II.8 From the Reports on Germany, SOPADE
(Social Democrats in Exile) Dec. 1938

The broad mass of the people has not condoned the destruction, but we should
nevertheless not overlook the fact that there are people among the working
class who do not defend the Jews. There are certain circles where you are not
very popular if you speak disparagingly about the recent incidents. The anger
was not, therefore, as unanimous as all that. Berlin: the population’s attitude was
not fully unanimous. When the Jewish synagogue was burning [ ... ] a large
number of women could be heard saying, ‘That’s the right way to do it – it’s a
pity there aren’t any more Jews inside, that would be the best way to smoke out
the whole lousy lot of them.’ No one dared to take a stand against these
sentiments, [ ... ] If there has been any speaking out in the Reich against the
Jewish pogroms, the excesses of arson and looting, it has been in Hamburg and
the neighbouring Elbe district. People from Hamburg are not generally anti-
Semitic, and the Hamburg Jews have been assimilated far more than the Jews in
other parts of the Reich. They have intermarried with Christians up to the highest
levels of officialdom and the wholesale and shipping trades.

(Detler J. K. Peukert, Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in

II.9 From a report by the Heilbrunn Gendarmerie
station (26 Nov. 1938)

Some have welcomed the actions taken against the Jews; others watched them
calmly; others again are sorry for the Jews, though they do not necessarily
express this openly.

(Detler J. K. Peukert, Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in

II.10 From the monthly report of the
Regierungspräsident of Lower Bavaria and
the Upper Palatinate (8 Dec. 1938)

The Jewish assassination of the German Embassy counsellor in Paris gave rise to
sheer anger in all sections of the population. There was a general expectation
that the national government would intervene. The legal measures directed
against the Jews were therefore fully understood. What was correspondingly
much less well understood, by the bulk of the population, was the reason for the
manner in which the spontaneous actions against the Jews were carried out;
indeed, these were condemned, including widely within the Party. The damage
to shop-windows, merchandise and furniture was seen as an unnecessary
II.11 Heinrich Himmler's speech to Gauleiter in Posen, Poland (6 Nov. 1943)

In this context and within this intimate circle I can refer to an issue which you, my fellow Party comrades, have all accepted as self-evident, but which has become for me the most difficult issue of my life, the Jewish issue. You all take it for granted as a self-evident and gratifying fact that there are no more Jews in your Gau. All Germans – with a few exceptions – are clear in their minds that we would not have held out against aerial bombardments and the pressures imposed by a fourth year of war, and maybe the fifth and sixth that lie in store, if we still had this plague destroying our people. The few words of the sentence 'the Jews must be exterminated' are easy to say. Yet for those who must carry out what it demands it is the hardest and most difficult thing there is. You see, of course they are Jews, it is obvious, they are only Jews, but think yourselves how many – even Party members – have made their famous request to me or some other authority stating that of course all Jews are swines, only that so-and-so is a decent Jew and should not be harmed. [...] In Germany we have so many millions of people each of whom knows decent Jews that this figure is already bigger than the actual number of Jews. [...] 

I ask you really only to listen to what I have to say in this circle, and never to talk about it. The question has arisen: What about women and children? I resolved to find an utterly clear solution for this as well. For I did not consider myself justified to eradicate the men – that means kill or have killed – and allow the avengers of their deaths to grow up in the form of the children and grandchildren. Thus the difficult decision had to be taken to make this people disappear from the face of the earth. For the organization which had to carry out this task it was the most difficult one we had ever had. It has been carried out – I believe I can say this – without inflicting damage on the minds and souls of our men and their leaders. The danger that it might was a real one. The path between the two possibilities of either being too cruel and heartless and losing respect for human life, or too soft and so suffering distress to the point of a nervous breakdown – the strait between this Scilla and Charybdis is narrow indeed. [...] 

With these words I would like to close the issue of the Jews. You know the score and will keep what you know to yourselves. At a future point we will perhaps be able to consider whether to tell the German people more about this