentiaries in whose cases the Department [of Immigration and Colonization - DIC] is prepared to proceed with sailing arrangements upon receipt of advice from the Department of Justice”. In September 1930 the Warden of the Sask. Pen. wrote Ottawa emphasising that his facilities were “very much over-crowded having some 86 inmates sleeping in the corridors and by Spring [1931] I would not be surprised if our population got near or over 600, our present population is 532. If our increase is as great as I anticipate I do not know where I will put them.” Although Lainck was proposed for deportation his time served for the crimes committed was viewed as too short by the Department of Justice, his deportation was refused until his scheduled year of release – 1948 (LAC, RG13).

Deportations were regarded as a cost saving measure to rid Canada of surplus labour, the lazy, the unemployable, the deviant and all troublemakers including alien convicts. It was the duty of transportation companies such as the CPR to return unwanted migrants they had brought to Canada earlier. With the New York stock market crash in 1929, the Great Depression (1929-1939) commenced, immigration to Canada became more restrictive in 1930 and deportations occurred more readily. The impetus to deport newcomers only increased throughout the 1930s; Canada routinely deported foreign convicts after a portion of this sentence was served (Montgomery, 2005).

A comparison of American and Canadian immigration and deportation statistics between the two world wars is revealing. Adding together the Canadian and American immigration statistics, a figure of 446,156 (422,162 for the USA, 23,994 for Canada) is reached for the years 1919 - 1932. This figure represents the destination of 74.2% (70.2% USA, 4% Canada) of German emigrants between February 1919 to January 1933 - the time of the Weimar Republic in Germany (Statistisches Reichsamt, 1921/22 - 1935). A comparison of deportations shows that from 1926 to 1932 the USA deported 4,249 Germans while the Americans allowed 223,468 Germans into the country, a ratio of 52.6 to 1 (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1933). During the same time period, Canada deported 692 German nationals while allowing 20,004 into the country, a ratio of 28.9 to 1 (Statistisches Reichsamt, 1921/22 - 1935). From 1933 to 1939 Canada allowed 961 Germans into the country while deporting 317 Germans, a ratio of 3 to 1. The Americans allowed 69,415 Germans into the country while deporting 1,554, a ratio of 44 to 1 (Statistisches Jahrbuch 1941/1942; Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor, 1937-1943). Both time frames show Canadian deportation rates to be higher than that of their American brethren for German nationals and suggest Canada’s criterion were harsher.

In Lainck’s case, his deportation fell to the CPR as this transportation company brought him to Canada in 1927. The Canadian Immigration Act of 1910 explained deportations and defined the



immigrants' responsibilities to Canada. If the newcomer failed to fulfil their part of the agreement, which allowed them to enter the country, the government could enforce their deportation. A newcomer to Canada was to be mentally stable, healthy, obey the law and find employment; any infringement could result in their repatriation. Section 41 of the Immigration Act allowed an immigrant to be deported if they intended to overthrow the government, advocated violence, caused the destruction of property, encouraged any form of disorder, or belonged to a subversive or secret society. Those who violated Section 41 were categorised as prohibited immigrants and customarily deported (Canada, 1927-1928; Roberts, 1988; Imai, 1981).

If an immigrant received any government-sponsored aid that person could be subject to deportation, this included their spouse and children born in Canada. For those German nationals that felt compatible with Fascist ideology, deportation was a viable means to return home; some intentionally sought their deportation. Canadian deportation legislation was exploited by Third Reich authorities to have the foreign government or shipping company pay for German transportation costs to Germany. For German authorities, deported German nationals were considered return migrants, but their lifestyle abroad and reasons for their deportation played a vital role in their acceptance by Nazi administrators (HAM, 1934).

For some immigrants, their deportation could mean incarceration, torture and death in their land of origin. Between the two world wars, the Canadian government feared communism and strove to weaken the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) culminating in the party's illegal status in August 1931. The deportation of foreign-born communists peaked in 1932 with 82 individuals. These deportations were authorised under Section 98 of the Immigration Act, an extremely broad and comprehensive law open to government interpretation. In this case, it was alleged foreign born communists were deported for advocating the downfall of the government and/or ending capitalism.

