

Netherlands Documentation Project Interview Summary

RG-50.570*0001

Mr Jacob (Jaap) van Proosdij, born April 15, 1921, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Date of Interview: May 2, 2004
Location: Voorburg, the Netherlands

Short summary

Mr Van Proosdij became a lawyer at 21 in 1943. He was asked to assist Kalmeijer. People who were registered as Jews, could ask Kalmeijer to register them as non-Jews. Reasons for this could for example be that not both their parents were Jewish or that their family was baptized. Van Proosdij decided to take the job. He was able to gain the trust of Kalmeijer and this way he was able to get Jews registered as non-Jews. He falsified papers to do this. His aim was to rescue as many people as possible from deportation.

Long summary

Tape 1

Background, family history.

Got a job at lawfirm Van Krimpen. The Portuguese Synagogue was a client of this firm. Van Proosdij was working for Mr. Kotting. This synagogue asked the lawfirm to help with cases of members of the community to get them registered as non-Jews. Different lists were created. List of baptized Jews, of Ashkenazi and Sefardim, of the Barneveldt Jews; list of people who said that they had less than four Jewish grandparents. Van Proosdij was asked to assist Kalmeijer to investigate these lists. Van Proosdij explains his method of working, describing several cases.

Tape 2

Van Proosdij explains about the "afstammingszaken" (cases of genealogy). Proof would be falsified to show that the Jewish father was not the real father. Van Proosdij would create proof to show that the mother had an affair with a non-Jewish man. Birth certificates were falsified to show that a child was not born by its parents but was 'adopted'. Money for these operations came from the underground movement. The commander of Westerbork was complaining that people who 'looked Jewish' were declared to be not Jewish.

At the end of the war there were still about 100 (estimation) people in Westerbork who were on the Kalmeijer list. These people could not be put on transport. Calmeyer said he would put them all on transport unless Van Proosdij would make a selection sending about half of the people on transport and leaving half in Westerbork.

Tape 3

More on the last people in Westerbork.

More on the German organisational structure, the Kalmeijer office

Correct spelling of some names mentioned in the video testimony:

Professor Coops = Oom Jan (Uncle Jan) the last name is his war-name

Kotting

Miessen

Wimmer

Slotke

Appelman