

Preliminary Report: The Nazi allegations raised against Bronius Sredersas

Submitted by Emeritus Prof Konrad Kwiet to the City Council of Wollongong

My brief

I have been asked by Wollongong City Council to investigate the allegations raised against Bronius Sredersas, a Lithuanian migrant who arrived in Australia in 1950 and passed away in 1982. My preliminary report focusses on his war time service. His pre-war life and the time spent after the war as a “Displaced Person” (DP) in occupied Germany are only briefly outlined. No comments are made on his life in Wollongong and his reputation as local “celebrity”, playing a vital role in the cultural landscape of the city, as an art collector and donor of valuable paintings to the Wollongong Art Gallery.

Review

My review is designed to assist the City Council on how to respond to the allegations which have caused considerable furore. My historical research was carried out in Sydney, within in a short period of six weeks, relying only on the evaluation of a few publications printed in German and English as well as on of a handful of documents, copies of copies, retrieved from electronic data banks or obtained from holdings in archival depositories in Australia, Germany and Lithuania. To put it differently, no archival studies have been undertaken to trace and evaluate original documents, especially those still not digitalized. I am listing the names of eight experts, eight archives and the scant literature consulted. Up to this point in time, two experts and one archive have not responded to my enquiries. Thus, my report is ‘preliminary’, presenting first findings and highlighting the problems which are still unresolved, that is, the questions which still have to be answered. Key documents which substantiate my findings are displaced in the attachment.

My initial overview was that Sredersas was a Lithuanian collaborator, serving as “*Kriminalbeamter*” – a detective – in the “Saugumas” – to be more precise - in its **department V** -the section of the **Lithuanian Criminal Police – office B 4**. The records reveal that he had already worked prior to the war, first as policeman, then as police officer in the Lithuanian State Security Department. When the Soviets took over control on Lithuania in July 1940, he was dismissed and reinstated after the Germans had invaded and occupied the country in 1941.

Findings

The name Bronius Sredersas was never brought to the attention of the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), Australia’s Nazi war crimes commission set up by the Hawke government in 1987 to investigate Nazi war crimes allegations made against Australian citizens and residents and to prepare cases for trial. His name did not appear on the lists of Lithuanian suspects compiled by Efraim Zuroff and sent to the SIU¹. The renowned Israeli “Nazi hunter” received some documents only a few weeks ago. He summarized his assessment with one sentence: that

¹ Attorney-General’s Department, *Report of the Investigations of War Criminals in Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services (1993), pp. 302-401.

Sredersas “very likely participated in Holocaust crimes”². Mark Aarons, a former investigative journalist of the ABC, played a pivotal role in reigniting the Nazi war crimes in Australia. He too did not discover Sredersas in his intensive research³. Furthermore, neither ASIO, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the Menzies Enquiry nor any other agency had alerted the SIU of the whereabouts of an alleged Nazi war criminal named Bronius Sredersas.

As I understand it, Michael Samaras, a former Wollongong City Council councilor, was the first claiming that Sredersas was a Nazi collaborator in occupied Lithuania, working as Intelligence Officer with the Secret Service (SD), the Intelligence agency of SS and the Nazi Party (NSDAP) and most likely involved in war crimes and crimes of the Holocaust. He spent four years collecting archival documents to substantiate his claims. His material is known to Council members and was handed over to Library of the City Art Gallery. By then the SIU had long abandoned its operations. Shut down by the Keating government in 1992, new Nazi war crimes allegations were directed to the AFP, a decision which excluded the allocation of additional resources and gave a clear signal that the Nazi war crimes debate was closed. Even if Samaras’ material had been sent to the AFP, no investigations would have commenced. Sredersas died in 1982. Alleged Nazi war criminals who were deceased were not investigated, as no criminal charges could be laid.

Michael Samaras sent me copies of documents, obtained from the National Archives of Australia, the Arolsen Archives in Germany, the Lithuanian Central State Archives in Vilnius and other sources. They have been examined and identified as authentic historical documents.

One document, in my view, needs to be verified: the “Temporary Certificate for an Individual”, issued by the Panevezys District Administration on 12 September 1941 to Bronius Sredersas⁴. The document shows two additional later dates and records Sredersas’ profession as “seaman”. I have asked the Lithuanian Central State Archives to examine the authenticity of the document. I was told that on that very date no temporary certificates were issued⁵. A “*quellenkritische Untersuchung*” - a source critical investigation - has to be carried out to confirm the authenticity of the certificate and its archival transmission. Otherwise, the suspicion or speculation must remain that it was forged.

Other records, obtained by Michael Samaras, have been inserted into my review. I continued what the Germans call the “*Spurensuche*”, searching for sources, which I unearthed in archival depositories.

The first finding is of utmost importance. Sredersas acquired two citizenships - the Lithuanian and the German, adopting each time slightly different first and family names. Born in 1910 in the Crimean city of Simferopol, he was baptised Bronislav Shreders as the son of ethnic

² Email messages from Zuroff to Samaras, 12.1., and 16.1.2022.

³ Mark Aarons, *War Criminals Welcome. Australia. A Sanctuary for Fugitive War Criminals Since 1945*. Melbourne: Black 2001

⁴ Attachment Doc 1

⁵ Email messages from the Lithuanian Central State Archives to Kwiet, 22.4 and 29.4.2022 (henceforth LCVA)

German (“*Volksdeutsche*”) parents. After World War I the family moved to Lithuania, acquiring Lithuanian citizenship, lithuanizing their name into Sredersas. Bronislovas Sredersas finished his high school years at the Gymnasium in Ukmerge, discontinued his University studies in Law and Commerce after 2 ½ years and embarked in 1935 on a professional career as “*Kriminalbeamter*”- a detective - within the Lithuanian State Security Department. When the Soviet Union took over control of Lithuania in 1940, he was dismissed. One year later, in June 1941 - on the eve of German invasion of the Soviet Union - he successfully applied for German citizenship, germanizing his name into Bronislaus Schroeders. After the war, seeking refuge as a DP in Germany, he concealed and renounced his German citizenship, reassuming his Lithuanian name.

There can be no doubt: Sredersas and Schroeders are the same person. They share the same date of birth (4.12.1910), the same place of birth (Simferopol), the same religious affiliation (Roman Catholic) , the same parental names (Anna and Maximilian), the same heights (177/178 cm), the same single status, the same signature and, most significantly, identical “*Lichtbilder*”, photographs appearing on identity cards and other official documents⁶.

The second important finding: I obtained from the German Federal Archives in Berlin Schroeders naturalisation records⁷. They confirm that he and his mother⁸ submitted on 12 June 1941 their applications for German citizenship to the *Einwanderungszentrale* (EWZ - Central Immigration Office), the SS-agency in charge of the resettlement and naturalization of ethnic Germans. Moreover, they turned up in Zgierz, a small village, located in close proximity to Lodz in occupied Poland. They were assessed on the same day and immediately declared as German nationals by a mobile commando of the EWZ⁹. On index cards Schroeders stated that he would like to resume his career as member of the Criminal Police¹⁰.

