

Freudiger, Fulop

(1900--1976), Hungarian Jewish leader. In 1939 Freudiger succeeded his father as head of the Orthodox Jewish community in Budapest. In 1943 he helped found the Relief and Rescue Committee of Budapest, and in 1944, he aided many refugees who had illegally entered Hungary in search of a safe haven.

German troops occupied Hungary in March 1944 and established a Judenrat in Budapest, to which Freudiger was appointed. Later that spring Rabbi Michael Dov Weissmandel of the Slovakian Working Group sent Freudiger a copy of the Auschwitz Protocols—a report about Auschwitz made by two Jews who had escaped the camp. Based on the report, Freudiger spread the news of the killings going on at Auschwitz to both Jewish and non-Jewish Hungarian leaders. With Weissmandel's help, Freudiger established contact with Dieter Wisliceny, the SS officer sent by Adolf Eichmann to act as advisor to the Hungarian government on Jewish affairs. Freudiger successfully bribed Wisliceny into releasing 80 well-known Orthodox Jews from Hungarian ghettos.

With Wisliceny's help, Freudiger and his family managed to escape to Romania in August 1944. After the war they moved to Israel, where Freudiger was considered a controversial figure due to his *Judenrat* job, his escape, and the issue of whether or not he had sufficiently warned Hungarian Jewry about Auschwitz. In 1961 Freudiger was a witness in the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem.