

The “liberation” of the Dossin Barracks

→ Laurence Schram
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The Dossin barracks are difficult to consign to the dustbin of history, given the important role they played in racial deportations. Between 27 July 1942 and 4 September 1944, 25,490 Jews and 353 Roma and Sinti were deported from the site. Except for 218 of them, the destination was the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex, with its concentration camps, *Kommandos* and labor camps, and its killing center on the outskirts of Birkenau.

It is estimated that 15,725 of the deported Jews were murdered in the Birkenau gas chambers as soon as they deboarded the trains. These were mainly children, women, the elderly and the sick, all deemed unfit for work and therefore useless in the concentration-camp environment. Only 1,261 of them returned from deportation. The others were registered before being exterminated through labor. The Roma and Sinti, of whom there were only 33 survivors, were tattooed before being crammed into the “Gypsy family camp”.¹

This 5% survival rate is a clear indication of why the Dossin barracks earned its epithets as the “waiting room of Auschwitz-Birkenau” and the “antechamber of death”. The human toll of the deportation from this assembly camp was much higher than that of the Breendonk camp. It is estimated that some 4,000 deportees of very different statuses passed through Breendonk, half of whom survived. Breendonk was already well known during the Occupation, having gained an international reputation as a terror camp, while the Dossin barracks remained shrouded in mystery and obscurity.

THE LIBERATION OF THE DOSSIN BARRACKS IN PRACTICE

On the night of 12-13 April 1944, Allied aircraft began a long series of bombing raids on the city of Mechelen. Their targets were the network and infrastructure of the SNCB (National Railway Company of Belgium), and factories that produced military equipment for the occupying forces². The daily lives of the inhabitants fluctuated between rushing to shelters, witnessing the desolate destruction, evacuating and identifying bodies, and clearing the ruins. Some Jewish prisoners were

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employed to clear rubble or as handymen at the SS training camp in Schoten. Some of them took advantage of the inattention of the guards to escape. The Dossin barracks escaped these bombardments. The SS imposed a stricter curfew on the inmates and the windows were blacked out to avoid attracting the attention of Allied pilots.

On 19 May, the 25th transport took 507 Jewish deportees and a young Roma man to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Fear and despair reigned supreme. But three weeks later, news of the Allied landings in Normandy on 6 June 1944 spread through the camp. Gilda Franco, then aged 13, later remembered that “after the announcement of the Allied landings in Normandy, the Allied planes flew over the town of Mechelen more and more often and lower and lower. The inmates of the Dossin barracks were overjoyed, even though they regularly had to take refuge in the shelters.”³ In his war diary, Dr Franz Parnes, a volunteer doctor at the camp, wrote:

Mr Frank’s Jewish butler has occasion to listen to the BBC, so we know that the Allies have been victorious in North Africa and are now fighting in Italy. And today, 6 June, we learn that the Allies have landed in Normandy. Our hearts beat faster and the joy is hard to hide. The end is drawing near – will it be ours too?⁴

The internees already saw themselves as free and hoped that Transport 25, which had just left, would be the last. The atmosphere inside the barracks fluctuated between joy and anxiety, depending on the news and rumors currently circulating.

On 6 June, Salomon Vanden Berg noted in his diary that “in the streets and everywhere, people were smiling”, but on 8 June, he was worried: “Many young people in town are being rounded up, including men aged 50”.⁵ From the beginning of June, the Association des Juifs en Belgique (AJB) stepped up its efforts to obtain the transfer to its homes of the children being held at the Dossin barracks with their parents⁶. The AJB was also concerned about Zionist militants on the German-Palestinian exchange lists and about Jews with certificates of nationality (Latin and Central America)⁷.