While Schroeders was recording his professional ambitions to an SS agency, preparations were underway to launch the German war of destruction against the Soviet Union - code-named “Barbarossa”. The mobile *SS-Einsatzgruppen* (EGr - Operational Task Forces) were already assembled in occupied Poland waiting to follow the Germany army. Equipped with specific killing orders they unleashed the genocidal campaign, the first wave of open-air shootings which signaled the beginning of the “Final Solution” - the murder of the Jews. No evidence has been found to suggest that Schroeders was recruited by the *Einsatzkommando 3 (EK)* to serve as local guide, translator or intelligence officer. Headed by *SS-Standartenführer* Karl

⁶ Attachment Doc 1; 2; 2.1; 2.3

⁷ Federal Archives Berlin R 9361-IV 37004

⁸ Federal Archives Berlin R 9361-IV 37003. Her husband had died a few years before in Lithuania

⁹ Attachment Doc 3

¹⁰ Attachment Doc 4

Jäger, EK 3 murdered till November 1941 - in broad day light and in close cooperation with Lithuanian collaborators - 137, 346 men, women and children; the vast majority were Jews¹¹.

The third finding: once Lithuania was occupied, the mobile EK 3 was transformed into the stationary *KdS Litauen* (Commander of the Security Police (SiPo) and Secret Service (SD) Lithuania)¹². I cannot answer the question when Schroeders resumed his career as *Kriminalbeamter*. Having passed the obligatory security clearance, he was appointed by Jäger and assigned to a position within the KdS Criminal Police Department V B 5. I have never heard of such an office nor found any information in the literature consulted. The Lithuanian State Archives informed me that their electronic data bank of digitalized files does not contain any records or information on this office and its activities¹³. Further archival research is required to retrieve documents which have not yet been scanned and digitalized.

The fourth and most important finding: on 7 November 1943 Schroeders submitted a German application to the “*SS-Ersatz-Inspection Ost, Nebenstelle Litauen*” (the Lithuanian sub branch of the SS-Inspectorate and recruitment center in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*) to serve as volunteer in the ranks of the *Waffen-SS*, the military arm of the SS¹⁴. Several type-written pages were completed in hand writing on *Lebenslauf* (CV), upbringing and education, service record, home address and place of work. He did not include in his CV any information on his political views and affiliations, on memberships of parties or organizations, on military experiences. He did not recall any “*besondere Ereignisse*” (special events). He simply stated: “*Keine*” (None). On a separate “*Meldevorgang*” (reporting form), he declared himself as a “*Beamter*”, a public servant, employed by the Secret Service (SD), working in the Criminal Police Department V B 5. The address given: Kaunas, Uytanto Pr 67 - Witautu prosp 67. This address has to be verified. Confirming the occupiers of the building might answer the question whether Schroeders performed his service within the German Criminal police or within the ranks of the Lithuanian Security and Criminal Police (Saugumas) which employed from November 1941 around 800 to 900 persons and operated under the watchful eyes of their German masters¹⁵.

Basically, officials of the Criminal Police - be they Germans or Lithuanians - were entrusted with the task of investigating and combatting “ordinary crimes” - such as homicide, robbery, accidents, missing persons, fugitives, identity theft, extortion, vice, black market and other war-related economic crimes. They tracked down and arrested, interrogated and tortured individuals and handed over suspects to the *Gestapo* (Secret State Police). These included Jews and non-Jews. As it also happened - in Lithuania and elsewhere in Hitler’s “*Reich*” – that

¹¹ Extract from Jäger-Report, 1.12.1941, in: Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman, Abraham Margalio (eds.) *Documents of the Holocaust. Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union*. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, Oxford: Pergamon Press 1981, pp.398-400.

¹² Attachment Docs 19 and 20

¹³ Email message from the LCVA to Kwiet, 29.4.2022

¹⁴ LCVA, F. R-656 ap.1, b.1581, 1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9. Attachment Docs 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4

¹⁵ Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941-1944*. Vol. 1. Göttingen: Wallstein 2011, pp. 534-539. See also Attachment Doc 10

member of the Criminal Police participated in war crimes and crimes of the Holocaust. If the manpower of the SiPo and SD was not available or insufficient to carry out large-scale “*Judenaktionen*”, mass-executions, deportations or ghetto liquidations, or to fight against the partisans, criminal policemen as well as officials from other Nazi agencies were recruited to bolster the execution commando squads. As already stated, no document has yet come to light which confirms, that Schroeders perpetrated war crimes or crimes of the Holocaust. After the war his name was not placed on wanted lists of Lithuanian war criminals. The deputy director of the former KGB Archives in Lithuania informed me¹⁶ that the holdings do not contain a “personal dossier” on Sredersas / Schroeders which indicates that the Soviets did not investigate him in absentia.

In 1958 in the West German city of Ludwigsburg the “*Zentrale Stelle*” - the Central Office of State Justice Administration for the Investigations of Nazi Crimes - commenced its work. Over the next decades a massive, unparalleled archival depository was established, accessible through a “*Zentralkartei*” (central file registry) which contains 1,750 million index cards. They carry the names of 700 000 persons, 26 000 places and crime scenes and 100 000 perpetrators. I was told that the names Sredersas / Schroeders do not appear in the “*Zentralkartei*”¹⁷.

I am unable to shed light on Schroeders application at the end of 1943 to join the military ranks of the *Waffen-SS*. He passed the examination on 7 November, declared as “suitable” for the *Waffen-SS* and war service. It might well be that he briefly fought as soldiers in a German *Waffen-SS* unit or in one the battalions of the Lithuanian Territorial Defense Forces (LTDF) against partisans and approaching Russian soldiers¹⁸. The LTDF, having recruited some 10 000 volunteers, was dissolved in May 1944. Some were arrested and incarcerated in concentration camps. A handful were murdered. Others were deported as forced laborers to Germany. A few managed to escape. Sredersas maintained after the war that he had fled Lithuania in October 1944 out of fear of the advancing Russians¹⁹.

