

The name is Menachem Pukhof, my profession civil engineer.
 My ^{present} address ~~was~~ is 11 Rowena Hill #, Haifa. During the
 war I had several ^{of} ~~addresses~~ ^{addresses} ~~addresses~~ Vroser, Mico Koning.

I was born in Amsterdam, Holland, ^{the} March 13 th 1920
 The name of my father was Sallie Pukhof, ~~was~~ ~~off~~
 secretary by profession, and a ^{journalist} ~~journalist~~ ~~writer~~.

My mother was Sofie-Pukhof de Beer. I had a brother
 Joda a sister Roza, a ~~bro~~ ~~brother~~ ~~not~~ a ~~half~~ ~~sister~~
 Heleen.

only Roza and Heleen survived the war,
 Roza lives in Holland, Heleen ^{was} ~~is~~ in Israel

My father belonged to the so-called 'Pravnik' group.
 He was transported from Bergen Belsen to Oranien-
 burg, and perished there.

My step mother Rosalie Pukhof-de Trauw is still
 alive. She survived Bergen Belsen, came to
 Ravensbrough and from there she was ^{said and it} ~~sent~~ ~~to~~
 Sweden ^{later she} ~~and~~ ~~returned~~ ~~to~~ to Holland
 I got my education at the Jewish High School

and after that I finished the M.T.S. (~~High~~
 Technical High School in Amsterdam.

Originally I was a member of Zichron Yaakov
 and Bachad (Mizrahi Youth Movement)
 afterwards I went ~~of~~ over to the Hechalutz Move-
 ment. ~~Now~~ I am Mafai-member (Labour
 Movement)

In June 1945 I married Mirjam ~~Le~~ Waterman.
We have 3 children, Jacobus, Chava and Jehuda.

In Autumn 1939 I read in the papers about deportation
of Jews to a certain district in Poland (Lublin)

The already I realised that the ^{what} Germans ~~really~~ had in
mind was physical destruction. So these were the first

real 'deportations'. Later, when we heard that
massive ~~real~~ annihilation was taking place, I remembered these
early suspicions.

~~In the~~ during the first days of the war in Holland,
May 1940, especially my father was depressed.

I had planned together with friends from the Youth
movement to ~~fly~~ ^{escape} to the South of Europe. The plan was

discussed at the house of Jaap van Amerongen ^{today known as} ~~but~~ ^(Arnon)
nothing came of it. and the same evening I returned

home. I finished the Technical Hogeschool and looked
for work at The "Amsterdamsche Ballast Maatschappij"

I was not excepted. Later it as I was a Jew. Later it turn, but that this firm collaborated extensively with the German.

Then I was asked to become a youth leader at the Youth Aliyah Home in Lodz direct; I accepted.

In the "Home" were some 60 young people 14-17 years old. After the November Program in Germany Youth Aliyah tried

to bring these children, via the neighbouring countries to Israel. They were difficult children three reasons: 1) their age 2) their ~~not~~ live in Germany since 1932. 3) They had their escape plan from the Hitler regime frustrated.

As a compensation we gave them courses and did cultural work with them. In the period 1941-42 the ~~best~~ ^{best} boy

and some girls found work (bachsparat, preparation for life in Israel) ^(translator) with farmers in the neighbourhood.

In these days we came to know Edelstein, the head

of Jewish Community in Prague, where he stayed as

a representative of the "Sochmuth". ~~and~~ ^{He} was a bonafide

subscriber of the idea that the Jewish communities

should be organized in such a way that organized

contact with the Germans might be possible. These ideas originated from the ~~times~~^{days} of the "Ha'arets" (Transfer of German Jewish capital to Palestine; Kolosovoff was the big promoter of this plan.

At the end of 1941 Edelstein was sent to Amsterdam by the Germans to help with founding of the Jewish Raad (Perlebaum). He spoke Hebrew and so he came to visit Rotterdam where a Hebrew was spoken. He was utterly pessimistic and thought that it would take a long time. He also laid stress ~~on~~ ~~misgivings~~ ~~a connection~~ with what the Germans were planning to do to the Jews.

I was deeply impressed by his pessimism especially at the same time people were arrested and sent to concentration camps. I was depressed that I ~~at~~ visited my previous Chemra-teacher and asked him for papers. I did not want to fall a prey in the hands of the Germans. He refused, ~~very~~ slightly so, I think now.

When in the spring of 1942 the Germans started with their plan of general deportations I had no non-Jewish connections. My neighbour Mirjam Hakornian, however, had this kind of connections through her I know a non-Jewish market-gardener the name of Boule Koning. He was willing to take me in but offered some considerations I felt responsible for the youngsters in Leerdrecht, and I felt that I could not desert them.

during a conversation with Fren^{*} Bluth she said: "In case there comes a deportation order ~~the~~ for the whole house one of you should really accompany the children. Blushu was already once in Dachau, so I want you to consider if you, in that case, would be willing to accompany the children." About that time I considered the idea to find clandestine addresses for all the children. The idea ^{appeared} ~~seemed~~ not to be realistic. Even for Dutch youngsters, with

contacts in the non-Jewish community it was already quite difficult to find an address. How could we find addresses for all these ^{poor} ~~wealthy~~ German youngsters?