The Sipo-SD made the same observation: “As might be expected, the Anglo-American landings caused great joy among the Jews. They believe in an Anglo-American victory”.⁸ As a result, the hunt intensified and now targeted Jewish spouses from mixed marriages and Jews who had remained within the law. The Sipo-SD even boasted about its results: “Despite considerable difficulties, an average of 80 to 100 Jews continued to be arrested every week.”⁹ The bonuses granted to informers proved their worth. In June 1944, at least 317 Jews were taken to the Dossin barracks. The Sipo-SD and its auxiliaries continued their efforts the following month, delivering 333 Jews to the assembly camp, almost all of whom had been arrested in Brussels.

Dates	Entrants to Mechelen	Deportees	Non-deported
Indeterminate	3	1	2
03/07/1944	32	26	6
04/07/1944	12	10	2
05/07/1944	2	2	0
06/07/1944	15	11	4
07/07/1944	1	1	0
08/07/1944	24	20	4
10/07/1944	3	1	2
11/07/1944	12	10	2
12/07/1944	1	1	0
13/07/1944	21	17	4
14/07/1944	1	1	0
15/07/1944	11	10	1
17/07/1944	1	0	1
18/07/1944	1	0	1
19/07/1944	23	21	2
20/07/1944	13	10	3
21/07/1944	22	19	3
22/07/1944	21	17	4
25/07/1944	19	13	6
26/07/1944	71	55	16
27/07/1944	1	0	1
28/07/1944	4	1	3
29/07/1944	19	19	0
	333	266	67

– Daily entries to the Mechelen camp in July 1944¹⁰.

Between 19 and 29 July, registrations of new arrivals at Dossin seemed to indicate that the liquidation of the “Jewish question in Belgium” was indeed underway. On 20 July 1944, in his war diary, Salomon Vanden Berg expressed concern about “the announcement of the replacement of the military government by a civilian government. We know from experience in Holland what this means: [... the] intensification of measures against the Jews”.¹¹ The next day, he learned that the attempt on Hitler’s life the previous day had failed and that a Jewish transport was about to leave. This news also spread to the Mechelen camp. The internees fell back into despondency and fear of another transport. Destroying all hopes, on 31 July 1944, transport XXVI, which was to be the last, left Malines for Auschwitz-Birkenau.

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The next day, the Sipo-SD planned to seize the few thousand Jews who had remained within the law: employees of the AJB, residents of orphanages and of old people’s homes and all other structures under the supervision of the Jewish Association, workers from firms employed in the Reich’s war effort, holders of German-Palestinian exchange certificates, nationals of protected nationalities, and all the Dossin internees. No one was to be spared.

– The identification
card of Nahim (alias
Norbert) Manelewitsch,
registered on the list of the
XXVIIth transport, which
did not leave, with a photo
of the boy in 1946



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Nahim (known as Norbert) Manelewitsch, aged 5, and his parents entered the camp on 5 August, a few days after the 563 deportees from the last convoy XXVI, of 31 July 1944, had been sent to Auschwitz. The child was struck by the almost empty building, although it was above all the ill-treatment inflicted on his mother in Avenue Louise that left an indelible impression on him¹². While he and his father were housed together in the *Flitser* room – a room for recaptured escapees – his mother was immediately sent to the infirmary.

Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik, aged 22, who had been locked up in the assembly camp since 29 April 1944, remembered learning of the Allied advance on Paris and the liberation of the city. He recounts that from mid-August 1944, “the Allied planes were flying lower and lower over the camp. We were happy to see the liberation approaching, but also desperate, not knowing what they were thinking about us.”¹³

On 24 or 25 August, Anton Burger, Adolf Eichmann’s special emissary and a specialist in the liquidation of Jewish populations, returned to Brussels to complete the Final Solution in Belgium. His arrival caused panic both within the AJB and among Jewish resistance fighters¹⁴. The underground Yiddish newspaper *Unzer Vort* called on all Jews to be vigilant against the arrival of this “Nazi executioner [...] whose hands are soaked in Jewish blood”.¹⁵