The last important finding: arriving in Germany, Schroeders reemerged as Sredersas. His DP records, preserved in the Arolsen Archives and the National Archives of Australia also confirm that he concealed his German citizenship and war time service as official of the Criminal Police within the KdS agency in Lithuania. Displaced Persons had to fill out questionnaires, outlining their employment for the preceding 12 years. In one document he declared that he was “unemployed” from August 1940 till December 1943, then working as “seaman” from December 1943 till June 1944, followed again by unemployment and, finally from September

¹⁶ Email message from Remeika to Kwiet, 22.4.2022

¹⁷ Email message from Cueppers to Kwiet, 6.5.2022

¹⁸ Arunas Bubnys, Matthew Kott, and Uelle Kraft. “The Baltic States. Auxiliaries and *Waffen-SS* Soldiers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania”, in: Jochen Böhrer & Robert Gerwarth (eds.) *The Waffen-SS. A European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017, pp.120-164; Jason Pipes, “Lithuanian Volunteers in the German Wehrmacht in WW II”. <http://feldgrau.com/Lith.html>. See also Saulius Suziedelis, “The Military Mobilizations campaigns of 1943 and 1944 in German-Occupied Lithuania”, in: *Journal of Baltic Studies* 21 (1990), pp. 32-52.

¹⁹ Application Schroeders, 20.2.1950., Attachment Doc 6

1944 till January 1945, working as “cook”²⁰. Displaced Persons had to submit numerous applications and to insert their “personal history”. In one application for skilled workers, Sredersas wrote²¹: “... From 1935 to 1940 I worked as a policeman. From 1942 to 1944 I worked on a ship as a seaman. From 1946 to 1947 I attended the Navigation and Sea-Engineering School²². From 4th October to 4th December 1948 I worked as a seaman”. Displaced Persons had to prove that they had no criminal record. Sredersas found an old friend and compatriot who provided him with a brief character reference, emphasizing: “(I) know (him) since the time of secondary school. During the war he was a farmer and left the country only (in) 1944. He was neither (a) soldier nor (a) police (man)”²³.

Renouncing his German citizenship, concealing war time service and presenting himself as a Lithuanian DP enabled Sredersas to be classified by the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) as a political refugee, eligible for rehabilitation, maintenance and resettlement. Moreover, Germans and Ethnic Germans were not permitted to migrate to Australia. The ban was lifted in 1952, igniting a wave of Jewish protests against the arrival of Germans, Nazis and war criminals. In 1950, having passed all the examinations of the IRO, Sredersas embarked on his journey to Australia - his newly adopted homeland. In Wollongong he rebuilt his life, continuing to conceal his temporary German citizenship during the war and his services during the Holocaust.

In conclusion

Bronius Sredersas alias Bronislaus Schroeders was neither a member of the Nazi Party (NSDAP) nor of the SS, Heinrich Himmler’s “*Schutzstaffel*”, at best a late applicant to and perhaps a soldier of the *Waffen-SS*. Prior to the war, he served under his Lithuanian family name Sredersas as a Criminal Police officer within the ranks of the Lithuanian State Security Department. Dismissed by the Sovjets in 1940, he hastened to become a German citizen, assuming his initially ethnic German family name, germanizing it into Schroeders. After the German invasion in 1941, he resumed his professional career as “*Kriminalbeamter*” – passing a security clearance and installed by Karl Jäger, the Commander of the Security Police and Security Service. Schroeders took up a position in the Criminal Police Department V of the KdS apparatus which also controlled the Lithuanian Security Police and Criminal Police. An army of German and Lithuanian perpetrators implemented the program of the “Final Solution”- the destruction of the Jewish world in Lithuania and the terror imposed upon the population. However, no document has as yet come to light that Schroeders committed war crimes or acts of genocide. He was never investigated for war crimes or summoned to give evidence in war crimes investigation and trials.

²⁰ Application for Assistance II, 17.9.1947, Attachment Doc 7

²¹ Attachment Doc 8

²² This maritime “navigation” school, sponsored by UNRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation), was set up the Antwerp-Westerwelle DP camp. Located at the outskirts of Flensburg, it assembled refugees from the Baltic States.

²³ Application for Assistance IV, 19.9.1947. Attachment Doc 9

As official of the KdS apparatus, Srederdsas / Schroeders could be classified as and labelled as “Nazi collaborator” though the definition of a “collaborator” does not apply to him. A “Nazi collaborator” is a citizen of an occupied country who cooperates with the enemy, the occupying force. Schroeders performed his duties as a German, not regarding the German occupiers as enemies. He could be called, borrowing the term, introduced by Christopher Browning, as an “Ordinary Man”, working for a terroristic occupation regime and playing a pivotal role in the functioning of such a regime. He could also be characterized, to use Daniel Goldhagen’s term, as one of “Hitler’s Willing Executioners”, implementing Nazi policies and rules in occupied Lithuania. Last but not least, Srederdsas was a clog in the Nazi machinery of mass destruction. He might not have committed murder, but his war time position within the SS and Police apparatus made him complicit to the Holocaust and others hideous crimes perpetrated. At the end of the war, he left Lithuania seeking refuge in Germany. He spent almost five years as a DP in Germany, concealing his war time German citizenship and service. Recognized by the IRO as a Lithuanian political refugee, Bronius Srederdsas was permitted to migrate to Australia, never revealing the role he had played during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania and the destruction of Litvak Jews. However one judges Srederdsas / Schroeders, he was, in my view, an opportunist, a true chameleon who wove his career paths strategically through turbulent times.

If council members regard these findings as sufficient to hand down a verdict on the Srederdsas case, then my preliminary report has fulfilled its purpose. There are still many questions unanswered and problems unsolved. Attempts to shed more light on his war time record require further archival studies. They would be time-consuming (2-3 weeks) and costly. They have to be conducted in the Lithuanian State Archives in Vilnius and the Regional State Archives in Kaunas and perhaps also in Germany, in the Military Archives in Freiburg and in the Arolsen Archives. It might well be, that the findings are minimal, even ending in a dead end. Many Nazi record collections did not survive the war. They were destroyed, either shredded or burned, especially those, classified as “top secret”, in order to erase the evidence of the crimes and the names of the perpetrators. In July 1944 most of the records of the Lithuanian Security and Criminal Police in Vilnius were destroyed²⁴. Perhaps Srederdsas / Schroeders “*Personalakte*” (personal file), disclosing his war time service, has been erased forever.

Experts, Archives and Literature consulted

Experts consulted

Mark Aarons, former investigative ABC journalist, re-igniting the Nazi war crimes debate in Australian in the mid-1980.

Graham Blewitt, former Director of the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), Australia’s Nazi War Crimes Commission.

²⁴ Dieckmann, *Besatzungspolitik*, vol. 1, p. 536

Dr. Arunas Bubnys, Genocide and Resistance Centre of Lithuania. Chief Historian. As yet - No response.

Dr. Martin Cueppers. Director of the *Forschungsstelle* Ludwigsburg. He checked the “Zentralkartei” and informed me that the names Sredersas / Schroeders do not appear in the “Zentralkartei”.

Dr. Jürgen Matthäus, Director of Applied Research, US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, providing me with valuable information on the Police and SS in Lithuanian and suggesting to approach other experts and relevant archives.

Michael Samaras, former councilor of Wollongong City Council, sending me documents and records and other material from his collection.