I talked things over with Mirjam. She had connections with many non-Jewish people, between others the pedagogic staff of the "Werkplacate" of Hans Bocke and other progressive ~~ide~~ idealistic minded ~~for~~ circles.

He ^{grew up} ~~had~~ a "plan ~~to~~ ~~organize~~" of campaigns, and Mirjam got the impression that it might be possible. We talked things over ~~it~~ with Sebastian and with Rector Cohen, the leader of the house.

They agreed; we then decided to notify only one person outside the House: ^{*} Grace Bleth. She told us, that she was unable to decide if the plan was viable but that she would help us if we were willing to take the responsibility.

It became clear later that Rector Cohen did not agree with this attitude. [#] Mirjam worked in the Exposition.

so she should know when ever a deportation order for the
Loosstreet House would come through. We did ~~not~~ ^{not} have
our telephone at that time so we decided on a code which she
could transmit to us, in case such an ^{order} ~~code~~ came through.

4 weeks before the 11th of August (that was the date)

We started our work. During daytime we worked normally
in the evening we started to look for addresses. ~~The~~ ~~transmission~~
were held in Morjan's room. During the first 2 weeks we found
a number of addresses but we realized that things did not
move good enough. We decided that Morjan should write
Joop Westermeeet and to explain our plans to him. Immediately
he agreed to help and give us all his assistance.

At once his influence became obvious. He was a man
with an enormous influence on Joop and a personality
who inspired all his cooperators. (for an extensive description

of his personality see at the end of this report. After our first meeting with Joseph N. we were convinced that our plans ~~had~~ should be continued. At the other side we felt that we shouldered a very heavy responsibility: If our plans were detected immediate transportation would follow; if we did not continue our plans the Jewish Council might be able to postpone ^{deportation} for a considerable time.

II. The huge responsibility for our non Jewish friends and their families who were suddenly exposed to the same dangers as the Jewish population. III. We also felt a responsibility for our families — as far as we had families — who might be the victims of reprisals in case our plans were detected.

~~The~~ Without doubt it was Joseph Bickelmann who gave us the moral support to go on and impelled on us the importance of our undertaking.

The following recollection illustrates the tension under which we were living. After our first meeting with Jozef Wlodek, ~~He~~ told me at night: Perhaps after the ~~the~~ children have disappeared we should give ourselves up to the Germans. His idea was that the disappearance of all the children might call for sharp reprisals from the Germans. By giving ourselves up we might ^{soothe} pacify the Germans to a certain degree. I did not at all agree with him and succeeded to convince him. We also constructed an emergency plan, this ~~idea~~ would be carried out in case the deportation order would come off before we had completed our original plans.

The 15th of August Irena Bluth sent us the code and we started immediately to mobilize our non Jewish friends, and started the implementation of the emergency plans. From Wednesday night till Sunday morning we succeeded to bring all our children to their hiding places. On these ^{*} Thursday, Friday and Saturday we did every thing to give ^{what happened in} the house a normal appearance.

That Wednesday night he took all the children in the dressing room and I told them that he decided to keep them ^{but} out of the hands of the Germans. I told them that they should read and study as much as they could. They were amazingly understanding. Some of the girls went to Miriam and asked for information in matters of sexual relations. After that he talked to every child alone, explained where he was going and how he should behave.

We needed some money and sold coffee, sugar and tea on the black market, this provided us with some base fee.

On Saturday very few children were left, but he made a lot of noise ~~to~~ giving the farmers of the village the impression that every thing was normal. Every child was provided with a false identity card. During the ~~first~~ original evacuation of the house only one boy was caught. On Sunday morning

it became apparent that there were 4 boys left without an
 living address. I took these boys to an address in Billthoren,
 but it appeared that the address was not safe. I told them
 to lie down in a ^{small} forest and ~~to~~ went to phone some of
 our people. One boy was taken to Forestland, the 3 last boys
 I took to Käthi Mulder (taute Käthi), and from there they
 were send on different addresses. Most of the addresses were
 very much ~~temporarily~~. temporarily. one of the problems was that
 the children spoke dutch with a ^{heavy} ~~very~~ German ~~acc~~ accent. We had
 to look for ~~the~~ new addresses continuously.

