

Exchange of Letters Between *Reichskommissar* Lohse and the Ministry for the Eastern Territories, Concerning the "Final Solution"

Riga, November 15, 1941

Reichskommissar for *Ostland*

Ila 4 M.219/41g

Secret

To

Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories

Re: Execution of Jews

in reply to letter I/259141 of October 31, 1941

Report from: Government Counselor Trampedach

I have forbidden the unauthorized ("wild") executions of Jews in Libau because the manner in which they were carried out was irresponsible.

Will you please inform me whether your inquiry of October 31 should be interpreted as a directive to liquidate all the Jews in *Ostland*? Is this to be done regardless of age, sex, and economic requirements (for instance, the Wehrmacht's demand for skilled workers in the armament industry)? Of course the cleansing of *Ostland* of Jews is a most important task; its solution, however, must be in accord with the requirements of war production.

So far I have not been able to find such a directive either in the regulations concerning the Jewish question in the "Brown Portfolio" (*Braune Mappe*) or in any other decree.

L[ohse]

Berlin, December 18, 1941

Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories

Nr. I/1/157/41

To

Reichskommissar for Ostland

Riga

Re: Jewish question

in reply to your letter of November 15, 1941

The Jewish question has presumably been clarified meanwhile by means of verbal discussion. In principle, economic considerations are not to be taken into account in the settlement of the problem. It is further requested that any questions that arise be settled directly with the Higher SS and Police Leader (*Hoeherer SS- und Polizeifuehrer*).

f/Braeutigam

Source: Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman, Abraham Margalio (Eds.), *Documents on the Holocaust, Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem 1981, Document no. 178, pp. 394-395.