Kestas Remeika, Deputy Director of the former KGB Archive. He informed me that the names Sredersas / Schroeders do not appear in KGB files and dossiers.

Emeritus Professor in History Saulius Suziedelis. University of Millersville Pennsylvania. He provided me with valuable information on the SS and Police system in occupied Lithuania, and suggested to search for further archival files, especially for the telephone listings of German and Lithuanian officials of the Security and Criminal Police.

Emanuelis Zingeris, Chairman of the “Komisja” - The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. As yet - No response.

Archives consulted

National Archives of Australia (NAA). Retrieving from online-archives records of Sredersas.. The Arolsen Archives preserve the holdings of the former ITS (International Tracing Service of the Red Cross). They are one of the world’s largest depositories on the victims and survivors of Nazi terror. They keep over 50 million files and index cards, running over 26,000 meters, providing personal data on 17.5 million persons. One quarter of the holdings relate to World War II and the Holocaust; three quarters to the immediate postwar period, that is, to Displaced Persons who found a temporary home in DP camps set up in Germany, Austria and Italy. Names and places, correspondence and questionnaires, statements and applications for emigration can be retrieved, not only of Holocaust survivors but also of perpetrators and bystanders of the Holocaust.

German Federal Archives Berlin-Lichterfelde (BA Berlin). Retrieving Schroeders records from the German “*Einwanderungszentrale*” (EWZ) documenting his German naturalization in June 1941. The only Sredersas/Schroeders kept at the BAB.

German Federal Archives. Militärarchiv Freiburg. Searching for records on Schroeders’ recruitment and service in the *Waffen-SS*. Response: no records are kept at the archive.

German Federal Archives – PA Berlin (formerly WAST). Searching for military records on Schroeders serving in the *Waffen-SS*, and possible entries in the “*Krankenbuchlager*” (‘medical record store). As yet - No response.

German Federal Archives – Ludwigsburg. Searching for Sredersas/Schroeders files in the record collections of the former “*Zentrale Stelle*”. Response: No mentioning of names and files in the “*Zentralkartei*”.

Lithuanian Central State Archives – Vilnius. Searching and retrieving Sredersas / Schroeders documents shedding light on his upbringing, pre-war life in Lithuania and service as “*Kriminalbeamter* in the Lithuanian Security Department till 1940 – and after 1941 in the Criminal Police Department V B 5 of the *KdS Litauen*.”

Lithuanian Regional State Archive – Kaunas. Searching for records on Sredersas / Schroeders war time service in Kaunas. Response: no military service records of World War II are kept in the archive.

Literature consulted

Mark Aarons, *War Criminals Welcome. Australia, A Sanctuary for Fugitive War Criminals Since 1945*. Melbourne: Black 2001.

Carly Adno, “SJM to investigate claims”, in: *Australian Jews News (AJN)*, 8.4.2022, p.4.

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Attorney-General’s Department, *Report of the Investigations of War Criminals in Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services

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Arunas Bubnys, Matthew Kott, and Uelle Kraft. “The Baltic States. Auxiliaries and Waffen-SS Soldiers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania”, in: Jochen Böhrer & Robert Gerwarth (eds.) *The Waffen-SS. A European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017.

Arunas Bubnys, “The Holocaust in the Lithuanian Province: The Kaunas District”, in: David Gaunt, Paul A. Levine & Laure Palosuo (eds.), *Collaboration and Resistance During the Holocaust. Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania*. Bern: Peter Lang 2004, pp. 283-312.

Joseph L.Davis, “Man on the Run (But from Whom?) The Gringilla Art Benefactor Bronius ‘Bob’ Sredersas (1910-1982)”. <https://uow.academia.edu/JosephDavis>

Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941-1944*. 2 vols., Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag 2011.

Royce Kurmelovs, “Jewish Museum to lead investigation into claim Wollongong identity collaborated with Nazis”, in: Australian edition of *The Guardian*, 1.4.2022.

Konrad Kwiet, “Rehearsing for Murder; The Beginning of the Final Solution in Lithuania in June 1941”, n: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12/1 (1998), pp. 3-26;

Michael MacQueen, “The Context of Mass Destruction: Agents and Prerequisites of the Holocaust in Lithuania”, in: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12/1 (1998), pp. 27-48.

Jayne Persian, *Beautiful Balts. From Displaced Persons to New Australians*. Sydney: New South Publishing 2017.

Jason Pipes, “Lithuanian Volunteers in the German Wehrmacht in WW II”. <http://feldgrau.com/Lith.html>.

Saulius Suziedelis, “The Military Mobilizations campaigns of 1943 and 1944 in German-Occupied Lithuania”, in: *Journal of Baltic Studies* 21 (1990), pp. 32-52.

My credentials

Born in 1941, I grew up in Germany and Holland, studied History and Political Science and commenced my academic career at the Technical University Berlin in 1967. Upon my arrival in Australia in 1976, I took up a position as historian at the German Department at the University of New South Wales. In 1992 I was appointed Professor in German and European Studies and Deputy Director of the Center for Comparative Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Macquarie University. I served as chief historian of the Australian War Crimes Commission (SIU). I also acted as historical consultant and expert witness for the Canadian, Scottish and American war crimes units. For a short period of time, I was a member of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania, a position from which I stepped down in 2011 in view of the hostile

campaigns launched against Jewish partisan fighters labelled as war criminals. My areas of research and teaching cover the fields of Modern Jewish History and German History, the History of the Antisemitism, the Holocaust and war crimes as well as of exile-studies. I have been a Visiting Professor in Jewish Studies at St Antony College, Oxford, at the Jewish University in Heidelberg, and the Universities in Frankfurt/Main and Berlin. I spent over one year (1985/86) as Senior Scholar-in-Residence at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. researching and publishing on the Holocaust in Lithuania. In 2000, following my retirement from Macquarie University, I joined the staff of the Department for Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies as Adjunct Professor in Jewish and Roth Lecturer in Holocaust at the University of Sydney. On 31 December 2014, I retired as Pratt Foundation Professor in Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies. I am still offering my services as a casual lecturer, and I continue to work as Resident Historian at the Sydney Jewish Museum, a position I took up 30 years ago.

Emeritus Prof Konrad Kwiet

19 May 2022

Attachment - Key Documents

Doc 1 Temporary Certificate for Sredersas, 13.9.1941; obtained from Samaras, retrieved from the Lithuanian Central States Archives (LCVA)

Doc 2 Photographs appearing on

2.1 Temporary Certificate (Doc 1)

2.2 IRO certificate or Purpose of Emigration to Australia (1949); retrieved from online archives of the National Archives of Australia (NAA: A 12027, 450) and Arolsen Archives (AA: online archive Sredersas)

2.3 Index card on racial screening during the naturalization process, 12.6.41; retrieved from German Federal Archives Berlin (BAB- R 9361-IV 37004)

2.4 IRO Medical Examination Form (1949), retrieved from online archives of the NAA and AA.

Doc 3 Copy of Naturalisation certificate, 12.6.1941, retrieved from BAB

Doc 4 Index card of naturalization process, 12.6.1941, retrieved from BAB.