We also started to find living places for several boys
 who were living on different places with farmers (Hachstein)

In the first place it was ^{the his} friendship ^{for} ~~between~~ Shuster and
~~what made~~
 loop, ~~which made him~~ ^{expand} ~~rebound~~ the work so intensively
 It became soon obvious that we would not be able to
 find sufficient new living places, and that we had to look for

way, to bring these youngsters over the frontier to
 neutral countries. Schuber took ~~it~~ this task on as
 we supposed that his German accent would be less
 of a problem abroad. He succeeded to arrive in France
 via Belgium, and made these important connections, and
 learned how "March-Befehle" (German military travel-
 passes) could be manipulated. In that way he contributed
 extensively to the foundation of the work.

During one of his travels he was caught when passing the
 Dutch-Belgian frontier, and on 27 January 1943 in the
 prison in Breda he committed suicide.

Then we tried to send a number of our ~~children~~ ^{people} to
 Switzerland with an organization we thought to be safe,
 we managed to send along our people by asking some
 rich people going with the same group to pay double
 the price, the smugglers demanded! But the whole group

~~plan~~ was delivered in Brussels correctly to the Gestapo Headquarters and from there via Tiedeman, to Auschwitz & My brother Juda was with this group. (See the testimony of Erika Bleich. Then it was decided never more to use

escape routes which were not completely under our control

One of the chabotim, who ^{after the death of Shushu} played an important role in organizing transports to abroad was Kurt Reitinger.

He was a half-Jew, after the war he died in an motor-accident during that period we started ^{self} to bring our people from

Belgia to France. ^{To live} Illegally was much easier in France, where the civil organization of the Germans was much less strict. Especially it under the forerunners workers at the

Nest ^{*}Hall it was relatively easy to "plant" ^{unnoticed,} many people.

~~unnoticed~~. The most dangerous frontier was the Dutch-Belg. Shushu and I managed to smuggle many people over this frontier. In the beginning we passed over the so called

Green frontier, walking through fields and forests using small roads the smugglers had ~~to~~ shown us. In the beginning he used a ^{route} ~~road~~ ~~west~~ via Budel - Hassont. But this route seemed very dangerous and indeed Shushan was ^{one year} ~~taken~~ ^{caught} ~~on~~ that route. Later I used several times a route south of Breda (Breda - Hoogstraten) and in the end a route south of Bergen op Zoom. Still later I found a way to travel in a German military train in both directions. A Jewish boy Abraham Hildersheim told me about this possibility.

I travelled to Paris with false, but not, identity cards. In Paris we typed ~~for~~ ~~these~~ applications for homeleave for workers at the Westwall on the names of the holders of these identity cards. With these papers I visited ~~the~~ a special department of the "Wehrmacht ^{##} oberkommando" in Paris and asked for papers for a group of West Wall workers.

who, during their home leave, wanted to spend a few hours
 in Paris. I came so often to their office that the people
 there already knew me! These papers I folded into very
 small parcels in fat-free paper. They were then ~~put~~^{hidden} under
 butter in a butter-box. I travelled back to Holland
^{distributed}~~delivered~~ these documents to the people, who travelled
 later with these papers ~~back~~ under my direction back to
 France. We did this once every fortnight; it was horre-
racking work. In Holland ~~was~~ there were still offices functioning
 to be served, papers had to be renewed, money collected
 Miriam looked after the children who were in hiding; she
 also forged documents. I had a Dutch passport over the
 name of Koning, once in a train it was examined very
 accurately. Till the end of 1943 Joop was betrayed by
 a Jewish agent-^{??} Provocateur by the name of Kaufman.

(see the testimony of Schuit) He reported various ^{crimes} ~~crimes~~, Joop never had committed. Then Wil Westermil, Joop's wife was arrested, and the children had to place with ~~the~~ friends. Joop had to give up his work at the school, & he went into hiding, but carried on with the work. In the mean time friends in France managed to find a route to Spain over the Pyrenees. Joop was brought to Toulouse and talked to the second group, before they crossed the Pyrenees into Spain.

He went on bringing people over the ~~border~~ Dutch-Germany frontier and was caught in March 1944 in the neighbourhood of Budel. In Rotterdam he was interrogated by the Gestapo and badly mistreated. Via well-meaning clerks we had some contact with him at that time. In prison he wrote beautiful poems. Later he was transferred to the concentration camp in Vught. He smuggled a note out of the ~~prison~~ ^{camp}.

trying to prepare an escape route. This note fell into the
 hands of the Gestapo. The Gestapo sent a "agent-provocateur"
 Karl Kaufman to us with this note. We recognized Top's
 handwriting, but we considered the matter suspect. Never-
 theless we decided to take the risk, trying to help ^{Top} ~~him~~ with
 with an attempt to escape. In April '44 I was caught
 to the railway station in Ben Barak. The same evening Mirjam
 was arrested, all through the activities of the traitor
 Karl. High German Police officers interrogated me 18
 hours without a break. A week I was held in the solitary
 prison in Harel, near Ben Barak, it was found out that I
 was a Jew, I was brought back to the prison in Ben Barak.
 Mirjam and I ^{were} ~~were~~ ~~in the~~ together in the prison-barrack in