Two examples will serve as illustrations - Conrad Cessinger emigrated from Germany on August 2, 1927, aged 31. He laboured on farms and did various forestry and bush work in western Canada before becoming the editor of the *German Workers News*, a German language communist publication in Winnipeg, Manitoba. At the time of his arrest, Cessinger was an active member of the German Workers Association, and Friends of the Soviet Union — both were international communist organisations. Cessinger was deported on December 18, 1932 — a mere forty-three days later the Nazis' assumed power. Cessinger's fate during the Third Reich is unknown but he survived the Nazi era, he later became politically active in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

Cessinger was deported with another German communist Hans Kist, both men were deported on December 18, 1932. Kist was a sailor arriving in Vancouver, British Columbia in May 1930. Upon arrival, he deserted his ship and illegally entered Canada. Similar to Cessinger, Kist was arrested for his enthusiasm for communist ideals and deported as being a security threat to the country. After his arrival, Kist continued with his work for international communism, by November 1933 Kist had been murdered by the Nazis in a concentration camp. Although the Canadian government knew Germany had widespread dissension including street violence, deportations to a country rife with political, social and civil problems continued.

When Kist and Cessinger landed in Germany in December 1932, the country was rampant with various problems including political groups with competing agendas. For example, the Nazi Party and the German Communist Party were often noted in the Canadian and international press in their reckless street violence (Barth and Hauke, 2020). Political intrigue and bloodshed both perpetrated



against, and committed by communists were commonplace - violent fights between Communists and Nazis often involved serious injury and periodically death (McElligott, 1990; Hett 2018). During the Nazi era Canadian immigration officials maintained that they were solely concerned that Canadian immigration regulations were upheld with all proper procedures followed, this included the right of deportation. Unfortunately, Kist was not the only deportee that suffered from maltreatment upon arrival in Europe. Deportees from Canada that returned to Fascist Italy, Croatia, and Finland suffered comparable consequences (Molinario, 2017; Schacher, 2016).

Conflict

The early 1930s were a time of divergence and great instability within Germany. Between 1930 and mid-1932, 171 Communists died in political fighting with over 18,000 injured. In Berlin alone, city authorities calculated 17 deaths and over 400 injuries during 1931, and in the first six months of 1932, there were 17 deaths and over 600 recorded injuries. With Adolf Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933, the predicament for Communists grew increasingly worse (Swett, 1999). Another factor for all German society in 1932 was an unemployment rate raging at 43.8 % (Galenson and Zellner, <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c2649>). But any thoughts on how deportees might fare in Germany were far from the minds of Canadian administrators.

Insecurity works both ways as governments tried to extradite problematic sections of the population, reduce the prison population and remove foreign convicted persons; their aim was reducing insecurity. At the same time, convicted immigrants were forcefully removed and deported, although they still have perceived the country of origin as an environment of insecurity. American authorities appeared to be slightly more humanitarian in their deportation agenda as they allowed German nationals that had illegally entered the country, but committed no further crime to depart on their own accord. Johannes Wiegel, a sailor illegally entered the USA in 1937 but immigration officials did not demand his deportation because they acknowledged that he “faced persecution if he returned to the Reich.” Although Wiegel could not remain in the USA he was allowed to leave for a destination of his choice (Schacher, 2016). Individuals that had committed more odious crimes were deported to the Third Reich. Similar to Canadian deportations, the return of criminal elements were seen to be a legitimate method of saving the country money while providing greater internal security and ridding the country of troublesome foreigners.

For Canadian officialdom apathy within deportation procedures reigned. By 1938 the Canadian government reasoned that Lainck had served enough of his sentence and as a foreign convict should be deported. Although Lainck may have been content to be transported back to his ancestral homeland, he probably had little idea of what lay in store for him. It is unknown what Lainck concretely knew about conditions in Germany. The German Consul for Saskatchewan was located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Dr Max Lorenz served as the Auswärtiges Amt (German Foreign Office – AA) representative from November 1926 until April 1929. Lorenz dealt with Edmonton and Dominion authorities after Lainck was initially arrested (BAB, R77354). Dr Heinrich Seelheim took over the Winnipeg consulate until his transfer to Japan in October 1937, where he continued to work within the German return migration process (Wagner, 1981). Seelheim may have corresponded with Lainck. Seelheim’s successor was Wilhelm Rodde. Both Seelheim and Rodde men were ardent Nazis defending events at home with full vigour and conviction. Rodde would have procured Lainck’s passport and alerted German authorities of Lainck’s impending deportation in 1938.



Lainck's Return to Nazi Germany

In 1938 the Third Reich was conducting their own deportations as it began expelling Polish Jews resident in Germany, to Poland. From October 1938 until July 1939 Germany expelled up to 18,000 Polish Jews depositing them on the Germany-Poland border where no preparations for their arrival had been planned. During the late 1930s, both Canada and Germany believed they were ridding the country of undesirable individuals that threatened the future security and prosperity of the nation (Milton, 1984; Weed, 2009).