Doc 5 German application for the Waffen-SS, 7.11.1943, obtained from Samaras , retrieved from LCVA F - 656, ap.1, b 1581, 1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9.

5.1 form sheet

5.2 cv

5.3 “Meldevordruck” (reporting form)

5.4 Certificate “Ostland”

Doc 6 Application Schroeders, 20.2.1950; retrieved from NAA

Doc 7 IRO Application for Assistance II, 17.4.1947, retrieved from NAA and AA

Doc 8 IRO Application for Assistance IV, 17.9.1947, retrieved from NAA and AA

Doc 9 Individual record for skilled workers, retrieved from NAA and AA

Doc 10 Table: SS and Police Structure

Doc 11 Table: Structure Reichskommissariat Ostland

1

[Stamp]
Panevėžys District Administration
12 December 1941
No. 4350

Temporary Certificate for an Individual

Surname: Šredersas
Name: Bronius Father's name: Maksimilijonas
Place of residence: Panevėžys district, Paglegala village
Occupation: Seaman Religion: Roman Catholic
Nationality: Lithuanian Marital Status: Unmarried
Birthdate and place: 1910 December 4, Simferopol, Ukraine – Russia
Based on: Copy of birth certificate

[signed]
P. Viskagiris
District Head

[signed]
P. Uogintas
Secretary

[Stamp]
Registered with Panevėžys City Administration
1 April 1942
Ramygala St. 25

[Stamp]
Registered with Ylakai District Administration
26 July 1944
No. 1223

(Translation by Dr. Ramutis Zakarevičius)

PANEVĖŽIO
VALSČIAUS SAVIVALDYBĖ

1942 m. 12 mėn. 12 d.
N. 4350



LAIKINAS ASMENS LIUDIJIMAS.

Pavardė Šredersas
Vardas Bronius Tėvo vardas Maksimilijonas
 gyvenamoji vieta Panevėžio valsč., Paglegalos km.
 Užsakovas juvėninkas Tikyba R-Kat.
 Tautybė lietuvių Šeimos padėtis nevedęs
 Gimimo data ir vieta 1910.12.04. Simferopolisje
Ukraina - Rusija
 Pagrindas simonio metrikų kopija.



2.2

Serial No 020119

Issued at RRPC Munster

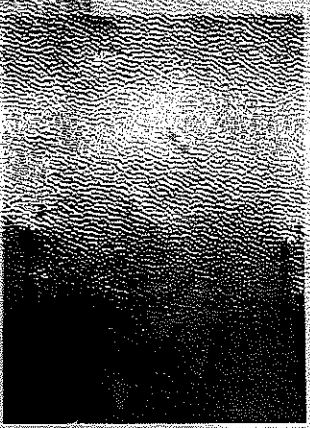
INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATION

CERTIFICATE OF INDENTITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

1. The holder of this Certificate is the concern of the International Refugee Organization.

This Certificate is issued by the International Refugee Organization with the approval of the Allied authorities of Occupation in Germany and Austria to Refugees and Displaced Persons recommended for emigration to AUSTRALIA. It is issued without prejudice to and in no way affects the holder's nationality.

unless it bears the signature of the I.R.O. certifying officer AND the holder's military exit permit has been granted.



RELIGION CHRISTIAN
FAMILY NAMES Bronius
MAIDEN NAME (not applicable) nil
DATE OF BIRTH 12.10 SEX M DP NO. 009000
PLACE AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH Simferopol/ Russ.Ukr.
NATIONALITY Lithuanian
OCCUPATION Seaman, Labourer
FATHER'S NAME SREDERSAS, Maksimilijonas
MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME SNIURYTE Ona

Bronius Bronius
(Signature of Applicant)

Description of Holder

Height 1.77 cm Weight 70 kg
Hair brown
Eyes brown
Nose normal
Shape of Face oval
Special Characteristics none

Children up to 16 years accompanying holder.
(Dependents over 16 years of age must have separate document).

NAME	SEX	PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH
PROCESSED GENTLE		

J.C. Bilzen
(J.C. BILZEN)
(Signature and Position of I.R.O. Certifying Officer)



IRO Resettlement Officer MUNSTER
Date 28.10.49

Place Munster
IRO Sub. Area Office 913
B.A.O.R. 12

Exit Permit Viss No. 21.63244
dated 7.3.50 issued 7.3.50

For insertion of visa



2.4

36

I.R.O. Resettlement Medical Examination Form

- i. Identification form to be completed by Assembly Centre doctor.
- ii. Identifikations-Formular, durch den Arzt der Assembly Centre auszufüllen.

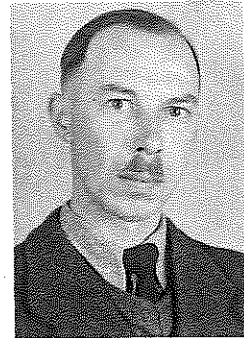
Name SREDERSAS BRONNUS 2. Camp SEEDPROSPECT 3. Location MEIERWIK
 Lager Ortschaft
 Date 4. 12. 66 5. Sex MALE 6. Colour of hair BROWN
 Geschlecht Haarfarbe
 Colour of Eyes BROWN 8. Height 177 9. Weight 70
 Farbe d. Augen Grösse Gewicht
 Marks or other Means of Identification _____
 Marken oder andere Kennzeichen _____

P. Number 009000 12. Claimed nationality Lithuanian
 P. Nummer Angebliche Staatsang

I certify that I have seen - Ich erkläre

Name Sredersas Bronnus and
 Unterschrift

his/her D.P.I. Card, his/her photograph and his/her appearance, and am
 seine/ihre D.P.I. Karte, seine/ihre Photographie und sein/ihr Aussehen
 zu haben. Ich bestätige, dass die Angaben richtig sind, und dass er/sie
 Gegenwart unterzeichnet hat.



