

The King and the Star Myths created during the Occupation of Denmark

Vilhjálmur Örn Vilhjálmsson

Every now and then the pleasantly edifying tale of the popular King Christian X of Denmark and his alleged use of the Yellow Star of David during World War II is revived. In June 2001 some members of The House of Representatives in the United States Congress honored King Christian for his morning horseback rides through the streets of Copenhagen wearing a yellow armband. The occasion for this latest revival of the myth was a decision in 2001 by the former Taliban terror regime of Afghanistan to order Hindus and others to wear a yellow badge to distinguish them from Muslims.¹

As most Danes know, the story of the King and the Star is a myth. Usually the story is denounced as fiction, as it is thought to have been put into circulation after the escape of the Danish Jews to Sweden in 1943.² While no one really knew when it was first circulated, it has also proven impossible to lay this myth to rest.

Exodus

Perhaps the most important reason for the persistence of the myth is that it appeared in the widely read novel *Exodus* (1958) by Leon Uris. It also appeared in the screen version of the book from 1960:

From the German occupation headquarters at the Hotel D'Angleterre came the decree: ALL JEWS MUST WEAR A YELLOW ARMBAND WITH A STAR OF DAVID. That night the underground transmitted a message to all Danes.

¹ Congressman Gary Ackerman, U.S. House of Representatives. *Ackerman's Statement on International Relations Mark-up, Statement by Mr. Ackerman 6-6-01. H.Con.Res. 145, Condemning The Recent Order by the Taliban Regime to Require Hindus in Afghanistan to wear Symbols identifying them as Hindus.* See: <http://www.house.gov/ackerman/press/taliban.htm>.

² Danish historian Lone Rünitz commented on the statement from the House of Representatives to the Danish press agency *Ritzau*, stating that the myth about the King and the Star originated from the US. *Ritzau Bureau News* release number 20010609: RTZ: 2939 of June 8, 2001. The news release was for some reason entitled "USA hædrer Christian X for jødeskrøne" which reads "USA honors Christian X for a Jewish cock-and -bull story".

*From Amalienborg Palace, King Christian has given the following answer to the German command that Jews must wear a Star of David. The King has said that one Dane is exactly the same as the next Dane. He himself will wear the first Star of David and he expects that every loyal Dane will do the same. The next day in Copenhagen, almost the entire population wore armbands showing a Star of David. The following day the Germans rescinded the order.*³

Mention of the tale in 1943

A version of the tale about the King and the Star became widely known in October 1943. An article by the Danish minister (ambassador) to the United States released by the *Independent Jewish Press Services, Inc.* appeared in a full or an abridged version in several American newspapers and magazines in 1943. *The Jewish Ledger* of Springfield, Massachusetts, published the article on October 12, 1943. Ambassador Henrik von Kauffmann, on this occasion using the name Henrik *de* Kauffmann, wrote:

*Instances are familiar of King Christian X's uncompromising manner and dignified bearing toward the German aggressors. Some of those instances relate to the King's response to the Nazi insistence upon introducing their anti-Semitic measures in Denmark. Thus, on one occasion his answer was: "We Danes do not consider ourselves inferior to the Jews; therefore, we do not have any Jewish problem in Denmark." And most recently, after the introduction of German military dictatorship in Denmark and their rounding up of Danish Jews, the King is reported to have declared: "If Jews in Denmark are required to wear a yellow badge, I and the Royal Family will also wear it as a sign of distinction."*⁴

On October 13, 1943 the London daily, *Evening Standard*, reported:

A NOBLE voice comes out of Nazi-occupied Denmark, a voice of tolerance and defiance, and of faith in humanity. "If the Germans want to introduce the Yellow Star for Jews in Denmark," announces King Christian, "I and my whole family will wear it as a sign of the highest distinction" King Christian makes no

³ Uris, Leon, *Exodus*, Garden City 1958, p. 75.