Dates	Entrants to Mechelen
Indeterminate	5
01/08/1944	3
02/08/1944	1
03/08/1944	17
04/08/1944	1
05/08/1944	26
08/08/1944	4
10/08/1944	23
12/08/1944	10
14/08/1944	1
15/08/1944	2
16/08/1944	2
17/08/1944	8
18/08/1944	2
19/08/1944	24
21/08/1944	3
23/08/1944	3
24/08/1944	18
25/08/1944	2
26/08/1944	2
28/08/1944	3
	160

– Daily entries to the Mechelen camp in August 1944¹⁶

However, the 160 arrests made in August 1944 were far fewer than those of June or July. In the midst of this apparent debacle for the occupying authority, the Sipo-SD spared no effort, while the AJB, hitherto docile, was reluctant to hand over its protégés and decided to “temporarily suspend all services, close the AJB’s premises, transfer the old people’s homes to the Assistance publique de la Ville de Bruxelles, and remove the 600 children from the homes”¹⁷, with the help of the Comité de Défense des Juifs.

In the Mechelen camp at the end of August, the Germans, tense and worried, were preparing to evacuate. Uncertainty reigned. The Germans loaded their luggage onto large lorries¹⁸, before unloading it the same day. On 24 August, lorries brought a group of 18 Jews to be deported on the next transport.

On the weekend of 26 to 27 August 1944, Burger is said to have come to the Dossin barracks to review the dubious files¹⁹ and to have communicated to Major Frank the

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secret order for the total liquidation of the assembly camp. He planned to deport all the Jews in the Dossin barracks to Bergen-Belsen on the night of 30 to 31 August.²⁰ All valuables (including jewelry and money) and goods (such as supplies, desks, typewriters, radios, kitchen utensils, sewing machines, infirmary equipment) were to be loaded onto goods wagons. Frank estimated the value of the goods confiscated from the Jews at RM25 million.²¹

On 28 August, the roundup planned for the whole of occupied Belgium did not take place. The occupying forces were in full collapse. With the Allies advancing, all available trains, lorries and fuel were mobilized to evacuate the German troops²². The *Sipo-SD* in Brussels began its withdrawal to Hasselt. Burger persisted, however, and on 30 August he still hoped to organize this last mass operation. The rush of events prevented him from carrying it out. In the end, Burger’s presence did not have the desired effect.

On 30 August, Salomon Van den Berg wrote in his diary that he had approached Léon Platteau, a senior official at the Ministry of Justice, to obtain the intervention of the Swiss and Swedish Consuls, so that the occupying forces would hand responsibility for the *SS-Sammellager* to the Red Cross or the Ministry of Justice. The AJB leader’s concern was to avoid the deportation of prisoners to Dossin when the Allies were just a few dozen kilometers from the Belgian border. The next day, the secretaries-general of the Belgian ministries obtained an assurance from the occupying forces that no further measures would be taken against Jews²³.

Around 30 August, *Sipo-SD* vehicles from Lille entered the Dossin barracks. Chaskiel Kapelusznik, a former prisoner who had not been deported, described the event as follows:

The porte cochere opened, but this time not for a “Transport” of Jews from the Gestapo cellar, but a transport of SS and Gestapo from Lille fleeing the Allies. Boden and Frank received guests, SS and senior SS officers. The courtyard filled up with lorries. The SS officers ordered the Belgian SS to go out in lorries and loot shops in the town. They came back with all sorts of goods that they were going to take with them when they fled²⁴.

The arrival of large numbers of SS men and their auxiliaries bearing weapons and riding in tanks frightened the Jewish inmates²⁵. There were rumors of a general deportation, and even of a general execution, and the Jewish internees feared the worst. Several inmates armed themselves with sticks, iron bars and various tools provided by the Bacman brothers, who were in charge of the camp bursar’s office²⁶. Maurice Szwarc, aged 14, found a safe hiding place in the attic, under the beds that were piled there.²⁷

Faced with this climate of possible insurrection, the SS introduced “a very strict guard regime in the camp and prisoners were no longer allowed to move without being accompanied by armed soldiers”.²⁸ Witnesses agreed that the machine guns were now pointed inside the barracks²⁹. The families and mistresses of the SS and their henchmen were allowed to join their loved ones in the barracks, with a view to escaping in the near future.³⁰