Date 21. IX 49 Signature [Handwritten]
 Datum Unterschrift d. Arztes

To be completed by Assembly Centre doctor and signed by the Candidate.
 Durch den Assembly Centre Arzt auszufüllen, u. durch den Kandidaten zu unterzeichnen.

medical history None
 Krankheitsgeschichte der Familie

Children: a) Alive b) Dead c) Cause of death
 Kinder: Am Leben Gestorben Todesursache

Any of your Family suffered from a) Tuberculosis, b) Mental illness, c) Epilepsy? If "Yes" give details:
 Hat jemand Ihrer Familie an folgenden Krankheiten gelitten: a) Tuberkulose, b) Geisteskrankheit, c) Epilepsie (Fallsucht).
 Wenn "Ja", bitte nähere Angaben:

medical history: Have you suffered from any of the following illnesses? a) Tuberculosis, b) Mental illness, c) Epilepsy,
 Krankheitsgeschichte: Haben Sie an folgenden Krankheiten gelitten: a) Tuberkulose, b) Geisteskrankheit, c) Epilepsie
 (Fallsucht), d) Geschlechtskrankheiten, e) Nierenkrankheit, f) Nervenzusammenbruch. Wenn "Ja", bitte nähere Angaben:

Previous injuries and operations of candidate, indicating whether he has or requires prosthesis for amputation:
 Frühere Verletzungen u. Operationen des Kandidaten, mit Angabe ob eine Prothese nach Amputation verlangt wurde.

I certify that the above statements are true and complete in the best of my belief.
 Ich bestätige die Richtigkeit der Angaben und wahrheitsgetreu, nach meinem besten Wissen auf alle Fragen geantwortet zu haben.

Signature of Candidate [Handwritten]
 Unterschrift d. Kandidaten

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE
 FASTEN Envelope by puncturing this Label across flap.
 OPEN by cutting Label instead of tearing Envelope.

HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE
 FASTEN Envelope by puncturing this Label across flap.
 OPEN by cutting Label instead of tearing Envelope.

3

Einwandererzentralstelle

Staatsangehörigkeitsstelle

Abschrift der Einbürgerungsurkunde

von ~~Dionislaus Schroeders~~

in ~~Glors~~, geboren am ~~14.~~ Dezember ~~1910~~

in ~~Siniferopol / Krim~~, hat mit dem Zeitpunkt der Aushändigung
dieser Urkunde die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit (Reichsangehörigkeit) durch Ein-
bürgerung erworben. Die Einbürgerung erstreckt sich nicht auf Familienangehörige.

in ~~Glors~~, den ~~12.~~ Juni ~~1919~~

I. A.
L. A.

entf. i.

Tgb. ~~523093~~/Sonderzug.

Ausgehändigt am ~~12.~~ Juni 1941

J. u.

Y. A.

Bisherige Beschäftigung: 27				Angaben über Vermögen und bisherigen Betrieb: 30	
Name, Sitz und Pkt. des Betriebes	Pkt. der Beschäftigung	von	bis		
<i>Karl Schmid</i>	<i>Uster</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>1920</i>	a) mitgebrachtes Vermögen	RM
<i>Walter Schmid</i>	<i>Uster</i>	<i>1920</i>	<i>1921</i>	b) zurückgelassenes Vermögen	RM
				c) Pkt und Größe des bisherigen Betriebes:	
Einkaufswünsche: 28				d) Jahr und Pkt. der beschäftigten Arbeitskräfte:	
a) als Bauer:				<small>weil die Unterlagen aus der Ausgabe über die Ver- mögenswerte noch nicht vorhanden sind.</small>	
b) . . . ländl. Handwerker:					
c) . . . Vollhandwerker:					
d) . . . <i>Handwerker</i>					
Wünsche für Zusammenföhl:				Für selbständige Landwirte: 31	
<small>Zeichen-Echt: <input type="radio"/> auf gleichen Hof mit — / <input type="radio"/> verwandt <input checked="" type="radio"/> als Nachbar mit —</small>				Größe des bisherigen Hofes { Eigenbesitz: ha	
				Pachtung: ha	
				davon: Acker ha	
				Wiesen und Weiden ha	
Erfolgte Umsiedlung: 29				Wald und Umland ha	
1. Zur Umsiedlung vorgeschlagen am: <i>13. 6. 21.</i>				Bodenart: schwer — mittel — leicht	
an: <i>Verfasser d. g. Kanton Luzern</i>				Hauptächlich angebaute Früchte:	
als:				Welche Tiere wurden gehalten: . . . Pferde . . . Rindvieh . . . Schweine	
2. Einfaß erfolgte am:				Welches Inventar (Maschinen):	
durch:					
als:					
in:					

5.1

Deutliche Schrift!

Winn 3.

Familienname: Schroeders

Vornamen: (Rufname unterstreichen) Brown'slaus

Geburtsangaben Tag: 4. Geburtsort: S. m. l. v. p. o. l. e. Monat: 12. StraÙe: Jahr: 10. Kreis: (Russland) Landgerichtsbezirk:

Des Vaters Vor- und Familienname: Maues, Gustav Schroeders

Der Mutter Vor- u. Geburtsname: Pona, Mari Schroeders

Stand (Beruf) jetzigen: Kriminalbeamter, fruheren: Krim. Beamter

Arbeitsgeber: S. D.

Genauere Anschrift des Arbeitsgebers: Kamen, Witauskas pros. 67

Wann Lehrzeit, bezw. Schule (Klasse) beendet: Ginnwartinn, 1938. universitat Zimmet

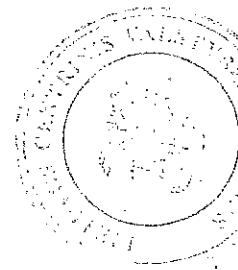
Jetztige Anschrift, Ort: Kamen, Kreis: StraÙe: Seliger 5-2

polizeilich gemeldet bezw. Heimatanschrift Ort: Kreis: StraÙe:

Staatsangehoerigkeit, jetzige: Deutsches Reich, fruhere: Letauisch

Wann und wo wurden Sie fuir die Waffen- u. w. v. t. r. a. u. c. h. t. ?

7.11.43. Kamen



Kopija tikra. Rasymu dokumenty skyriaus pareija. Elzabeta Simelovičienė. 2021-11-11

L e b e n s l a u f .

Name: *Schroeder* Vorname: *Bronislaus* Nr.:
 geb. am: *2.10.10* in: *Simferopol/Russland* Bekenntnis: *R. K. L.*
 Vor- und Zuname des Vaters: *Max Sutor Schroeder* Beruf: *Lehrer*
 der Mutter: *Anna Marie Schroeder* geb. am:
 Familienstand: *ledig* Vor- und Zuname der Ehefrau:
 geb.: Kinder: Söhne: Töchter:

Kurze Schilderung über den politischen Werdegang: (Eintritt in die Partei, Eintritt in eine Gliederung, Zugehörigkeit zu politischen Organisationen, Teilnahme an Aufmärschen, Parteitagen Auszeichnungen usw.)

Kurze Schilderung über den beruflichen Werdegang: (Schulbesuch mit evtl. Abschluss, Fachausbildung usw.)

keine Schulbildung
keine
keine

4.11
2.11
1.11

Kurze Schilderung über den militärischen Werdegang: (Grundausbildung, Einsätze, Verwundungen, Beförderungen, Auszeichnungen usw.)