^{##} Westerbark. Karl Bluth visited us there, he managed
 to get us out of this special barrack (Testimonium K.D.)
 and we were transported immediately, not to Auschwitz

sent to Bergen Belsen. There we knew several of the
 leading people, who managed to give us occasionally a
 somewhat better job. Miriam volunteered for the old
 people home and the orphanage. I worked in the
 "cleaners commando". After the liberation of the Bergen Belsen
~~camp~~ ^{to Melkman} camp, we lived in a house together with ~~for the~~
 Miriam and I left after a short time, we stole a
 bicycles, we ~~bought~~ ^{rode} to Trobitz, at the other
 side of the Elbe and reached ^{the} American zone in Thurgau.
 We took with us a ~~memorandum~~ ^{memorandum}, written by Abel
 Herzberg and S.J. de Vries, ^{etc} recording the condition of
 the prisoners after their liberation. In Halle we reported
~~us to ourselves~~ ^{to} the C.A. Co Civil Affairs department
 of the American Army at the Town Hall. The commanding
 officer there was so ~~am~~ impressed by this memorandum

to the Division Commander. American Division officers travelled to Trzbitza and confirmed the evidence ~~mentioned~~ reported in the memorandum. After this serious attention was given to the repatriation of liberated prisoners, he went back to Halle and a French Captain arranged for us transport to Holland. although officially repatriation to Holland was stopped at that time. A month after the liberation we were back in Holland.

In Holland we started to reorganize the Hehalutz-movement. Together with people from the Jewish Brigade and with the help of Jo Mekhman a paper was started "Bomas ha Halutz" (the Chalutz-Post). The first general assembly was held in Castricum, here the basis was laid for the the work of the He-Halutz-movement after the war. In the mean time a medical checking

wreaked that I was suffering from a T.B. pleurisy.
I had to rest for half a year. In April 1946 we
went to Israel.

Here follow a few data about the Lodzrecht-Group.

Occupants of the Lodzrecht-House 65 persons
Total number of people helped with a hiding address 200.-
Of these 200 people quite a number reached Israel
before the German capitulation. 70 "
Of these 200 people ~~10%~~ were caught by the Germans.
Of the Lodzrecht group 30% were caught.
This high percentage was caused by the relative ~~lack~~
lack of experience we had with this first group.
Many were caught in the failure of the group who
tried to reach the Swiss border.

The 70 youngsters who reached Israel already during
the war went to several "Lizbuckwin", Chaliloth, Gal 9th
and Hatzorea (and from there to Yaborn).

Joop Kester reel.

Joop ^(born in 1899) came from stern religious background in Delft.
 As a matter of fact it really was a religious sect. Even
 later when it was no longer a religious person he
 often used in his talks and letters citations from the Bible.
 He was a strong individualist and a confirmed in-
 dependent thinker. Politically he was near ^{*}Communist
 Kromenhuys and an admirer of Bast de Light. He called
 his youngest son after him. As a young teacher Joop
 went to Indonesia (a Dutch Colony at that time)
 and he was the first Dutchman imprisoned ^{there} as a
 conscientious objector. He was a sworn anti-militarist.
 Back in Holland he refused to pay taxes as part of
 these taxes went to military expenses. His property was
 confiscated, but he ~~saved~~ managed to save his books
 He liked literature, and the dramatic arts, and inspired

^{school}
 the children to creativity. He was a vivacious person, and occasionally there were conflicts between him and Ken Baake, the director of the school and a more didactic type of man. Joop was a champion of the free-educational system. He resisted conventional prejudice.

Among the Spanish Freedom was the children of "Harkplatz" helped the Spanish retreating children. During the persecution in Germany of the Jewish population Joop and Kees opened a section of the school for Jewish-German children (May 1940). The initiative came from the children of the school! Mojaime worked in the section. During the days of the war in Holland once Joop brought a $\frac{1}{2}$ wounded German soldier on a carrier ~~to~~ bicycle to hospital. Already before the war identity cards were distributed in Holland. Joop refused to accept one. ~~but~~ also during the war he only accepted

when he needed it for his illegal work.

Already before Mirzain contacted him, he was active
 trying to ~~find~~ hiding places for Jews.

During the German ~~by~~ Occupation he searched for an answer to the terrible things that happened at that time.

Helping only a few people did not satisfy him.

During the first days ~~that~~ we worked together, he told us many times that he had been waiting for this kind of task and responsibility! Quickly he formed a special feeling of alliance with the Chelutsim!

It was not the nationalistic side of the Zionism that attracted him. (he had certain reservations in this respect)

The social idealism, the endeavour to build a new society in a new country attracted him to the world of the Chelutsim.