But fear arose not only from what was inside the camp. Lotti Teplitzki, who entered Dossin on 1 August, was terrorized by the Allied bombings:

One night, there was an alert and the Germans forced us down into the cellar. It was 1st September 1944, the day I turned 16. There was such a hubbub that I lost my aunt and the Goldbergs and found myself in the cellar, surrounded by strangers. I started crying again and a young man came to console me. We were happy that the Allies had bombed.³¹

On 2 or 3 September 1944, Major Frank called the prisoners together in the barracks courtyard and gave what witnesses agreed was a surprising speech. Chaskiel Kapelusnik sums up the situation as follows:

I think there were about 500 Jews. He placed an SS man with a machine gun and made a speech for the Jews. What I remember, he said that “I can make it very simple and you’ll be dead in a few minutes, but I won’t do it because the enemy will propagate that. We are going to leave and I advise you to barricade yourselves well, because I am not responsible for what the enemy is going to do³².”

The commandant reportedly drew the internees’ attention in particular to the use of war propaganda by the Allies: “The military situation is not too good for us at the moment. We’re going to leave you all alone. You see, if we’d wanted to kill you, we would have done it, and it’s Anglo-American propaganda that claims we’re killing the Jews.”³³ H el ene Beer’s account is confirmed almost word for word by the young Maurice Swarc: “The military situation no longer allows us to stay here in Belgium. We’re going to leave you, we won’t do anything to you. This is Allied propaganda claiming that we are killing the Jews. If I wanted to kill you, I would have done it. Stay calm, stay disciplined, we’re leaving.”³⁴ Gilda Franco, aged 13, noted that Frank would have added that “we will bear witness to the kindness he showed”³⁵ towards the Jews, as Frank insisted that he had treated the internees humanely, that he had not starved or tortured them. In conclusion, he did not rule out a return in the following days.

During these days, Frank informed Dr Franz Parnes, a Jewish volunteer doctor at the camp, of his decision to release certain people, including Dr Parnes himself. Frank stressed that he would accompany them personally, to prevent them from

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– The second commander
of the SS Sammellager,
Johannes Gerhard Frank,
in 1942 (top) and Dr Franz
Parnes in 1940 (bottom)

being shot³⁶. Erna Schelasnitzki, a Jewish employee of the *Aufnahme*, the camp’s registration office, drew up and distributed certificates of release which were supposed to serve as safe-conduct passes for the occupying troops. Did she act on Frank’s orders or on her own initiative to protect Jewish employees and workers from reprisals by the Jews on the deportation lists? This point remains a mystery.

On 3 September, the departure became clearer. Commandant Frank ordered all the documents, files and deportation lists at the *Aufnahme* to be burnt. However, one of the Jewish employees of the *Aufnahme*, Maurice Van Reeth, saved almost all the precious *Transportlisten* by carefully hiding them³⁷. The SS loaded the vehicles with their belongings, their plunder and all the food they could carry. Léon “Napoléon” Moresco, in charge of the SS pigsty in Dossin, had to slaughter all the pigs, and the camp kitchens were hard at work.³⁸

At around 10 or 11 p.m., the bell rang for the departure. The British troops were approaching. Shots rang out. The cohort of SS men and their collaborators left in a hurry, leaving 552 internees, including three non-Jews, to their fate. A vehicle, sabotaged by the Jewish handymen, was immobilized in the barracks yard. The SS confined the Jews to their rooms and forbade them to go near the windows.

Dr Franz Parnes reported that:

German soldiers in shirt sleeves, retreating on bicycles, others in ox-drawn carts. At one point, German soldiers are loading a lorry. One of them, standing on the roof, suddenly shot himself in the head, plunging into the void, and his comrades covered his body with wrapping paper. Men of the resistance, civilians, rifles in hand, advance from tree to tree towards the German barracks³⁹.

