

# Repression and deportation in France and Europe, 1939-1945

Jean Jankowski, an example of deportation and  
repression during the Second World War, 1939-1945

# Introduction:

Last year, I and a few comrades took part in a historic project with our school. The man I'm going to talk to you today is the great-grandfather of one of the participants. We are very happy to talk about this man because it is a pride to have a family member who participated in the war and it is very interesting to do this work in order to trace its course and its history. Finally, we will see that this case testifies to a form of deportation because during his war experience, he will pass by different countries of Europe.

## II) A French soldier in the Second World War

### A) A Polish immigrant mobilized in the French army

- ◆ Jean Jankowski was born in Poland on November 5, 1924. A doubt persists on this date because there are different dates on different documents: on the French passport (appendix 8) and a photograph (appendix 1).
- ◆ Jean was part of a family made up of brothers and sisters. In 1924, when he was 12 years old, his parents decided to leave Poland for France because of his lack of work
- ◆ Jean wants to stay in France, he gets French nationality and that is why it is among the French mobilized on September 3, 1939 following the declaration of war of France against Germany.
- ◆ Since January 30, 1933, Hitler became Chancellor and Head of Germany. He transformed the Weimar Republic into a totalitarian, racist and anti-Semitic regime: The Third Reich
- ◆ the Allied forces declare war on Germany and mobilize all men of fighting age on 3 September 1939. Jean is mobilized in the 91st Infantry Regiment in the North of the French Ardennes.



## B) The « war funny » experience

- ◇ At this time we speak of « funny war » because there is not conflict. The french army was waiting for the German army in the east
- ◇ In may 1940, the Germans invade Belgium and Surprise the allies with their lightning war called « the blitzkrieg »
- ◇ Jean and his comrades participate in the Battle of Stone (in the Ardennes, in the north of France, in the department of my high school)
- ◇ On june 17, 1940, Marchal Petain spoke on the radio to, announce to the french that we must stop fighting. Jean is taken prisoner the next day (by the German army), the same day as the famous call of General de Gaulle

### III) A French soldier prisoner of the German army

#### A) Living the deportation to the North of the Reich

- ◆ Once captured by the German army, it was first on foot that a major part of the 91st R.I, including Jean, was moved first to Bouillon in Belgium, then to Arlon or Trier depending on the case. then, these prisoners of war are sent by train to the north of Germany to join the forced labor camp called Stalag II-A.
- ◆ During the deportation of the French prisoners, Jean's son told us that the prisoners were stealing everything they could because they were starving.

## B) Living in a prison camp

- ◆ After this long journey, they are settled in a prison camp in Germany located in Fünfeichen, near Neubrandenburg, in northern Germany.
- ◆ The Stalag II-A is an ordinary prison camp, it is a convent reserved for troops but also for non-commissioned officers. This way of life generates different diseases or epidemics that can be serious or sometimes fatal.
- ◆ Despite this, men are not abused.

- ◆ Thus the camps of prisoners of war are less severe than the concentration camps, in a prison camps there are rules but it's less strict and a little more liveable.
- ◆ Hitler uses the prisoners of the war to replace the German war workers who have gone to fight, so they work for the benefit of Germany. Jean Jankowski worked in an airplane factory.
- ◆ Prisoners have difficulties communicating with their family, informing of their position, their health...



## C) Escape the repression and hide in occupied zone

- ◆ On 8 October he will receive an authorization from the French police headquarters on his passport to travel to Germany (see annex and passport statement). Injured in the leg, he returned to France for two weeks on November 4, 1943 with a pass. But he will never come back to Germany.
- ◆ Back in France, he will hide during the checks carried out by the Germans in the occupied Ardennes.
- ◆ Jean was to join the "maquis of Revin". It was a group of resistance fighters, but his wife forbade him to join this group and encouraged him to continue hiding.
- ◆ It was his brother, also called Jean, who joined the maquis. He will be killed on June 13, 1944 during an ambush in the forests of the Manises.
- ◆ Jean Jankowski, the eldest, will stay in Revin in the Ardennes until the end of the war. He died a natural death in 1977.



## Conclusion:

- ◆ According to us, to trace the story of Jean enters the context of this contest. Indeed, he did not choose to go to Germany, he was arrested as a prisoner of war. In addition, he suffered a kind of repression as he was arrested by soldiers who had been fighting for his country.

◊ Je tiens à préciser que ce power point sera lu et non affiché, c'est celui avec les photos qui sera présenté