⁴ WL: Wiener Library, London: Microfilm PC 6; Reel 156: *Jews in World War II. 2D.1 Denmark.*

*empty gesture. His brave defiance expresses the call of conscience that humanity should be degraded no longer by crimes committed in the name of a false race theory and a wicked creed. Those Jews who perished in Warsaw, fighting Nazi panzers to the last, converted the Ghetto into a fortress. Now Denmark's King converts the Yellow star into a flame.*⁵

The American Jewish Committee's Bulletin Review of the Yiddish Press No 14 of October 15, 1943 reported the great interest shown by the Yiddish press in America on the rescue of the Danish Jews:

*Particular prominence was given to the Stockholm dispatch that King Christian of Denmark, when informed of the German intention to force every remaining Danish Jew to wear a yellow Star of David on his sleeve, said: "If the Germans want to introduce the yellow Star of David in Denmark I and my whole family will wear it as a sign of the highest distinction."*⁶

From the above quotations it is clear that the story was already well known on both sides of the Atlantic in October 1943. This means that the myth may have been put into circulation during or immediately after the rescue of the greater part of the Jewish community of Denmark when they were sailed to Sweden in October 1943. However this was not the case. But when was the myth really created?

The real origin of the myth

Already in 1942 the story of the King and the yellow star was in circulation. On September 4, 1942 *The Jewish Telegraphic Agency* in London released the following news, which caught the attention of a large number of readers:

The full story of the part played by King Christian of Denmark when the Danish Government rejected the German demand for the introduction of the anti-Jewish legislation in Denmark, has just reached Free Danish circles here from a reliable source. According to this report the King, when he learned that anti-Jewish measures were threatened said: "There is no Jewish question in this country.

⁵ WL: Microfilm PC 6; Reel 156: *Jews in World War II. 2D.1 Denmark.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

*There is only my people"..... When the King was told the Germans were going to press for the introduction of the Yellow Badge for Jews, he declared: "When this happens, I shall wear the Yellow Star on my uniform in public and I shall order the entire Royal household to follow my example."*⁷

It has previously been argued that the source of the myth was a cartoon, which might have appeared in a Swedish newspaper in 1942. On May 15, 1942 the Danish Listening Post (see below) reported the appearance of such a cartoon without citing the newspaper in which it appeared.⁸ Though the report on the cartoon and the cartoon itself seemingly were not published in any allied newspapers and thus never became known to the general public, the story and the myth about the King and the Star were now on their way.⁹

There is no doubt about the Danish/Scandinavian origins of the tale of the yellow star and the Danish King which later evolved into the story of the King riding around Copenhagen proudly wearing the yellow star or a yellow armband. It first appeared at least a year before the rescue of the Danish Jews in 1943 and was not triggered by that event, contrary to what many scholars believed.

⁷ WL: Microfilm PC 6, Reel 156. *Jews in World War II. 2D Denmark and Norway General*: Press release entitled: Danish King's Reaction to German Demand for Anti-Jewish Legislation in Denmark; Snubs Germans By Paying Ceremonial Visit to Synagogue. London.

⁸ *The Danish Listening Post*, November 15, 1942, p. 4. The Danish Listening Post was distributed by the privately run office of the *Friends of Danish Freedom and Democracy* in New York.

⁹ The cartoon in question was drawn by Norwegian artist, Ragnald Blix, (who used the pseudonym Stig Höök), and was published in Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning on January 10, 1942. It shows Danish Prime Minister Stauning and King Christian. Stauning says: "What are we to do Your Majesty if Scavenius succeeds in making our Jews wear yellow stars?" The King responds: "Then we will probably all have to wear yellow stars";. Jens Lund writes: "I have been unable to locate any corroborating information regarding the cartoon". Jens Lund also assumed that the Swedish daily, Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning, published in Gothenburg, had published the cartoon, but was never able to find it. Lund concluded (note 70): "My inquiries to the Göteborg Handels- och Sjöfartstidning regarding the cartoon have not yet received any reply". Lund, Jens, "The Legend of the King and the Star", *Indiana Folklore* 8, 1975.