Chaskiel Kapelusznik recounted the atmosphere in what was once the assembly camp:

Around midnight on 3 September, the porte cochère opened and the entire SS convoy from Malines and Lille and the lorries left. Boden and Frank put helmets and machine guns on their shoulders. There are no words in any language to describe that moment. The camp without the SS, for us, that hell was at an end. Although the majority were not religious, everyone gathered in room I, we prayed [...] together and recited the “Hallel”⁴⁰ as on public holidays. Then we cried and danced around the room. We went to sleep.⁴¹

Norbert Manelewitsch had few memories of that day. The child recounted that “some of the guards threw their weapons into the canal”⁴² and that once the SS had left, his father went to the storeroom to collect a prayer shawl. Alegrina Escojido, aged 12, saw the scene as if it were an illusion:

The impression I get is that we were machine-gunned and that the Germans left in the lorries that were meant for us to go who-knows-where... It was the debacle, it was the debacle. I remember seeing people leaving like that, but I don't know... it's almost like a film image... moving through space like that to get to the open doors, with difficulty, running... [...] But I don't know if it's true or not.⁴³

Relieved and surprised, the prisoners expressed their joy, weeping, laughing, dancing, singing and praying, but calm soon returned. That night, many Jewish prisoners stayed in the camp. They were scared. Distraught, they did not know where to go. As the nurse Gertrud Isaac pointed out, “the prisoners, although they could hardly contain their joy at the departure of their captors, had the presence of mind to barricade themselves in, as the *Wehrmacht* occupying the barracks opposite the Dossin barracks were still awaiting their orders to leave”.⁴⁴ Others hurried from the building, some returning shortly later after running into *Wehrmacht* soldiers or witnessing clashes between Germans and Allied troops. The darkness made it impossible to distinguish between friendly and enemy uniforms.

A few men attacked the prison doors. At least two women from the Resistance were still locked up there. One of them was not Jewish. Véra den Boer, the wife of Hendrik Reynaers, had entered the barracks with her baby, from whom she was immediately separated. The child was taken to the infirmary, out of sight of the young mother⁴⁵. For the SS, this was undoubtedly a means of exerting pressure to make the couple talk. The second, Régine Krochmal, an escapee from the 20th convoy, was brought back to Dossin four days before the departure of the last transport. When she was released from her cell, all she could think about was getting out: “I would have walked, even without legs. I didn't want to be there any more.”⁴⁶

Gilda Franco shared this great relief. In the carefree spirit of childhood, she momentarily forgot all those who had been deported:

At that point, all you could think about was getting out of the barracks as quickly as possible before the Germans got the idea to come back. There was a lot of fighting going on! The soldiers were arriving and there were still Germans holding out. We didn't know if they were going to come back, if it was really definitive or not, if it was going to be taken over or what. All we could think about was getting out of the barracks as quickly as possible⁴⁷.

The rest of her account highlights the local support that former prisoners encountered: “We went out and were taken in for a few hours by some nuns in a street nearby. I can't remember where we left from, but it wasn't very far. And there we were taken in by some nuns who tried to comfort us a little and give us something to eat.”⁴⁸

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On 4 September, a small delegation from the CDJ and AJB arrived at the camp. Chaskiel Kapelusznik recounts the events in some detail:

Early in the morning, a Jewish delegation from Brussels, including [...] Mrs Perelman, came to the camp and [distributed] money to everyone. The porte cochère opened and the prisoners began to leave. To our great surprise, there was a crowd in front of the gate with bags to loot. We had nothing but the clothes we were wearing. We no longer had a flat or any furniture, but we had life. We went out into the town. There were no Germans or Allies [...] Groups of resistance fighters or those who had become resistance fighters walked alone or holding a German prisoner or Belgian traitor. Towards the end of the morning, we were in the center of the town and [...] in the main street British tanks were passing [...]. While the girls were kissing the English, we were kissing the tank. A man accosted us in the street and asked if we had a place to stay for the night. They fed us and put us up for two nights. For about a hundred francs, a lorry took us back to Brussels.⁴⁹

WAS THE LIBERATION OF THE DOSSIN BARRACKS A NON-EVENT?