Immediately after working hours at his school he went out to work for the Landsdrecht group. As a rule he came only in early morning he came back to Rotterdam, having ~~still~~ slept a few hours in some waiting room.

Seldom he was a night at home. We tried to persuade him to give up his work as Headmaster of the Montessori-school in Rotterdam; we were afraid that he could not carry on with this strenuous way of life. I once visited him at his school in Rotterdam but when I started to explain our motives,

but he told me: Since I ~~was~~^{do} the illegal work anyway, in the school goes much better. Previously I saw around me the horrible influence of the German occupation and I knew that I did nothing against it.

In ~~the~~^{the} ~~night~~^{night} .. he was a enormous ~~of~~ support for the other prisoners. How much responsible, administrative and technical

work he was doing for the Jewish children, he was always
 tried to ~~not~~ ^{help} understand and help every child and
 see him as a separate person. He ~~to~~ really loved these
 children and for ^{most} many of them ~~his~~ this personal
 connection with ~~loop~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~being~~ been a guiding factor
 in their life.

About ~~Keith~~ Kurtz Blitt:

During the summer of 1943 we planned a massive escape
 from Waskenborg. It was a risky plan. It could contain
 also a serious risk of other Chelutism on other groups in
 Waskenborg. They might be transported immediately as
 a reprisal measure. He did not want to decide before talking
 with one of the most authoritative people of the Jewish Council.
 I visited Kurt Blitt in his office. After my explanation he
 gave as his opinion that it was responsible to try to

to let escape as many Chetniks as possible from
Nisterbock, what ever the consequences

The plan ~~was~~ ^{could be} not executed following changes in the organization
of the Nisterbock camp

- 1 -

My name is Menachem Pinkhof, my profession civil engineer. I live at 11 Downes Hill, in Haifa. During the war I had several false identities, such as Jaap Visser and Nico Koning.

I was born in Amsterdam, Holland on March 13, 1920. My father was Sallie Pinkhof, a secretary and a writer. My mother was Sofia Pinkhof de Bear. I had a brother, Juda, a sister, Rosa, a half-brother, Bram, and Heleen, a half-sister. Of all of them, only Rosa and Heleen are still alive. Rosa lives in Israel, Heleen in Holland.

My father belonged to the "Diamantgroep." He was transported from Bergen Belsen to Oranienburg, where he perished. My step-mother, Rosalia Pinkhof de Paauw, was taken from Bergen Belsen to Ravensbruck, and from there was brought to Sweden, from which she returned to Holland.

I attended the Jewish high school and after that the technical high school in Amsterdam. I belonged to the Zichron Yaakov youth movement and Bached (Mizrachi). Afterwards, I went over to the Mehalutz movement. Today, I am a member of the Mapei party.

In June, 1945, I married Mirjam Waterman. Our children are Jachin, Chava and Jeshua.

In the autumn of 1939 I read in the press about the deportation of Jews to the Lublin district of Poland. I immediately understood that the intention of the Germans might be physical annihilation; these were the first deportations. Later, when the full-scale destruction was under way, I remembered that time.

During the invasion of Holland in 1940, my father was depressed. I had a plan to escape to the south with friends from the youth movement. We devised the plan, which we never carried out, at the home of Jaap van Amerongen (Teddy Arnon). The same evening, I returned home. I finished the final examinations of the technical high school, and applied for a job with the Amsterdam Ballist Company; I learned later that the company collaborated with the

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Germans. As I was a Jew, my application was denied. Afterwards, I was invited to serve as a youth leader in a home of the Youth Aliya in Loosdrecht, and I accepted. There were some 60 young people, between the ages of 14 and 17, who were evacuated to neighboring states under the auspices of the Youth Aliya after the November programs (Kristalnacht), with the intention of taking them to Palestine. These children were very difficult. Reasons: (1) their age, (2) difficulties from 1933 in Germany and (3) they saw their plans to escape the Hitler regime frustrated. As compensation, we gave them courses and did cultural work with them. In the period 1941 - 1942, the eldest boys and some girls found work with farmers in the neighborhood as hakshera (trans: preparation for life in Israel). In those days we came to know Edelstein, the head of the Jewish community in Prague, where he was a representative of the Sokhnut. He was a bona fide subscriber to the idea that the Jewish communities should be organized in such a way that organized contact with the Germans might be possible. These ideas originated from the days of the Maamarah. At the end of 1941, Edelstein was sent to Amsterdam by the Germans to help with the founding of the Joodse Raad (Jewish Council). He spoke Hebrew and so he came to visit Loosdrecht, where also Hebrew was spoken. He was utterly pessimistic and thought that the war was a long way from ending. He also had somber forebodings about what the Germans planned to do with the Jews. His pessimism, along with the arrests and deportations to Matthausen, made a deep impression on me. I was so depressed that I visited my former chemistry teacher from the Jewish high school to ask him for poison because I did not want to fall into the hands of the Germans alive. He refused, rightly so I think today.