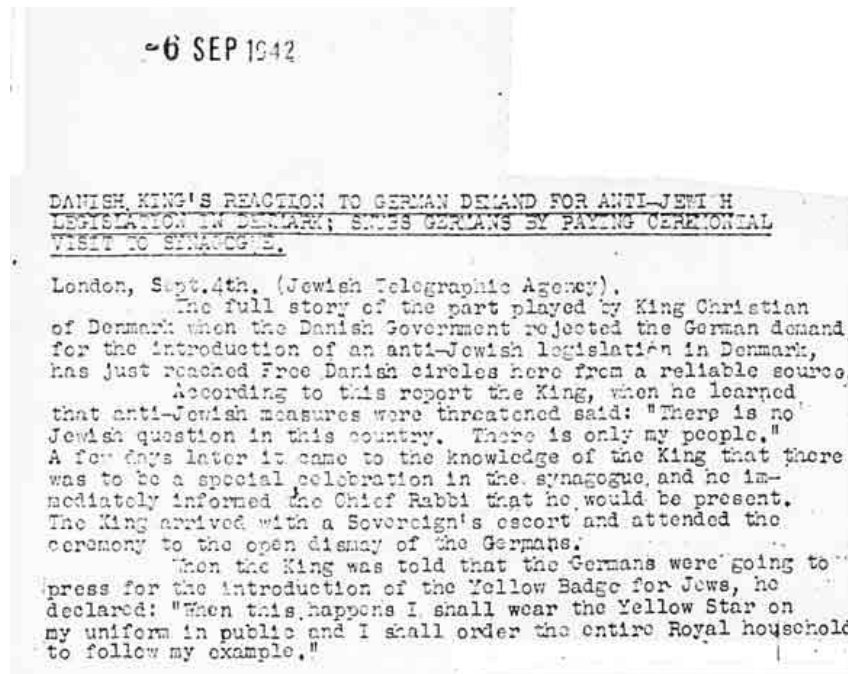


Fig. 1. The news release from The Jewish Telegraphic Agency September 4, 1942.

Why the legend?

The tale about the King and the Star was not just a fairy tale which can be analyzed in folkloristic terms.¹⁰ There were those who deliberately put this story, along with similar fabrications, into circulation, believing them to be beneficial to the interests of Denmark abroad. The story can be seen as a response to the criticism Denmark received in the Allied press between 1940 and 1943. King Christian, wrongly accused, became a symbol of the lack of Danish resistance to the German invasion of Denmark on April 9, 1940. This can be illustrated by one example. In 1942 *The Washington Post*, in an illustrated quiz on the victims of the war, ironically asked its readers for the name of the ruler whose nation put no armed might in the way of the Nazis. This bad reputation had to be corrected, and it is likely that the popular King was used as an instrument in the

¹⁰ As argued by Lund (1975).

hands of Danish citizens in exile. The legend of the King and the Star was most likely created to gain goodwill in America.

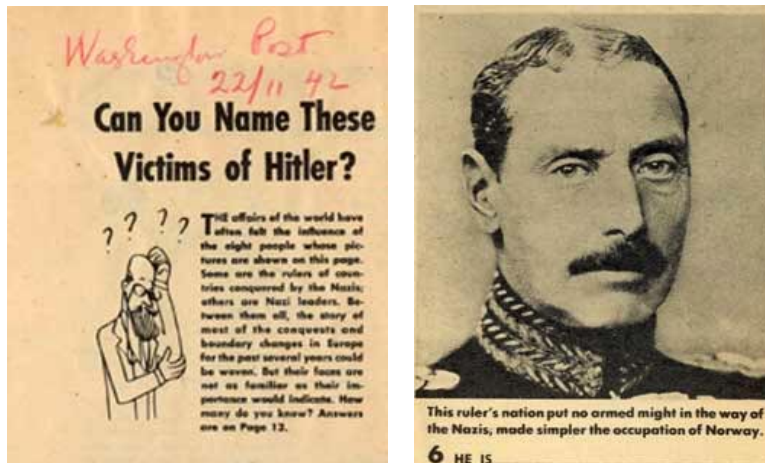


Fig. 2. The quiz was published in *The Washington Post* on November 22, 1942. The quiz included seven other portraits of "victims" of Nazism.¹¹

The people behind this legend represented the *The National America Denmark Association* (NADA). The association was founded in May 1940 in Chicago and was an umbrella organization for a series of Danish-American associations. NADA's goal was to promote a positive view of Denmark. An office of the *Friends of Danish Freedom and Democracy*, run by private donations, opened in New York immediately after the occupation of Denmark in April 1940.¹² The objective was to collect and pro-

¹¹ The clipping from the *Washington Post* is in the personal diary of one of the counselors in the Danish Embassy in Washington 1941-45.

¹² Hæstrup, Jørgen et al., *Besættelsen, Hvem Hvad Hvor*, Copenhagen 1985, pp. 100-101. The men behind the very successful New York office were Caspar Hasselriis, the founder of the Danish Luncheon Club and ship owner Hans Isbrandtsen. *The Danish Listening Post* was edited by Mrs. Signe Toksvig. The "Father of Public Relations and Spin" and nephew of Sigmund Freud Edward L. Bernays (1890-1995), was also hired by the *Friends of Danish Freedom and Democracy* as a consultant. See also Hasselriis, C.H.W., *Danmark i USA under besættelsen*, Forlaget SIXTUS 1978.

vide the American press with news of Danish affairs. Quickly this task evolved into a fortnightly bulletin, *The Danish Listening Post*.

