



STATEMENTS & RELEASES

Statement from the Press Secretary

IMMIGRATION

Issued on: August 21, 2018



Early this morning, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) implemented a 2004 order of deportation to the Federal Republic of Germany of Jakiw Palij, a former Nazi SS labor camp guard in German-occupied Poland and a postwar resident of Queens, New York.

President Trump commends his Administration's comprehensive actions, especially ICE's actions, in removing this war criminal from United States soil. Despite a court ordering his deportation in 2004, past administrations were unsuccessful in removing Palij. To protect the promise of freedom for Holocaust survivors and their families, President Trump prioritized the removal of Palij. Through extensive negotiations, President Trump and his team secured Palij's deportation to Germany and advanced the United States' collaborative efforts with a key European ally.

Palij had lied about being a Nazi and remained in the United States for decades. Palij's removal sends a strong message: The United States will not tolerate those who facilitated Nazi crimes and other human rights violations, and they will not find a safe haven on American soil.

Palij, who was born in what was then Poland and is now Ukraine, immigrated to the United States in 1949 and became a United States citizen in 1957. During the United States immigration and naturalization process, he concealed his Nazi service and his participation in human rights abuses. Palij lied to United States immigration officials, saying that he had spent World War II working on a farm and in a factory.

In 2001, Palij admitted to officials at the Department of Justice that he trained in 1943 at the Nazi SS Training Camp in Trawniki, in German-occupied Poland. Court documents demonstrated that men who trained at the SS Training Camp in Trawniki participated in executing “Operation Reinhard,” a code name for the Third Reich’s plan to murder Jews in Poland. Palij also served as an armed guard at the adjacent Trawniki Labor Camp. On November 3, 1943, approximately 6,000 Jewish children, women, and men who were incarcerated at the adjacent Trawniki Labor Camp were shot to death in one of the single largest massacres of the Holocaust. By serving as an armed guard at the Trawniki Labor Camp and preventing the escape of Jewish prisoners during his Nazi service, Palij played an indispensable role in ensuring that the Trawniki Jewish victims met their horrific fate at the hands of the Nazis.

In August 2003, a federal judge revoked Palij’s United States citizenship based on his wartime activities, human rights abuses, and postwar immigration fraud. He was ordered deported in 2004, and his administrative appeal was denied in 2005.

The United States government has prioritized the identification, prosecution and deportation of Nazi war criminals since the 1970s. If you have information about foreign nationals or foreign nationals who naturalized to United States citizenship and are suspected of engaging in human rights abuses or war crimes, please call the ICE Homeland Security Investigations tip line at 866-DHS-2-ICE, or complete its [online tip form](https://www.ice.gov/human-rights-violators-war-crimes-unit). <https://www.ice.gov/human-rights-violators-war-crimes-unit>