When, in approximately the spring of 1942, the Germans began the large-scale deportations, I had no non-Jewish connections but my neighbor Mirjam (Waterman) had such connections. Through her I came to know a non-Jewish gardener, Bouke Koning, who offered to take me into his house. On second thought, I decided that I had responsibility for the young people in Loosdrecht and I could not abandon them. To illustrate this, a conversation I had with Erica Bluth. She said, "If we receive a deportation order for the whole

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House, perhaps it is advisable that one of you accompanies the children and, because Schuschu already spent time in Dachau, I ask you to consider that you accompany the pupils."

Around this time I conceived the idea of sending the whole House into hiding, although this did not seem very realistic because, even for individual Dutch Jews it was difficult to find a place to hide, even if they had enough money at their disposal; what about these very poor German youngsters?

I talked things over with Miryam. She had connections with many non-Jewish people, among others the teaching staff of the "Werkplaats" under the direction of Kees Boeke and other progressive idealistically-minded circles. We drew up a plan of execution and Miryam had the impression that it might be possible. We then talked things over with Schuschu and with Lodie Cohen, the house administrator. They both agreed. We then decided to notify only one person outside the House: Erica Bluth. She told us that she was unable to decide if the plan was viable, but that she would help us if we were willing to take the responsibility. It became clear afterwards that Ru Cohen did not agree with this attitude. Mrs. Bluth worked in the Expositur, so she would know whenever a deportation order for the Loosdrecht House would come through. We still had our telephone at that time so we decided on a signal which she could send us in case such an order came through. About four weeks before the 15th of August (that was the date) we started to find hiding places. During the day we worked as usual and in the evening we set out. Meetings were held in Miryam's room. During the first two weeks we found a number of addresses but we realized that things weren't moving quickly enough. Then Miryam asked Joop Westerweel for help and we discussed the plan with him. He agreed instantly to put his shoulder to the wheel. At once his influence became obvious. He was a man with enormous influence on people and a personality who inspired all his co-conspirators (for an extensive description of his personality, see the end of this report). After our first meeting with Joop Westerweel we were convinced that under all circumstances our plans should be executed. On the other hand,

4.

we felt that we had shouldered a very heavy responsibility. (1) If there were a traitor or a mishap, immediate punitive deportation would follow while, on the other hand, the Jewish Council might be able to postpone deportation for a considerable time. (2) The huge responsibility for our non-Jewish friends and their families who were suddenly exposed to the same dangers as the Jewish population. (3) Our families (as far as we had families) who might be the victims of reprisals in case our plans were detected, because ours was the first collective act of resistance. Without a doubt it was Joop Westerweel who gave us the moral support to go on and impressed on us the importance of our undertaking.

The following recollection illustrates the tension under which we lived. After our first meeting with Joop Westerweel, Shushu told me at night, "Perhaps after the children have disappeared, we should give ourselves up to the Germans." His idea was that the disappearance of all the children might call for sharp reprisals from the Germans. By giving ourselves up, we might soothe the Germans to a certain degree. I did not at all agree with him, and I succeeded in convincing him. We constructed a plan to hide and an emergency plan. This would be carried out in case the deportation order would arrive before we completed our original plans. The fifteenth of August Erica Bluth sent us the code and we started immediately to mobilize our non-Jewish friends and started the implementation of the emergency plans. From Wednesday night until Sunday morning, we succeeded in bringing all of our children to their hiding places. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday, we did everything to make what happened in the house seem normal. That Wednesday night we brought all the children into the dining room and we told them that we had decided to keep them out of the hands of the Germans. I told them that they should read and study as much as they could. They were amazingly understanding. Some of the girls went to Miryam and asked for information in matters of sexual relations. After that we talk to each child individually, explained where he was going and how he should behave.

We needed some money and sold coffee, sugar and tea on the black

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market. This provided us with some 6,000 florins. On Saturday, very few children were left, but we made alot of noise, giving the farmers of the village the impression that everything was normal. Every child was provided with a false identity card. During the original evacuation of the house, only one boy was caught. On Sunday morning it became apparent that there were four boys left without a hiding address. I took these boys to an address in Bilthoven but it appeared that the address was not safe. I told them to lie down in a small forest and went to phone some of our people. One boy was taken to Friesland. The three last boys I took to Kathi Mulder (Aunt Kathi) and from there they were sent to different addresses. Most of the addresses were very much temporary. One of the problems was that the children spoke Dutch with a heavy German accent. We had to look for new addresses continuously. We also started to find hiding places for several boys who were living in different places in Holland with farmers (shahshera). In the first place, it was his friendship for Shushu which made Joop expand the work so intensively. It soon became obvious that we would not be able to find sufficient new hiding places and that we had to look for ways to bring these youngsters over the border to neutral countries. Shushu took this task on since we thought that his German accent would be less of a problem abroad. He succeeded in arriving in France via Belgium and made important connections there and learned how "Marschbefehle" could be manipulated. In that way he contributed extensively to the foundation of the work.