Besondere Ereignisse: *keine*

Wenen
 Riga, den *7.11.* 1943

Schroeder
 (Unterschrift)
 Kopija tikra
 Kaspinis dokumentu skyriaus
 patarēja
 Elžbete Sirelcvičienė
 20.11.11-11

5.3

14

Ich bin Angehöriger des -der W, SA, HJ,
NSKK, NSFK 1)
im Sturm:.....

M e l d e v o r d r u c k

für die Einstellung als Freiwilliger in die Waffen-W 2)
(Deutlich schreiben, unleserliche und unvollständig ausgefüllte Angaben werden nicht bearbeitet).

Geburtsjahrgang: 4.12.10 Kamen den. 7.11.43
(Ort)

Ich bitte um Einstellung in die Waffen-W, und zwar in die
Artillerie
(Infanterie, Artillerie usw.)

Ich heiße: Schroeders Brauns
(Familiengeme) Vornamen (Kufname unterstreichen)

Ich bin geboren in: Simferopol / Russland am: 4.12.10
Geburtsort und Kreis Tag, Monat, Jahr
Staatsangehörigkeit (auch frühere): Russland vorbestraft: ja/nein

Doppelstaater: ja/nein 1) welcher andere Staat:

Ich habe in der Wehrmacht folgenden fremden Staates
vom: bis: gedient.

Ich habe in der deutschen Wehrmacht gedient vom: bis:
Truppengattung: Erreichter Dienstgrad:

Ich wurde von der Wehrmacht gemustert: ja /nein 1)

Von einem Wehrmachtstruppenteil als Freiwilliger angenommen? ja/nein 1)

Ich habe mich um Einstellung als Freiwilliger bei der Wehrmacht beworben:
ja/nein 1).

Ich bin Wehrpaßinhaber: ja/nein 1)

Mein Wehrpaß hat die Nummer: 1011519/30 und ist ausgestellt vom WRK: Ordnung

Ich wohne: Kamen Lehijasta 5 Lankaitis
Wohnort: Straße, Platz, Nr. Untermieter bei:

Ich bin arischer 1) Abstammung, Religion: R. Kath. ledig, verh., ges.

Mein Arbeitsbuch hat die Nummer: Arbeitsbuch Seite 1)

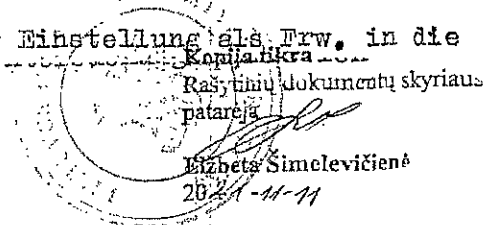
Ich gehöre lt. Arbeitsbuchseite 5 zur Berufsgruppe Berufsart:

Ich arbeite z.Zt. als Beamter bei: S.D. Kriminalabt. P.B.5
(Behörde oder Arbeitgeber)

in: Kamen Vylandska jor 67
Ort Straße Platz Nr.

Schroeders
(Unterschrift des Freiwilligen)

- 1) Nichtzutreffendes streichen
- 2) Dieser Vordruck ist dem Meldevordruck für Einstellung als Frw. in die Wehrmacht gleichzuachten.



5.4

Ostland Beworben für Einstellung in: ~~W~~-Div.—L. ~~W~~-A.H.—~~W~~-T.St.—~~W~~-Pol.-Div.—Allgemeine-~~W~~
 als Führer-Bew. Verw.-Führer-Bew. San.-Führer-Bew. **F.A.L.-Nr. 1623/17/45**

A. Name: Schroeders Wohnung: Kalen
 Vorname: Bronislaw
 geb. am: 4. 12. 10. in: Simaferopol Kreis.: _____ Reg.-Bezirk: _____
 Landkreis: _____ Reg.-Bezirk: _____ Straße: Delija st. Nr. 5-2.
 Beruf: Krim. Beamter Familienstand: ledig. z. Zt.: _____
 Lehrzeit bzw. Schulzeit beendet am: _____ Kreis: _____ Reg.-Bezirk: _____
 Schulbildung: Volksschule, _____ Kl. Haupt-, Ober-, Handelsschule, LBA-
 Welche NS.-Gliederung: _____ [Abitur] Straße: _____ Nr. _____
 Wehrdienst: _____

B. Ist zur Untersuchung zu bestellen: _____ Kalen Nicht erschienen.
 Aufforderung erging für (Tag): 7. NOV. 1942 Untersuchung in _____ Grund: _____
 Untersuchung fand statt am: _____ in: _____

C. Ergebnis der Untersuchung: tauglich — untauglich Kv — GvF. — GvH. — Av. — Wu. Größe: 178.
 untauglich a) ~~W~~-Ungeeignetheit b) Körperl. Fehler c) Untergröße und sonst.
 wegen A 39.
 Unterschrift des ~~W~~-Eignungsprüfers _____ des Arztes _____ des Leiters der Kommission _____
 zurückgestellt wegen: _____ bis: _____

D. Nicht angenommen wegen: _____
 Angenommen zur Einstellung am: _____ für ~~W~~-Div.—L. ~~W~~-A.H.—~~W~~-T.St.
~~W~~-Polizei-Div.—Allgemeine-~~W~~
 UB. mit Papieren abgegeben am: _____ an: _____

Domplatz-Druckerei Riga, Domplatz 1. 9135—26454

Kopija tikra
 Rasyunų dokumentų skyriaus
 patarėja
 Elzbeta Simelevičienė
 2021. 11. 11

Lietuvos Respublikos Valstybinis Archyvas
 R-656 Ap. 1. B. 1581. L. 1.

7

ELIGIBLE FOR I. R. &
N. G. A. ECKERT
18 SEP 1947

*to be considered
oct 27.*

CMI **RETURNED** APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
(AMEND. REP. 6-13.
M. 1947.) **PCIRO**

1. **SREDERSAS** 4. 17 sept 1947 5. 197955
 Family name Date Identity No.