Part of Nazi ideology dictated that all German-Aryans, including those who emigrated abroad owed a debt to Germany because the right of the individual was subordinate to the consensus and unity of German-Aryan blood, race, and territory (Grams, 2016). Fascist Germany was founded on flawed logic as it strove to have a homogenous society based on corrupt ideology, immoral laws and questionable leadership. This quest to create Aryan perfection centred on misguided principles and racist doctrine which guided the country domestically and internationally. The doctrine became more rabid and unshakeable as the Nazi regime consolidated power. These ideas and principles played a role in its population and migration policies as Nazi Germany strove to increase its population and solve some of its labour problems through return migration. By 1936, it was obvious to Nazi authorities that the migration of German speakers from within Europe to Germany would not suffice for their manpower deficits. Nazi Germany did not want to weaken German claims to European lands and wanted German speakers to remain in their ancestral homeland, although if they migrated to the Third Reich, they were accepted by the state. Return migration from lands of immigration became increasingly tantalising for Nazi administrators, this was coupled with Nazi ideology that did not want German-Aryan women working outside of the home. Although more manpower was needed, Nazi dogma believed women's labour outside of a domestic environment was unhealthy, deplorable and harmed the woman's fertility, thus hindering German population growth. These facts dictated that non-European sources of Aryan labour to be actively contemplated. Foreign workers, usually Polish or Italian were a solution to short term problems, but the migration of German speaking Aryans from overseas might be extremely helpful not only to solve arrears of manpower but help the Third Reich increase its valuable Germanic population (BAB, NS9/65).

Nazi society enacted laws designed to protect German society, but not the individual. Non-conformist elements were not protected by the law and were endangered by government directives. Criminal tendencies were viewed as a genetic flaw requiring their elimination from public life. Their very existence had to be physically removed from healthy society for the majority to prosper and procreate; it would be irresponsible for any criminal element to mingle freely with wholesome individuals. The Nazi state followed its own perverse laws to legally curtail personal freedom and human rights as they selectively weeded out, their interpretation of improper individuals to breed a utopian, homogenous Aryan state (Chapoutot, 2018). For Nazi Germany, the collective good and security of society outweighed the rights of the individual, German citizens such as Lainck were to be incarcerated. The needs for nationwide security dictated that the Third Reich could subjugate what it interpreted as inferior people and place oppressive measures on their existence. Thus racism and oppression took priority over legal, moral, religious and humanitarian concerns (Letsinger, 2015). Non-German elements and those exhibiting any form of deviancy were to be extracted from society and energetically combated from all levels of the Nazi state. Throughout the Nazi era, any



form of non-societal conformity was feared as a dangerous element because it could bring political or economic calamity to the Fascist state (Waite, 1980).

Although deportation procedures retained their rigour and deadly consequences, in 1938 Canadian immigration procedures became slightly more tolerant regarding European refugees already in the country that fled an oppressive government; this change of heart was influenced by American policies. The Canadian government became reluctant to deport refugees who might suffer persecution within their home country. Those already in Canada in danger of maltreatment in their land of origin and who entered under “technically irregular” circumstances could be allowed to remain (Dirks, 1972). Although this accommodation was afforded to refugees fleeing an unhealthy situation in Europe, there were no provisions afforded to immigrants deemed deportable to Germany no matter how deplorable their internal situation might be. Deportations to the Third Reich caused little concern for Canadian officialdom as Canada still tried to deport German-Jewish refugees to the Third Reich as late as March 1939 (Imai, 1983).

Already by 1937 members of Canada’s government knew about internal German turmoil recognising that non-Aryans and non-conformist Germans lived precariously within an increasingly militaristic and intolerant state. An April 1937 government of Canada memorandum described the Third Reich as a country “of unrest and aggression”. This occurred because the Nazi government was committed to intrigue and uncompromising belligerency while implementing highly questionable social and racial norms (Munro, 1967). In addition, senior Canadian military officer, Henry Duncan Graham Crerar (1888-1965) believed Germany was a grave danger to Europe. While in Great Britain to attend an Imperial Conference (May 14 - June 24, 1937), Crerar and members of his staff visited Berlin and Hamburg. While in Berlin, Crerar spoke with the British military attaché. This conversation combined with Crerars’ and his staffs’ observations made him leery of Fascist Germany, believing a European war instigated by Germany would occur in one year, perhaps two (Dickson, 2007; MacLaren, 2019).

