

## Nazi in Australia

Australia is the only major Western country that admitted large numbers of Nazis and ex-Nazis between 1945 and 1950 and has failed to successfully prosecute even a single one. As the *Jerusalem Post* noted last year, Australia "has failed to convict, denaturalize, deport, expel or extradite a single Nazi war criminal", making it "a haven for some of the worst of Hitler's henchmen". Technically that may have changed with the decision by the Courts to extradite Konrads Kalejs to Latvia following a request for his extradition from that country. However, with Kalejs' appeal estimated to take up to four years, and considering his age and alleged state of health, it is unlikely that he will ever leave Australia.

In 1941, following the German invasion of Latvia as part of [Operation Barbarossa](#), Kalējs deserted the [Red Army](#) (Latvia by that stage having been [occupied by the Soviet Union](#)) and joined the Nazis, becoming a member of the Nazi-controlled Latvian security police.<sup>[1]</sup> Kalējs would later assert that he worked as a farmhand during this period.<sup>[2]</sup> It was common practice in occupied nations for indigenous security forces to act in support of German military and security forces in the collection, interrogation, and transport of "undesirables"; such as [Jews](#), [Roma](#), [Communists](#) and [partisans](#)

Latvian authorities finally charged Kalējs with war crimes offences in September 2000, relating to his participation at the Salaspils labour camp, and in May 2001 a [Melbourne](#) court ordered Kalējs' [extradition](#) to Latvia.<sup>[1]</sup> Kalējs appealed this decision, and the ensuing proceedings were delayed by illness, with Kalējs reportedly suffering from [dementia](#) and [prostate cancer](#) at the time. His lawyers claimed he was blind and had lost his memory.<sup>[5]</sup>

Kalējs died in [Melbourne](#) in November 2001, aged 88. His lawyers criticised the [government of Australia](#) for being "inhumane and callous in its bid to extradite a sick old man" and described the process as a "witch hunt".<sup>[6]</sup> Kalējs eventually admitted to working for the Nazi-run Latvian police in his last Australian interview.