Stories for all purposes

King Christian and the Danish Jews were also the objects of other fabricated news from Danish organizations in the U.S. and Britain in 1941-43.

The "Jewish question" in Denmark was raised on several occasions by the Germans during 1941. The Danish response was definite and firm. On November 25, 1941 when Foreign Minister Erik Scavenius visited Berlin he met Hermann Göring. Göring mentioned that Denmark in the long run could not avoid the issue of solving the "Jewish question". Scavenius responded, "*There is no Jewish question in Denmark*". The government as well as most members of the Danish parliament backed this position.¹³

Despite the firm Danish standpoint the following news about anti-Jewish measures accepted by the Danish government was publicized. In January 1942 *The Daily Telegraph* published news from "a special correspondent" with "Scandinavian sources" who reported that King Christian had threatened to abdicate if any measures were taken against the Jews. There is no basis in fact for this report and it should rather be perceived as a political proclamation or wishful thinking.

DANISH KING MAY ABDICATE

Anti-Jewish Threat

By a Special Correspondent

According to news reaching London from Scandinavian sources, King Christian of Denmark has threatened to abdicate because of German insistence that Denmark adopt anti-Jewish laws.

King Christian's threat came last Saturday as a climax of a long series of political manoeuvres by three pro-Nazi members of the Danish Government and their German backers.

¹³ Yahil, Leni, *Et Demokrati på Prøve: Jøderne i Danmark under Besættelsen*. Gyldendal 1967, pp. 55-57; Stræde, Therkel, *Die Menschenmauer. Dänemark im Oktober 1943: Die Rettung der Juden vor der Vernichtung*. Copenhagen 1993, p. 46.

The trouble started when anti-Jewish legislation was prepared and presented to the Cabinet by Erik Scavenius, the Foreign Minister; Gunnar Larsen, the Minister of Transport, who, incidentally, is head of a Portland cement company, and T. H. Jacobsen¹⁴, the Minister of Justice.

At a meeting of the Ministers on Thursday their proposals were rejected by other Ministers, and the Prime Minister, M. Stauning¹⁵, refused to present them to the King.

When Scavenius subsequently approached the King and asked him to over-ride the Cabinet, the King refused to, and indicated that he would approve the proposals only if they received the Parliament's unanimous support.

The pro-Nazi Ministers then presented the proposals to a special committee, which rejected them unanimously on Saturday. The Germans thereupon demanded that the laws be accepted immediately.

It was then that the King announced that if they persisted in these demands and attempted to force their acceptance he would abdicate. It is not known whether the Germans have backed down. If they persist in their demands the King's abdication may be expected within a few days.¹⁶

After this story about the imminent abdication of King Christian was released, a similar story reached the Foreign Office in London in early 1943 from Lisbon showing that the tales of the King and his Jews had already been widely circulated:

Political Memorandum Denmark No. 1 to P.I.D. from Mr. Ridley Prentice (Lisbon), 4th Jan. 1943.

Danish Jews.

Six months ago, the Germans put into force the Nuremburg laws against Jews. The King personally went to synagogue¹⁷[sic.] in Copenhagen where there was

¹⁴ Minister of Justice Thune Jacobsen.

¹⁵ The Prime Minister's name was Thorvald Stauning.

¹⁶ WL: Microfilm PC 6. Reel 156. *Jews in World War II. 2D Denmark and Norway General*; The news was also published in other British newspapers.

¹⁷ King Christian did not visit the main synagogue in Copenhagen during the German occupation. After an arson attack on the synagogue in 1941 by Danish Nazis, the King wrote a New Year's greeting on December 31, 1941 expressing his concern to the assistant Rabbi, Marcus Melchior, see Melchior, Marcus, *Levet og oplevet*, Copenhagen 1965, pp. 162-63.

an official ceremony. This was an event hitherto unprecedented in Denmark, and later the Germans withdrew the Nuremburg decree as regards Denmark.