In an interview conducted by Johannes Blum on 20 September 2001⁵⁰, Maurice Szwarc asked whether he had ever questioned other witnesses about the liberation of the site. Unsurprisingly, the answer was no. This event had gone virtually unnoticed and had occurred amidst almost general indifference. Neither the Allied troops who liberated the town, nor the population of Mechelen, nor even the Jewish population itself, really cared about this assembly camp.

The articles in the *Gazet van Mechelen* during the months of September to December 1944 mainly mention the bombings, the arrival of Allied troops, the repression, the arrests of suspected or known collaborators, the trials, and the looting, but offer not a word about the circumstances surrounding the “liberation” of the Dossin barracks. The regional image bank⁵¹ contains no photos of this particular event. The absence of such photographs is telling. Without photographs, does the event really exist?

Even among the Jews abandoned to their fate at Dossin, very few testified about the site’s liberation. This can partly be explained by the lack of interest shown by researchers and by the short duration of internment in the assembly camp. At least 160 of the 552 detainees entered the Dossin barracks after the last transport had left on 31 July 1944, and so spent only a few weeks or days there. Many of the survivors we interviewed had no precise memory of that time.

The Dossin barracks were not liberated. It could be described as a non-event. To conclude, we can refer to the analysis of the political scientist Dimokritos Kavadias on the end of the Occupation and the Second World War⁵². The residents of the Dossin



barracks were marked by the euphoria of the Liberation, the celebrations surrounding the liberators, their lorries and their tanks. Everyone, prisoners and residents alike, remembered the looting that targeted the camp, some of which occurred while former detainees were still there. Food and many other things were taken.

– The liberation of Mechelen, 4 September 1944. The British armoured cars attract the attention of the population as they drive up the ‘Grote Markt’

In an article published in the *Gazet van Mechelen* in January 1957, the municipal secretary at the time, Louis Ryckeboer, recounted that on 6 September 1944:

Two Jewish lawyers, who didn’t want to waste any time and who had already come to me the day before to recover items belonging to the Jewish community from the Dossin barracks, had returned to take possession of the kitchen utensils and their other belongings. In consultation with the Burgomaster, we ensured that this removal was carried out properly and in the required form, and police officer Van den Bosch and bailiff Mees were sent to the scene to issue the necessary summonses. The burgomaster winked and said that it had to be borne in mind that these were still Jews after all.⁵³

This last sentence leaves no doubt about the anti-Semitism reigning in the city administration at the time.

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For the people of Mechelen, the Liberation was synonymous with the hunt for suspected collaborators. In the square between the Dossin and Lobbe barracks, women had their hair shaved and were publicly humiliated. At the same time, men suspected of being collaborators were dragged around the city and exposed to public vindictiveness before being imprisoned in the Dossin barracks.

In the days following the abandonment of the assembly camp, itself the starting point for a genocidal deportation, suspected or known collaborators were imprisoned there. In April 1946, the Belgian army returned to the building and resumed its activities there. These events erased the Dossin barracks from the collective memory. The imprisonment and deportation of Jews and Roma in the Dossin barracks were overlooked. It took decades for the site to take its place in the collective memory. ■



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and northern France, and on antisemitism and Holocaust denial. She played an active part in the founding of the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance (1996), the new exhibition in the Belgian pavilion at Auschwitz (2006) and the creation of the permanent exhibition (2012), and the renovation of the Kazerne Dossin Memorial (2020).