During one of his travels, he was caught while crossing the Dutch-Belgian border and on January 27, 1942, in the prison in Breda, he committed suicide. Afterwards we tried to send a number of our people to Switzerland with smugglers we thought to be safe. We managed to send our people by asking some rich people traveling with the same smugglers to pay double the asking price. But the whole group was delivered directly to the Gestapo headquarters in Brussels and from there, via Mechelen, to Auschwitz. My brother Juda was with this group. (See the testimony of Erica Bluth.) Then it was decided never more to use escape routes that were not completely under our control.

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One of the Halutzim who, after the death of Shushu, played an important role in organizing transports abroad was Kurt Reilinger. He was a half-Jew; after the war he died in a car accident. During that period we started to bring our people via Belgium to France ourselves. Living illegally was much easier in France, where the civil organization of the Germans was much less strict. Especially among the foreign workers at the "West Wall" it was relatively easy to hide many people. The most dangerous border was the Dutch-Belgian. Shushu and I managed to smuggle many people over this border. In the beginning we passed over the so-called Green Border, walking through fields and forests, using the small roads the smugglers had shown us. In the beginning we used a route via Budel-Hamont. But this route seemed very dangerous and indeed Joop was caught a year later on that route. Later I used a route south of Breda (Breda-Hoogstraten) several times and, in the end, a route south of Bergen op Zoom. Still later I found a way to travel on a German army train in both directions. A Jewish boy (Avraham Hildesheim) told me about this possibility. I traveled to Paris with false Dutch identity cards. In Paris we typed applications for home leave for workers at the West Wall in the names of the holders of these identity cards. With these papers I visited a special department of the Wehrmacht Oberkommando in Paris and asked for papers for a group of West Wall workers who, during their home leave, wanted to spend a few hours in Paris. I came so often to their office that the people there already knew me. These papers I folded into very small parcels in wax paper. They were then hidden under butter in a butter box. I traveled back to Holland, distributed these documents to the people who traveled later with these papers under my directions back to France. We did this once every fortnight. It was nervewracking work. In Holland there were still other problems to be solved. Papers had to be renewed, money collected. Miryam looked after the children who were in hiding. She also forged documents. I had a Dutch passport under the name of Koning. Once on the train it was examined very closely.

About the end of 1943, Joop was betrayed by a Jewish agent-

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provocateur by the name of Kaufmann. (See the testimony of van Schaik.) He reported serious crimes Joop never had committed. Then Wil Westerweel, Joop's wife, was arrested, and his children had to be placed with friends. Joop had to give up his work at the school. He went into hiding, but carried on with the illegal work. In the meantime, friends in France managed to find a route to Spain over the Pyrenees. Joop was taken to Toulouse to say good-bye to the second group before they crossed the Pyrenees into Spain.

He went on bringing people over the Dutch-Belgian green border and was caught in March, 1944 in the neighborhood of Sudel. In Rotterdam he was interrogated by the Gestapo and badly beaten. Through well-meaning clerks we had some contact with him. In prison he wrote beautiful poems. Later on he was transferred to the concentration camp in Vught. He smuggled a note out of the camp, trying to prepare an escape route. This note fell into the hand of the Gestapo. The Gestapo sent an agent-provocateur (Karel, an Indo) to us with this note. We recognized Joop's handwriting, but we considered the matter suspect. But we decided to take the risk, trying to help Joop with the escape attempt. In this way, I was caught in April, 1944 at the railway station in Den Bosch. The same evening Miryam was arrested, all through the activities of the traitor Karel. Officers in the German police interrogated me 18 hours without a break. I was held in the political prison in Haren, near Den Bosch. There it was found out that I was a Jew. I was brought back to the prison in den Bosch. Miryam and I were together in the prison barracks in Westerbork.

-8-

Karl Bluth visited us there, he managed to get us out of this special barrack (Testimony of K.B.) and we were transported immediately, not to Ausschwitz but to Bergen Belsen. There we knew several of the leading people, who managed occasionally to give us a somewhat better job. Mirjam volunteered for the old people home and the orphanage. I worked in the "shoes commando". After being liberated we lived in a house together with Jo Melkman. Mirjam and I left after a short time. We stole (organized) bicycles and we took with us a memorandum on the situation of our co prisoners that were liberated, composed by Abel Herzberg and I.S.de Vries. That was how the situation became known in the western world. We traveled on our bicycles from Trobitz (where we were liberated), crossed the Elbe river and arrived into American territory near Thorgau and we called on the military commander of the civil Affairs department in Halle. They considered this memorandum so important that they sent us on to the Division Commander. American Liaison officers travelled to Trobitz and confirmed the evidence reported in the memorandum. After this serious attention was given to the repatriation of the liberated prisoners in Trobitz. We went back to Halle and a French captain arranged transport for us to Holland, although officially repatriation to Holland was stopped at that time. A month after the liberation we were back in Holland.