An intelligence officer in the Foreign Office wrote a comment to this memorandum:

*I should not grade this informant very highly. The statement in parag. 4. that the Germans introduced anti Jewish Legislation is incorrect. They only threatened to. Mr. Clarke. 19/1 1943.*¹⁸

Others were just as sceptical. In a "Political Review of Denmark of 1942. From Foreign Office Minute, Mr. Gallop, 2nd Feb. 1943" the following remarks appear:

.... Proposed Anti-Semitic Legislation.

*5. 1942 went out to the accompaniment of insistent rumours that measures were about to be taken against the Jews. It is an established fact that anti-Semitic measures legislation had been drafted for future use by the pro-Nazi lawyer M. Popp-Madsen¹⁹, but reports from Sweden suggesting that the matter had followed similar course to that of the Anti-Comintern Pact (though with a different issue) were almost certainly false, and their inclusion in the Danish broadcast of the BBC did some injury to the high reputation of the latter in Denmark ...*²⁰

¹⁸ Public Record Office (PRO), FO 371/36787, *Situation in Denmark 1943*. The cover of the file reads: "Situation in Denmark: Transmit copy of political Memorandum Denmark No.1 dated 30th December 1942 addressed to Political Intelligence Department discussing. 4) Danish Jews."

¹⁹ M. Popp-Madsen is lawyer Carl Popp-Madsen (1900-73), a Danish Nazi and one of the founders of the Danish Nazi terror unit "Schalburg-korpset", who among other things organized the recruitment of thousands of Danes for the German army and Waffen-SS. Popp-Madsen only served three years of the ten-year sentence he received in 1946.

²⁰ PRO, FO 371/36786, *Situation in Denmark 1943*. From Foreign Office Minute, Mr. Gallop, 2nd Feb. 1943.

Other stories were told and distributed about the commitment of Danish patriots:

DANISH PATRIOT ARRESTED FOR DEFENDING JEWS.
Stockholm, Mar. 15th. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

The reason for the arrest, for the second time, of the famous Danish patriot, Lacour²¹, is revealed in the "Goeteborgs Handels och Shjoefarts Tidningen."
M. Lacour's arrest was due to his open opposition to the introduction of anti-Jewish laws in Denmark. He had also together with other Danish patriots, attacked the anti-Jewish measures adopted in Germany.²²

Danish historian Vilhelm la Cour was arrested for a short period by the Germans at the beginning of 1941 for his resistance to the German occupation and views published in a booklet called "Ord til os i Dag" (Words to us Today).²³ In 1942 la Cour was arrested again and imprisoned for four months for his fight against the German occupation. After his imprisonment he was interned at a manor house until the spring of 1943. The Gestapo had plans to arrest him again and la Cour fled to Sweden in December 1944. There is, however, no indication that la Cour was especially concerned with matters relating to a possible implementation of the anti-Jewish laws in Denmark.

The internment of Jews in Denmark

Probably the most malicious tale involving Danish Jews, which the representatives of Danish interests abroad tried to introduce in the allied press, was a story about Jews who allegedly contacted King Christian X asking him to intern them in a concentration camp.

²¹ Vilhelm la Cour (1883-1974), a Danish historian and vocal opponent of the German NS-occupants in Denmark.

²² WL: Microfilm PC 6. Reel 156: *Jews in World War II. 2D Denmark and Norway General: News distributed by The Jewish Telegraphic Agency, registered at the Wiener Library on March 16, 1942.*

²³ Vilhelm la Cour. *Ord til os i Dag: Noter til Øjeblikket*, Birkerød 1941.

DANISH JEWS' PATRIOTIC OFFER TO LESSEN COUNTRY'S DIFFICULTIES.

New York, Feb. 8th [1942] (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

Denmark's Jewish population, numbering more than 5.000, is reported here to have asked King Christian for internment in a Danish concentration camp as a measure to forestall possible deportations by the German occupation authorities.

The National America Denmark Association, attributing the report to an "authoritative source," said that King Christian had declined the proposal as being incompatible with Denmark's tradition of religious freedom. The request of the Danish Jews, in the form of a petition, was presented to the King by the leaders of the Jewish communities. "We have always been well treated in this country and we understand that our being here is one of the difficulties between you and the German Government. If we can make things easier for you by being interned, please intern us," the petition read.²⁴

A story like this is only likely to have grown out of the traditional view of the Jews as "a problem".²⁵ Possibly the creator of this story knew about the Danish internment camp at Horserød in North Sealand, a WWI camp which was extended and rebuilt in the late 1930s. In 1940-41 it was used for the first time to imprison 71 refugees, many of whom were later to be extradited to Germany in August 1941.²⁶ Among the prisoners held on

²⁴ WL: Microfilm PC 6. Reel 156. *Jews in World War II. 2D Denmark and Norway General.*

²⁵ Vilhjálmsson, Vilhjálmur Örn, "Vi har ikke brug for 70.000 jøder", *Rambam; Tidsskrift for jødisk kultur og forskning*, 1998, nr. 7, pp. 47-50.

