

***Die Judenfrage*, 31 May 1941: article on the expropriation of the Jews in Luxembourg and the Aryanization of the economy¹**

The administration and utilization of Jewish assets in Luxembourg

On 5 September last year, the chief of the civil administration of Luxembourg, Gauleiter Simon,² issued a *Regulation on Jewish Assets* which set out the future management of Jewish assets, Jewish businesses, and Jewish agricultural and forestry property, as well as other real estate.³ The *question* that interests us today is *what, in practical terms, has been done* with regard to this regulation. That autumn, Gau Inspector Ackermann⁴ was entrusted with the task of managing Jewish assets located in Luxembourg, as he had previously carried out the Aryanization of the Gau Moselland⁵ with great success and brought a wealth of experience to his new assignment.

Before 10 May 1940 around 3,500 Jews were living in Luxembourg.⁶ First, the *Jewish population* was registered, which also involved registering all Jewish assets so that they could be managed according to regulatory and business principles. Only the Chief of the Civil Administration has the right to dispose of these assets. It was established that there were 335 Jewish *businesses* in all of Luxembourg. Since some business sectors were overcrowded because of the Jewish competition, a number of Jewish companies were closed down in consultation with the head of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, which resulted in a gratifying cleansing of these sectors. As a result, only seventy-five of all the Jewish companies were Aryanized, while the remaining ones were eliminated. The Jewish accounting practices were very poor, if they existed at all, and tax records were opaque. *Aryanization* created clarity in this area as well. Luxembourg Germans were appointed as temporary administrators and entrusted with ensuring proper management.

To a considerable extent, Jewish *private assets* consisted of securities. A large number of the assets which had been transferred to supposed safety in neighbouring countries could be recovered as a result of the quick advance of German troops. A total of 380 plots of developed Jewish-owned *real estate* as well as 155 hectares of undeveloped Jewish-owned land were found. Most of the arable farmland was leased immediately. The rest will be offered for sale to Luxembourg ethnic German farmers whose land borders on Jewish property, enabling them to extend their landholdings. During their flight on 10th May last year, many Jews had to leave behind a considerable amount of *furniture*, which was given to families in need in exchange for appropriate compensation. The

1 *Die Judenfrage*, 31 May 1941, p. 97. This document has been translated from German.

2 Gustav Simon.

3 See Doc. 200.

4 Josef Ackermann (1905–1997), retailer; joined the NSDAP and the SA in 1925; Gau inspector in the Gau of Koblenz-Trier from 1936; head of Dept. IV A (responsible for managing Jewish and emigrant assets) under the Chief of the Civil Administration in Luxembourg from Dec. 1940 to Sept. 1944; arrested in Sept. 1945; sentenced to ten years of hard labour in Luxembourg in 1950; sentenced reduced in 1951 to seven years of penal servitude; returned to Germany in the 1950s.

5 On Hitler's orders, the Gau of Koblenz-Trier was renamed Gau Moselland on 24 Jan. 1941.

6 Approximately 3,900 Jews were living in Luxembourg when the Wehrmacht invaded the country on 10 May 1940.

value of the items had to be determined by appraisers. Neither Reich Germans nor anyone entrusted with the appraisal of Jewish assets was allowed to acquire any of the items for their personal use. For the most part, Jewish-owned *houses* were put at the disposal of the authorities, namely the Civil Administration, the Reich Railway, the Reich Post Office or the Hitler Youth or other organizations; a small portion of the property was sold to local Germans. No matter the type of plunder the Jews had scraped together over all those years, it will now be used for *völkisch* and social purposes for the benefit of the German population in the territory of Luxembourg, which has now been freed from Jewish economic pressure.⁷

⁷ On the expropriation of Jews in Luxembourg, see Commission spéciale, *La Spoliation des biens juifs*, pp. 16–84.