In Holland we started to reorganise the Hechalutz movement. Together with people from the Jewish Brigade, and with the help of Jo Melkman a paper was started, called "Dawar Hechalutz" (the chalutz post). The first general assembly was held in Castricum, where the basis was laid for the work of the Hechalutz movement after the war. In the mean time a medical checkup revealed that I was suffering from pleurisy. I had to rest for half a year. In April 1946 we made aliya to Palestine.

Here follow some details about the Loosdrecht hachshara group.

Occupants of the Loosdrecht home	65
Total number of people who went into hiding	200
Those of these 200 reaching Palestine before German capitulation	70
Of these 200 were caught by the Germans	10%
Of the Loosdrecht group 30% caught. This high percentage was caused by the relative lack of experience we had with the first group. As many were caught in the failure of the group who tried to reach the	

- 9 -

Swiss border.

The 70 youngsters, who reached Israel before the end of the war, joined kibutzim- Chulioth, Gal Ed, Hazorea (and from there to Jakum)

About Joop Westerweel. (1899-1944)

Joop came from a stern religious background in Zutphen. As a matter of fact, it really was a religious sect. Even later when Joop was no longer an observant person, he still attached importance to the words of the Bible, as before. (see letter written in the cell).

He was a strong individualist and a confirmed independent thinker. Politically he was near Domela Nieuwenhuis (social democrats) and an admirer of Bart de Ligt. (religious socialist). He called his youngest son after him. As a young teacher Joop went to the Dutch East Indies (later Indonesia) and he was the first Dutchman there imprisoned as a conscientious objector. He was a sworn antimilitarist. Back in Holland he refused to pay taxes as part of these taxes went for military expenses. His property was confiscated, but he managed to save his books. He was fond of literature and the dramatic arts and he inspired the schoolchildren to creativity. He was a vivacious person and occasionally there were conflicts between him and Kees Boeke, the spiritual leader of the school and more the preaching christian. Joop was a champion of free education. He resisted conventional prejudice. During the Spanish Freedom War the children of this school, called "the Werkplaats", helped Spanish refugee children. During the persecutions of the Jewish population Joop, and a bit reluctant Kees, opened a section of the school for German Jewish children (in 1939). The initiative came from the children of the school! Mirjam worked in that section too. During the days of the war in Holland once Joop brought a wounded German soldier on a carrier-bicycle to hospital.

Joop refused to accept an identity card, that were already distributed before the German occupation. Also during the war he only accepted one when he needed it for his illegal work. Already before Mirjam contacted him, he was active trying to find hiding places for Jews. During the German occupation he searched for an answer as a human being to the terrible things that happened at that time. Helping only

- 10 -

a few people did not satisfy him. During the first days we worked together he told us many times that he had been waiting for this kind of task and responsibility! Quickly he formed a special feeling of alliance with the Chalutsim! It was not the nationalistic side of the Zionism what attracted him. (He had certain reservations in this respect). The social idealism, the endeavour to build a new society in a new country attracted him to the world of the chalutsim. Immediately after working hours at his school he went out to work for the hiding plan of the Loosdrecht group. As a rule he came only back to his school in Rotterdam in early morning, having slept a few hours in some waiting room or a train. Seldom he was a night at home. We tried to persuade him to give up his work as headmaster of the Montessori school in Rotterdam; we were afraid that he could not carry on with this strenuous way of life. I once visited him at his school in Rotterdam, but when I started to explain our worries, he told me: Since I do this illegal work everything in the school goes much better. Previously I saw around me the terrible influence of the German occupation and I knew that I did nothing against it....of course I did not come forth with my proposal. In Vught (after he was caught) he was an enormous support for the other prisoners. Despite the enormous responsibility and practical work he had in this illegal work for the Jewish children, he has always tried to understand and help every child and see him as a separate person. He really loved these children and for most of them this personal connection with Joop has been a guiding factor in their life.

About Kurt Bluth.

During the summer of 1943 we planned a massive escape from Westerbork. It was a risky plan. It could contain also a serious risk for other chalutsim and other groups in Westerbork. They might be deported immediately as a reprisal measure. We did not want to decide before talking with one of the most authoritative people of the Jewish Council. I visited Kurt Bluth in his office. After my explanations he gave as his opinion that it was responsible to try to let escape as many chalutsim as possible from Westerbork, what ever the consequences. The plan could not be executed following changes in the organisation of the Westerbork camp.