²⁶ Leif Larsen and Thomas Clausen have in their book *De Forrådte: Tyske Hitler-flygtninge i Danmark* (1997) argued (p. 40) that The Jewish Community in Denmark, *Mosaik Troessamfund*, was more successful than the Danish Social-Democrats because the community managed to have 14 Jewish prisoners released from the Horserød internment camp. Their assumption is incorrect and is based on the fact that only two non-Jewish Social Democrats were released after intensive correspondence on the matter between Danish Social Democrats and the Danish authorities. In the available sources about the 14 Jewish prisoners in Horserød, it is evident that their release was not mediated by the Jewish Community, nor the Jewish relief organization *Komiteen af 4. Maj 1933*, which had been banned in 1940. When all available sources are taken into account, it is more feasible to conclude that a total of 21 refugee-prisoners released from the Horserød camp in 1940-41 were eventually

the order of the Danish State Prosecutor for special affairs and the Danish State Police were 14 Jewish refugees. In May 1940 the Danish authorities contacted the Nazi occupants in order to initiate negotiations for the expulsion of refugees whom the Danish authorities wanted to get rid of. The prisoners in Horserød were among those whom the Danish authorities asked the *Sicherheitsdienst* to take back. To begin with Germans rejected the suggestion to receive stateless Jews whom the Danish authorities were hoping to send out of the country.²⁷

None of the Jewish refugees who were held in the Horserød camp in 1940-41 were expelled to Germany in August 1941 along with German socialists.²⁸ This was not due to measures taken by Danish officials or Jewish organizations to demand the release of the Jewish prisoners. Without receiving any demands or requests from the Germans for the expulsion of the prisoners in Horserød, the Ministry of Justice had already in late July 1941 prepared and signed the expulsion orders for most of the Jewish prisoners held in Horserød 1940-41.²⁹ With the exception of one who had fled in a rowing boat to Sweden and another who committed suicide due to his fear of being arrested again by the Danish authorities, most of the Jewish prisoners released from the Horserød camp in 1941 were arrested in July 1941 by the Danish Police and held in custody while the Danish Justice Department waited for the Germans to decide when the deportations could take place. However the Germans refused to accept prisoners from the Horserød camp other than German political activists.

After the war the officials responsible for the imprisonment of refugees in Horserød in 1940-41 proudly explained to the Danish public in special

released on the decision of the Danish Ministry of Justice because the Nazi-occupants were not willing to accept Danish wishes for their extradition to Germany.

²⁷ Vilhjálmsen, op. cit., pp. 50-51; Danish National Archives, Justitsministeriets 3. kontor, journalsag nr. 1120/1940.

²⁸ Only a few of the Jewish prisoners in the Horserød camp in 1940-41 were, or had been politically active. Those who were had been ordinary members of the German Social Democratic Party in the early 1930s.

²⁹ Danish National Archives, Justitsministeriet, 3. kontors kopibog for 1941.

publications that the purpose of the internment had been to protect the refugees from the Germans.³⁰

The news release of 1942 reporting that the Danish Jews wanted to sacrifice themselves to improve the relations between Denmark and Germany is thought-provoking for another reason. On September 29, 1943 the director of the Danish Red Cross, Helmer Rosting, contacted *Reichsbevollmächtigter* for Denmark, Dr. Werner Best, and proposed a sinister trade. He suggested an internment of Danish Jews to ensure a gradual release of Danish soldiers held by the Germans. *Reichsaussenminister* von Ribbentrop rejected this plan.³¹

Also in September 1943 a similar plan for the internment of Jews in Denmark was suggested at a meeting in the Foreign Ministry in Copenhagen. In that case, it was allegedly to prevent the evident deportation action against the Jews in Denmark.³² The Chairman of the Danish Jewish community, C. B. Henriques, describes this in the following manner:

