

KASTNER, Rudolf

1957

ISRAELI 'QUISLING' DEAD OF WOUNDS

Dr. Kastner, Branded a Nazi
Collaborator, Succumbs to
an Assassin's Bullets

TEL AVIV, Israel, March 15 (AP)—Dr. Rudolf Kastner, controversial Hungarian Jewish leader in World War II, died today of an assassin's bullets.

Dr. Kastner was found bleeding profusely from three chest wounds in a northern Tel Aviv street early March 4.

He was taken to a hospital, but his condition grew progressively worse. Mrs. Kastner was at her husband's bedside when he died.

A number of persons were rounded up following the shooting. The police said two young men among those detained would be charged with murder.

The slain man had been editor of the Hungarian-language newspaper Uj Kelet in Tel Aviv and was believed returning home when attacked. An abandoned jeep was found near the spot where he was cut down.

Dr. Kastner headed a Budapest rescue committee of Hungarian Jews during the Nazi occupation of Hungary in 1944. After the war, he was accused of having been a stooge for the Nazis.

In June, 1955, a Jerusalem district court ruled that Dr. Kastner had acted as a quisling. It said he had known that by his action he was sacrificing a large number of Jews to save a small group of his friends and relatives.

The court's decision came after a year-long libel trial of Malkiel Greenwald, who had charged that Dr. Kastner had collaborat-

ed with the Nazis and prepared the ground for the mass murder of Hungarian Jews.

Mr. Greenwald was exonerated of libel, except on his charge that Dr. Kastner had "shared loot" with the Nazis. The court found that this charge was not substantiated, and it fined Mr. Greenwald one Israeli pound (56 cents).

The Israeli state attorney general appealed the judgment, and the case is still pending before Israel's Supreme Court.

Dr. Kastner had maintained his innocence and had vowed that he would do everything possible to clear his name.

Origin of Greenwald's Case

The charges against Dr. Kastner go back to 1954, when Mr. Greenwald, brooding about the deaths of fifty-two members of his family in the Nazi gas chambers at Oswiecim (Auschwitz), began a search of the records for their betrayer. He thought the records accused Dr. Kastner, who, like himself, was a refugee in Israel.

Dr. Kastner had become a rising leader in Israel's dominant Mapai party and an assistant to a Cabinet minister. Mr. Greenwald had been a supporter of the extreme nationalist Irgun Zvai Leumi.

Mr. Greenwald published a pamphlet charging that Dr. Kastner had been a collaborator with the Nazis in the massacre of 500,000 Hungarian Jews.

He asserted that the rescue committee Dr. Kastner headed had negotiated an agreement under which 600 Jews, including nineteen members of his own family, were permitted to escape. In return for that, he charged, Dr. Kastner worked against a revolt against the Nazis.

Mapai leaders lodged a charge of criminal libel against Mr. Greenwald. Dr. Kastner admitted dealings with the Nazis, saying he was simply doing all he could to save his people.

Kastner Is Cleared Of Pro-Nazi Taint

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JERUSALEM, Israeli Sector, Jan. 16 (AP).—Israel's Supreme Court yesterday exonerated the late Dr. Israel-Rudolf Kastner, World War II leader of Hungarian Jews, who had been accused of criminal collaboration with the Nazis and of being responsible for deportations. The verdict was on an appeal brought by the Israeli State Attorney General.

Dr. Kastner died last March after he was shot in a Tel Aviv street by three youths who were later jailed for life.

In 1955 the Jerusalem District Court almost completely exonerated Nalkiel Greenwald, who had been charged with libel after publicly accusing Dr. Kastner of collaborating with the Nazis and being partly responsible for the deaths of 500,000 Hungarian Jews.

At the time the court said Dr. Kastner had been guilty of "the fullest co-operation" with the Nazis, that he had served them as a Quisling, and that he had sacrificed a large part of Hungarian Jewry in order to save about 1,000 privileged persons, including personal friends and relatives.