- (1) *Dossin barracks deportees* database, created by Laurence Schram, as of 13 March 2024.
- (2) Sabine Deboosere, *Mechelen in de tweede Wereldoorlog*, Tielt, Lannoo, 1990, p. 88.
- (3) Kazerne Dossin (KD), KD_00016, Interviews by Johannes Blum (Les Compagnons de la Mémoire), *Interview with Gilda Franco*, Brussels, 3 November 2004.
- (4) USHMM, 2006.245, *Around the World in Ten Years, Memoir by Dr. Frank J. Parnes*, Accession Number 2006.245, p. 41.
- (5) KD, Coll. Centre National des Hautes Études juives (Martin Buber), after CNHEJ, KD_00010_A006685, *Diary of Salomon Vanden Berg* (typed copy), 8 June 1944, p. 156.
- (6) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, KD_00010_A006832, *Minutes of the joint meeting of the Steering Committee of the Association of Jews in Belgium (AJB) and the Brussels local committee. Meeting of Thursday 8 June 1944*.
- (7) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, KD_00010_A006830, *Minutes of the joint meeting of the AJB Steering Committee and the Brussels Local Committee. Meeting of Thursday 1st June 1944 and KD_00010_A006833, Meeting of Friday 16 June 1944*.
- (8) *Report by the Delegate of the Head of the Security Police and the SD for the sector of the Military Commander for Belgium and Northern France*, Brussels, 15 June 1944, quoted in: Serge Klarsfeld and Maxime Steinberg, *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage*, New York, The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1982, p. 86.
- (9) *Ibid.*
- (10) The figures come from the *Dossin Barracks deportees* and *Dossin Barracks non-deportees* databases, as at 13 March 2024.
- (11) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Diary of Salomon Vanden Berg*, 20 July 1944, *op. cit.* p. 161-162.
- (12) KD, KD_00016, Interviews by Johannes Blum (Les Compagnons de la Mémoire), *Interview with Norbert Manelewitsch*, Brussels, 16 February 2006.
- (13) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Letter from Israël Cappell (Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik) to Betty de Leeuw, guide to Kazerne Dossin*, 2014.
- (14) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Diary of Salomon Vanden Berg*, *op. cit.* 25 August 1944, p. 168.
- (15) *Unzer Vort*, "On our guard", late August 1944.
- (16) *Non-deportees held at the Dossin barracks*, *op. cit.*
- (17) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Diary of Salomon Vanden Berg*, *op. cit.* 30 August 1944, p. 169.
- (18) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, audio cassette, *Interview with Maurice Szwarc*, conducted by Frédéric Molle, Brussels, 29 July 1997.
- (19) Hélène Beer, "Le 27^{ième} transport n'est pas parti", in *Centrale*, s.l., 1974.
- (20) Maxime Steinberg private archive, *Eidesstattliche Erklärung von Kranich Lilian (Frank's mistress) (copy)*, Hamburg, 7 July 1950.
- (21) Archives générales du Royaume (AGR), Auditorat militaire (AM), Procès Boden, Farde 1, Section IV-B – PV d'auditions de sujets allemands, doc. no. 17, Statement by Gerhard Johannes Frank, Zwolle, 27 October 1946.
- (22) AGR/AM, doc. no. 17, *Statement by Frank Gerhard Johannes*, 27 October 1946, *op. cit.*
- (23) Maxime Steinberg, *Le Dossier Bruxelles-Auschwitz. La police SS et l'extermination des Juifs de Belgique*, Brussels, Comité belge de soutien à la partie civile dans le procès des officiers SS, 1980, p. 162.
- (24) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Letter from Israël Cappell (Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik) to Betty de Leeuw, guide to Kazerne Dossin*, 2014.
- (25) "Interview with Hélène Raszner" in *La caserne Dossin à Malines. Des témoins racontent...*, DVD produced by Stéphanie Perrin and Sarah Timperman, Brussels, Mémoire d'Auschwitz ASBL, Collection Paroles d'Archives, vol. 2, 2013.
- (26) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, audio cassette, *Interview with Maurice Szwarc*, conducted by Frédéric Molle, Brussels, 29 July 1997.
- (27) *Ibid.*
- (28) AGR, Service Archives des Victimes de la Guerre (SAVG), R. 497/Tr. 208 337, *Report on an investigation carried out on 10 June 1966 by Mr Dumonceau de Bergendael at the Service Social Juif, 68, Avenue Ducpétiaux à Bruxelles-St-Gilles, Subject: Circumstances surrounding the liberation of the Mechelen camp – Dossin barracks*.
- (29) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Letter from Israël Cappell (Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik)*, *op. cit.*
- (30) AGR/AM, Aelbers Albert trial, Farde 6 – Research, doc. No. 85, *Verhoor van Lande Anna*, Mechelen, 14 December 1946.
- (31) Lotti Teplitzki's private archives, *Handwritten testimony by Lotti Teplitzki*.
- (32) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Letter from Israël Cappell (Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik)*, *op. cit.*
- (33) Hélène Beer, "Le 27^{ième} transport n'est pas parti", in *Centrale*, X, s.l., 1974, p. 14-17.
- (34) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, audio cassette, *Interview with Maurice Szwarc*, conducted by Frédéric Molle, Brussels, 29 July 1997.
- (35) KD, KD_00016, *Interviews by Johannes Blum* (Les Compagnons de la Mémoire), Interview with Gilda Franco, Brussels, 3 November 2004, 2^e part.
- (36) USHMM, *Around the World in Ten Years, Memoir by Dr. Frank J. Parnes (Franz Josef Parnes)*, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
- (37) AGR/AM, Procès Boden, Farde 3, Section 3 – Affaires Vanderham Bernard et Israëls Betty (C), doc. no. 174, *Deposition of Schelasnitzki Erna*, Brussels, 24 February 1949.
- (38) Laurence Schram, *Dossin, l'antichambre d'Auschwitz*, Brussels, Racine, 2017, p. 275.
- (39) USHMM, *Around the World in Ten Years, Memoir by Dr. Frank J. Parnes*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
- (40) Set of psalms (113 to 118), recited as a prayer of praise or thanksgiving on certain feast days and on the day of the first moon.
- (41) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Letter from Israël Cappell (Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik)*, *op. cit.*
- (42) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, *Interview with Norbert Manelewitsch*, *op. cit.*
- (43) KD, KD_00016, *Interviews by Johannes Blum* (Les Compagnons