When I went home, I was called to the Foreign Ministry to participate in the meeting of the permanent secretaries. All of the permanent secretaries were present, as well as the Private Secretary of the King. The situation was discussed; one did not really know how to act. One permanent secretary mentioned the possibility of an internment of the Danish Jews, so they would remain in Denmark, but the feeling – specially of the Private secretary of the King – was negative towards initiating any negotiations with the Germans, one should rather stress the protests, so one could see that the public reacted fiercely against the persecution. The permanent secretary suggested that I went to the King, but

³⁰ Minister of Justice in 1940, Harald Petersen, and permanent undersecretary in the Ministry of Justice, Jens Herfelt, wrote that the Horserød camp was a place where the "emigrants could stay under tolerable conditions"; Harald Petersen & Jens Herfelt, "Retsvæsen og Politi under Besættelsen", in Aage Friis (ed.) *Danmark under verdenskrig og besættelse, Vol 1*. Odense 1946, p. 49; Vilhjálmsson, op. cit., p. 51.

³¹ Dr. Best defined the proposals as "Typical of the National socialistsin Denmark" ; Yahil, op. cit., pp. 161, 423-24; The Danish Red Cross director Helmer Rosting (1893-45) also proposed to use interned Jews as hostages. They were to be deported if the acts of sabotage against the Germans did not cease.

³² Yahil, op. cit., pp. 161, 201; 424 note 91.

I felt that that would be difficult and embarrassing for the King, because he himself was in a way interned. The permanent secretary then promised to go to the King himself because he was certain that the King would not have any objections, which was also the case. The Germans did not want to receive the King's protests.³³ The meeting thus ended without result, as one did not know what one could really do to prevent the current situation, and one didn't see any other alternative than to flight.³⁴

Fortunately the idea of interning the Danish Jews in September 1943 was abandoned. Whether the motives behind the suggestions made by some of the permanent secretaries of the Foreign Ministry to intern Danish Jews were the same as those of the director of the Danish Red Cross is worth studying in greater detail than previously has been done. The idea at least was not unfamiliar to some Danes as the above-mentioned press release of 1942 clearly shows. Whether the idea also included plans to intern and not to deport non-Danish Jews, is not known.

A story less known

The above-mentioned myths and fabricated stories about King Christian X and the Danish Jews during World War II were originally introduced for the sole purpose of improving the reputation of occupied Denmark abroad. The tales certainly did not and most likely were not intended to improve the situation of the Jewish population in Denmark. Out of all these stories about the Danish King and Jews, the myth about the King and the Star grew to be the favorite. It was believed to have been created in the US due to the great good-will Denmark had received overseas for the rescue of Danish Jewry in 1943.

³³ *Reichsbevollmächtiger* in Denmark, Werner Best, rejected receiving a letter from the King. See Yahil, op.cit., pp 55-57.

³⁴ Account given by C. B. Henriques to historian Ole Barfoed ten years after the event; Published in Hæstrup, Jørgen, *Til landets bedste; Hovedtræk af departementsstyrets virke 1943-45*. Udgiverselskabet af Danmarks Nyeste Historie 1966, vol. 1.; Blüdnikow, Bent & Klaus Rothstein (eds.) *Dage i oktober 43*, Forlaget Centrum and Det Mosaiske Troessamfund, 1993 pp. 81-82. Another version and interpretation of this meeting in the Foreign Ministry is given by Hans Kirchhoff in "Endløsning over Danmark", in Hans Sode-Madsen (ed.), *"Førenden har befale!"* Viborg 1993, pp. 90-96.

Fortunately most Danish Jews never bore the yellow racial badge. Those Danes who were forced to wear the yellow star on their garments were for instance Jews deported from Denmark to Theresienstadt in 1943, as well as many Jews born in Denmark who, in their time of need, were not admitted back into their native country by the Danish authorities.

From August 1940 to early 1944, 21 stateless Jewish refugees, three of them children, were expelled from Denmark to Germany – not because the Germans demanded it, but because Danish officials in charge of refugee matters worked ardently for the expulsion of unwanted individuals from Denmark.³⁵

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WL: Wiener Library, London: Microfilm PC 6; Reel 156: *Jews in World War II. 2D.1 Denmark.*

³⁵ See book *In Prep.* by the author of the present article; Vilhjálmsson (2000), "Den største myte". An article published in the Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, February 6, 2000. 1st section, p. 12; for an English translation see: http://www.dchf.dk/staff/vov_artikler/greatest_myth.html

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