2. 7890/428 6. Lithuanian.
 Other spelling or aliases Nationality

3. R.C. Prof. Jew. Other 7. S. M. Sep. D. Wid. Un.C.
 Religion Marital status

8. Names	Relationship to head	Date of birth	Nationality	Town, province and country of birth
(1) Bronius Man	Head	4.12.10	Lithuanian	SIMFEROPOL, RUSSIA
(2) _____ Woman				
(3) _____ Children				
(4) _____				
(5) _____				
(6) _____				
(7) _____				

9. Other members of family

a Full names _____

b _____

c _____

d _____

e _____

f _____

g _____

10. Places of residence for last 12 years

For whom	dates	Town or village, province and country
1.	1937	Kaunas, Lithuania.
	oct. 1939	
	oct. 1939	Vilnius, Lithuania.
	aug. 1940	
	aug. 1940	Ukmerge, Lithuania.
	apr. 1941	
	apr. 1941	Pagiegala, Lithuania.
	dec. 1943	
	dec. 1943	Panevezys, Lithuania.
	June 1944	
	June 1944	Kaukuoliskiai, Lithuania.
	Sept 1944	
	Sept 1944	Heilsberg, Germany.
	Jan 1945	
	Jan 1945	In several camps, Germany.
	May 1945	

18. Organisations

For whom	Date	Name	Purpose

19. Present Address

Date	Street address or name of camp	Town or City	Country
17 sept 1947	Latvian "Lithuanian" A.P. camp "Hilbertsdorf"	Flensburg	Germany
	D.P. Camp "Hilbertsdorf"	Flensburg	Germany
	Sepproject Lithuanian		

20. Remarks. Use for any additional information

Identity card N° 009000.


1. Flight for Russian.
2. Political reasons.

008965 = KRUCAS JUOZAS STATING THAT THAT HE KNOW A/M SINCE THE TIME OF SECONDARY SCHOOL. DURING THE WAR A/M WAS A FARMER AND LEFT COUNTRY ONLY 1944. - HE WAS NEITHER SOLDIER NOR POLICE DURING THE WAR.

Within the mandate of I.R.O.
Eligible for care and maintenance

25 APR 1949 Eligibility Officer
Date 901 IRO Area Office
NG. A. BEKERT

21. 
Signature

22. 
Signature of Interviewer 17 sept 1947
Date

9

INDIVIDUAL RECORD FOR SKILLED WORKERS.

~~REGISTRATION~~/Mr. Bronius S E D E R S A S
who applies for a vacancy in Norway.....
as Seaman.....

Address: Flensburg, DP Camp "Antwerp, Westerallee

Sex, civil status, date of birth: male, single, 4th December, 1910

Religion and Nationality: R. Cathol. Lithuanian

Education: one year Navigation and Sea Engineering School

Languages: Lithuanian, German, Russian, Polish, Ukrainian and a little English

Category (Occupational Title): Seaman

IRO Trade Testing Certificate: Serial No:
Date: * - *

Other documents of evidence of qualifications: certificate of the Navigation and Sea-Engineering School

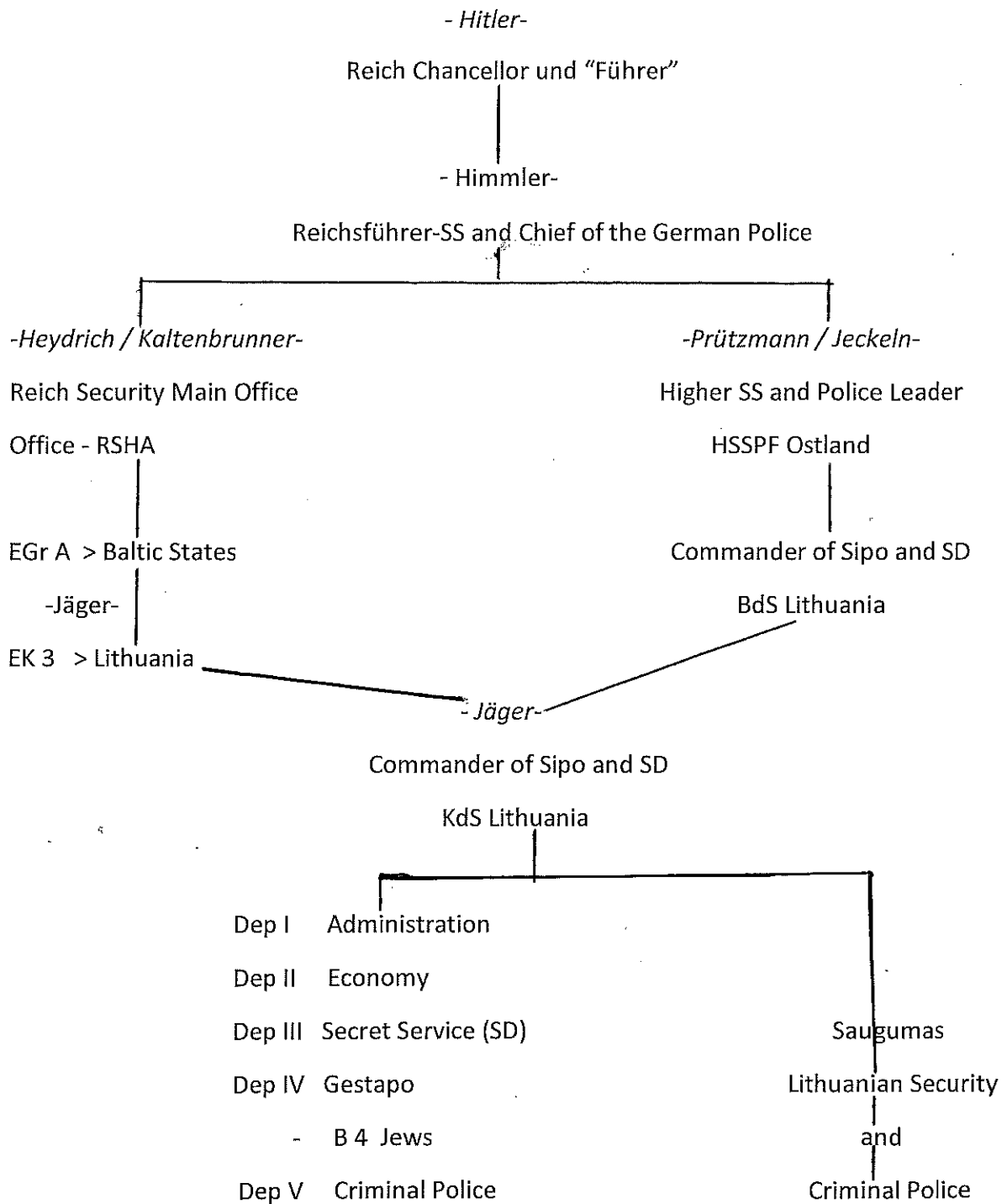
Accompanying family members: (Relationship, age, trade) none

Personal history: I was born on 4th December, 1910 in Russia, Ukraine. Till 1928 I attended the school in Lithuania. Afterwards I worked as a building worker. From 1932 to 1935 I worked on a ship as a seaman. From 1935 to 1940 I worked as a policeman. From 1942 to 1944 I worked on a ship as a seaman. From 1946 to 1947 I attended the Navigation and Sea-Engineering School. From 4th October 1948 to 4th December 1948 I worked as a seaman.

Professional Record:

Remarks: I would not like to work on a ship which has something to do with the Russians. I have got already seaman's book and exit permit on hand.

SS and Police Structure



Structure Reichskommissariat Ostland Lithuania