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de la Mémoire), Interview with Alegrina Escojido, Brussels, 15 October 2005.

(44) AGR/SAVG, R. 497/Tr. 208 337, *Report on an investigation carried out on 10 June 1966 by Mr Dumonceau de Bergendael at the Jewish Social Service, 68, Avenue Ducpétiaux, Brussels-St-Gilles, Subject: Circumstances surrounding the liberation of the Mechelen camp – Dossin barracks.*

(45) KD, KD_00016, *Interviews by Johannes Blum (Les Compagnons de la Mémoire)*, Interview with Marc Reynaers, Brussels, 4 November 2004.

(46) KD, KD_00016, *Interviews by Johannes Blum (Les Compagnons de la Mémoire)*, Interview with Régine Krochmal, Brussels, 7 February 1995.

(47) KD, *Interview with Gilda Franco*, op. cit.

(48) KD, *Interview with Gilda Franco*, op. cit.

(49) KD, *Letter from Israel Cappell (Chaskiel Israel Kapelusnik)*, op. cit.

(50) KD, Coll. CNHEJ, Interview with Maurice Szwarc, op. cit.

(51) <https://www.regionalebeeldbank.be>.

(52) Dimokritos Kavadias, *Bulletin trimestriel de la Fondation Auschwitz, Histoire et mémoire des Crimes et génocides nazis*, Colloque international, Bruxelles, novembre 1992, Actes I, n° spécial 36-37, avril-septembre 1993, De Dossinkazerne te Mechelen : een exploratief onderzoek naar de orale geschiedenis van de sociale ruimte rond een nazi-verzamelkamp voor Joden. Het collectieve geheugen van de “Paroche”-buurt, Éditions du Centre d’Études et de Documentation, p. 182-183.

(53) Louis Ryckboer, “Uit mijn Oorlogsdagboek”, in *Gazet van Mechelen*, 7 January 1957, p. 4.