If a German living abroad wished to return to the Third Reich through official German channels, it was the standard Nazi policy to investigate if deportation was a possibility. If the German possessed citizenship, that individual could be deported to the Reich at the cost of the foreign government or affiliated transportation company. Nazi officials encouraged this deportation process because it placed the financial costs of transportation on non-Reich sources (PAAA, R67434). Of greatest importance for the German administrators was obtaining information about the potential returnee, i.e. health, age, career, work experience, political affiliation and marital status because large families were encouraged to return (BAB, NS9/65).

Lainck was transported to Europe aboard a CPR ship or through CPR funding and landed at the Hook (Hoek), Netherlands and escorted to Germany’s border. Lainck was transported from the Hook to the Aachen train station (ca. 205 km) because German border authorities actively cooperated with the police of neighbouring countries. Aachen is ca. 6 km from the Netherlands-Germany border. Lainck was described in German documents as a “dangerous criminal [Schwerverbrecher]” deported from Canada (Stadtarchiv Ochtrup E103). At Aachen, Lainck was immediately taken into ‘preventative custody’ by the Geheimstaatspolizei (Gestapo – Secret State Police) in June 1938. He was held with this designation and transferred to Sachsenhausen concentration camp at Oranienburg in Brandenburg on June 28, 1938 (https://www.ushmm.org/online/hsv/person_view.php?PersonId=4436099, accessed July 12,



2016). Preventative detention had been introduced in Germany on November 24, 1933, for persons deemed “habitual criminals”, people with this classification were customarily worked to death or died from abuse in the concentration camps (Wachsmann, 2001).

Although German authorities accepted deportees from lands of immigration not all returning Germans were considered worthy of Aryan status and embraced by the Fatherland; some were treated suspiciously by Nazi authorities. The Nazi government was apprehensive regarding Lainck as the Fascist state would not accept deviance, dissent or controversial behaviour (Browder, 2004). It is unknown to what extent his previous brushes with German law influenced the decision for his internment but his prior actions coupled with his Canadian crimes placed him in a precarious position (*Life History of Lainck Discovered*, *Edmonton Journal*, March 2, 1928). Lainck’s attempted murder of a policeman, burglary of businesses, private homes and one church may have influenced the Nazi court system to imprison him as a person with criminal tendencies as well as a security threat. His criminal status meant that he must be imprisoned for the benefit of Adolf Hitler’s utopian Aryan society. Lainck’s imprisonment was sanctioned by Nazi courts and the judicial system because any criminal’s detention was viewed as being in the Fascist state’s best interests (Wachsmann, 2004; Majer, 2003).

On arrival, Sachsenhausen prisoners were categorised according to their offence against the Third Reich. Each was given a coloured badge to be worn on the left breast, another on the seam of their pants to reveal their crime. Political prisoners wore a red triangle, forced labourers wore blue, homosexuals pink, asocials black, Jews yellow – habitual criminals such as Lainck wore a green triangle (Moorhouse, 2010). On December 12, 1938, 100 prisoners including Lainck were transferred from Sachsenhausen concentration camp to Neuengamme (ca. 285 km). Neuengamme acted as a subcamp to Sachsenhausen until 1940 when it became an independent concentration camp. At an undetermined date, Lainck was transferred back to Sachsenhausen².

Either Lainck had talents the Nazis wanted, or he was just lucky because he survived his years in a Nazi administered concentration camp. His ability to work with metal combined with his fluent command of English may have made him an asset among the Sachsenhausen prisoners. Possibly Lainck’s profession as a locksmith was a trade that Sachsenhausen authorities found useful within the camps counterfeiting operation (*Yad Vasham Holocaust Resources*, Josef Lainck TD Card 04 and TD Card 07). Within Sachsenhausen, there were three possible vocations that would have used Lainck’s ability to manipulate metal. The Sachsenhausen camp had Operation Bernhard, a secretive endeavour for counterfeiting foreign currency, mostly British Pounds. Another possibility was the “clock detail”, this refurbished stolen Jewish watches from the Auschwitz death camp. Odd Nansen, a Norwegian internee at Sachsenhausen, reported that there were fifty Jewish men repairing tens of thousands of stolen watches. The men’s survival rested solely on their chosen vocation, it was because of their talents and work experience they received better quarters and care while imprisoned in the concentration camp. Lainck’s last possible activity was aiding in the forging of British postage stamps (Baldus, 2005; Nansen, 1949). Which occupation Lainck was forced to take part in is unknown, regardless he survived the war while detained in a Nazi concentration camp

Lainck’s survival in Sachsenhausen camp was solely due to his forced labourer and status as a convict, and his predicament ended when he was freed by the Russian forces on April 27, 1945. At

² <http://media.offenes-archiv.de/ngaussenlagersachsenhausen.pdf>, accessed Feb.1, 2019.



the time of his release in 1945, Lainck was 38 and had spent 18 years incarcerated – nearly half his life. After his freedom was granted Lainck moved to Wuppertal, roughly 140 km from his childhood home of Ochtrup, both cities are in North Rhine-Westphalia. Lainck's father, Heinrich with other family members had owned and operated a hotel in Ochtrup (BAB R77354). Unfortunately, the Lainck's hotel was destroyed by allied bombing on February 2, 1945 with several family members being killed. The destructions of the family business and the death of close relatives may have motivated Lainck to reside in Wuppertal (Klaus Toemmers, Heimatvereins Ochtrup, 2018).

The years of forced incarceration would have been a huge challenge for all former concentration camp inmates. Lainck's challenges would have been compounded by his years of detention in Canada. Lainck migrated to his home state of Westphalia and initially found work as an interpreter in the British area of occupation from May 1945 to May 1948. The British occupied the German states of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Lower Saxony, Westphalia and the Rhineland. British occupation forces were desperate for translators and interpreters. It was due to the shortage of people with German language skills that the British employed someone with a questionable past. The translators/interpreters used by the British was an assortment of British soldiers and officers, non-British born soldiers, German-Jews and local Germans that could be trusted. The latter group's reliability and security issues came into question; they were to never work alone but always with a dependable British national (Footitt and Tobia, 2012; Footitt and Kelly, 2012). The British government employed 579 translators on April 1, 1947; the administration downsized and one year later this figure had declined to 350, a decrease of nearly 40% (Turner, 1989). Lainck's position ended in May 1948. It is assumed British authorities knew of Lainck's incarceration in Sachsenhausen, which gave evidence of his aversion to German fascism and acceptance of Germany's occupation by victorious Allied powers. It is unknown if British authorities knew that Lainck had committed crimes and had been deported from Canada in 1938; possibly his linguistic abilities eclipsed his suspect past and criminal activity abroad.

Conclusion

Lainck spent the remainder of his life in the state of Westphalia. He married in 1948 and found employment as a labourer in October 1950 (International Tracing Service). Later he became a businessman in Wuppertal where he lived until his death on January 3, 1981, aged 74. Lainck had spent ca.11 years in Canada and ca.7 years in Germany in involuntary confinement. At the time of his death, Lainck was divorced (Stadt Wuppertal Archiv, Sterberegister Nr.54/1981). Although Lainck had spent the final decades of his life as a free man in Westphalia, the state of his birth, his years of imprisonment must have been a terrible burden upon his psyche and transformed his youthful dreams of a life abroad into a frightening tale of questionable deeds. His life reads like a tragic novel, one of the missteps and unfortunate circumstances. His heart-breaking tale involved an individual that might have been better off, if he had remained near his childhood city of residence of Ochtrup, Westphalia.

Lainck's tale of a criminal and deportee appears to be that of a flawed individual, but his latter phase as a Nazi concentration camp inmate and forced labourer might be portrayed as a resilient man with commendable qualities. However, the full story of Lainck, perhaps apart from the criminal detail, was not a unique one. In the first half of the 20th century, many western European countries, unlike today, were countries with potential emigrants and witnessed millions of European immigrants arriving in the Americas. A key motivation for such emigrants, including Lainck, was



economic insecurity as they pursued their dreams of comparative security in the Americas. Lainck's choice of Canada was probably due to restrictions imposed by USA and his forced removal from Canada are all indicative of shifts in security as perceived by immigrants. Lainck, like many others, decided to enter Canada and possibly wait until he qualified to enter USA. There are clear resemblances to today's migrants stranded in non-EU countries around the Mediterranean, Balkans or in Calais, France until they can find the opportune moment for the final crossing for their ultimate final destination and a new life.

People pursue security (social, economic, cultural, political) and negotiate their own circumstances as well as the contexts in places where they are from and those in places they consider as destinations with relative security. This is a constant process determining migration, settlement, returns and remigrations. National level administrators and politicians may intervene in this cycle of human mobility when they perceive an insecurity or a threat as Lainck posed for Canadian administrators at that time. Deportations were a tool to bring increased security for Canada and were actively used between the two world wars to rid the country of all perceived threats.

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