

– Well, good evening everyone. And tonight I have a very controversial subject. I'm going to be looking at Count Folke Bernadotte and his role in when he touches and becomes very involved in Jewish history, but I'm going to start in a kind of softer way. So can we see the first slide, please? Yes, and can we go on to, can we go, ah now. The founder of the Bernadotte Dynasty was Jean Baptiste Bernadotte. Now, Williams been giving you quite a few lectures on the development of Sweden, Finland, et cetera, et cetera. Now the point was that at the conclusion of the Finnish War, Sweden had lost parts of its territory. And remember, the King and his son were deposed. And in my 1810, Parliament elected a Danish prince, but he died a year later. Now, this was the time of the Napoleonic Triumph. So the Swedes decided to elect somebody, to elect a king, someone that in fact, the Napoleon would want, bearing in mind that he'd put most of his family on the thrones of Europe. And on August 1810, they elected Jean Baptiste Jules Bernadotte, who was a marshal of France. He was one of Napoleon's men. He was a marshal. And he had risen to the rank of general through the French Revolution. And those of you who loved the byways of history, in 1798, he married a woman called Desiree Clary, who had once been the fiance of Napoleon Bonaparte. And in fact, her sister had married Napoleon's brother Joseph. So Bernadotte, the Marshal of France, married to Desiree Clary. And there's a rather sweet film, completely non-factual, starring Marlon Brando as Napoleon. And Audrey Hepburn as Desiree, if you want to wallow. But the reality was the marriage and he becomes the Crown Prince of Sweden. He takes the name and acted of regents through the last years of Charles the XIV. But in 1813, he breaks with Napoleon. And he led Sweden into an anti-foreign French alliance. And as a result of that, at the Treaty of Kiel, Norway is awarded to Sweden. Norway resisted, there was a brief war, but what Bernadotte did, he was a very clever diplomat. He persuaded Norway to enter into a personal union. They were independent, but they had the same king, and he reigned over both kingdoms until his death. So I just thought I'd give you a little bit of history. Shall we see Desiree Clary, the fiance of Napoleon. He ditched her for of course, Josephine. And when we come onto France, I'm sure we'll have fun with all of that. And then she becomes Queen of Sweden. She didn't like it very much. It was much too cold. She preferred Paris, but she provided the heir to the Swedish throne. And they are the dynasty that are in power now. So can we go on? I want to jump on now, if you don't mind. Yes, there of course is the great Napoleon, who we'll be talking about a lot later on in the course.

And now I want us to look at Count Folke Bernadotte. Yes, there he is. His dates are 1895 to 1948. He's absolutely crucial in understanding certain aspects of Jewish history, an incredibly controversial figure. And I'm going to try very hard to do what I always do to hold the objective line. But as we've spoken about this many times. Is there

such a thing as objective history, particularly when you're talking about this sort of thing? Now, and those of you who don't know, he's going to be involved in rescuing Scandinavians and some Jews in the latter part of the war, and then he becomes the first ever mediator for the United Nations. The first time they send a mediator is to Israel during the first Arab-Israeli war. And he is killed by the Irgun. I've lost, oh, thank you. So this man, his father was the second son of King Oscar II, so he is the great grandson of Bernadotte and Desiree Clary. Now, his mother had been a lady in waiting to Victoria Bardon. So as a result, she was actually the queen to Gustav V, and he'd married without the consent of the King. This is an incredibly formalistic royal family. And as a result, he had to renounce his Swedish titles, but all these families are interrelated. And in 1892, his uncle Adolph, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, made his father Prince Bernadotte and Count of Wisborg, so this is the title that he inherited. So the very structured conservative court, because he had married against the wishes of the King, his father loses some of his titles. Now, so he comes from the Swedish aristocracy. He goes to school in Stockholm and he trains to become a cavalry officer. By 1918, he is a lieutenant. And then by 1921, he's a major. So he has a military career. He has a military background.

Now remember what we've already discussed, Sweden had followed a policy of new neutrality since the Napoleonic Wars and asserted its right. Now in the first World War, there were strong pro German sentiment, particularly amongst the nobility and the conservative political circles. I think it's very important to remind you that Germany before unification had once had 360 city states. It was then cleaned up after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 to 36. But each of those states had a royal house. Some of them were Catholic and some of them were Protestant. And basically, when kings and queens were looking for spouses, they turned to Germany. So there's a great, and don't forget how near Sweden is geographically to Germany, so there's a great deal of relationships between the Swedish aristocracy and the German aristocracy. Also, of course, Britain. If you think about the First World War, don't forget that Prince Albert was, the consort of Queen Victoria was German, and there's far more German blood in the English royal family than any other. So this was a bit of a problem. And what Sweden did, and this is the same as in the Second World War, it traded with both sides. Her trade, particularly in iron ore, as far as the Germans are concerned, the trade with Germany is mainly in iron ore, which meant that the British put a blockade on and it led to food shortages in Sweden. And it led to hunger marches and riots, which led to the overthrow of Sweden's conservative government. At the end of the war, they were not signatories to the Versailles Treaty, but joined the League of Nations and was therefore bound by its restrictions of rearmament of Germany. But Swedish firms did help their German counterparts and help 'em avoid restrictions, for example, a great deal of assistance in assembling military aircraft and manufacturing artillery weapons. So that's the situation of the

Swedes that in many ways they are more pro German than anything else. Now, in 1933, what sort of career is Bernadotte going to have? He becomes a diplomat. And can we see, please, the next slide. There you see his father. That is Oscar, beg your pardon, his uncle, Oscar II of Sweden. And can we go on please? In 1933, remember the period of the Great Exhibitions? This is the Chicago Century of Progress Exhibition. And he actually represented Sweden at this exhibition. He was a skilled diplomat. He was very tall. He was very aristocratic. And he really cut quite a dashing figure. Later on, he married an American woman, now, and spent quite a long time in America. And then he was Commissar General at the New York World Fair between 1938 and 1940. So in those terrible years as, will America going into the war, will America not go into the war, he's in New York. Now back in Sweden in 1937, he'd become involved in the Boy Scouts movement. He very much liked the idea of through physicality, through teammanship, you create the sound young man. He became the director of the organisation in 1937 and at the outbreak of World War II, where of course Sweden is neutral, he wanted to integrate the scouts into, basically campaigning for Sweden's defence and training them in anti-aircraft work. Now in 1943, in the war years, he is appointed first vice president and then president of the Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross. And of course, by 1943, can we turn to the next slide, please? Thank you. There you see the Swedish Red Cross in wartime. They're going to be very, very useful.

Can we come to the next slide, please? Neils Christian Ditleff. I have no problems with any kind of side against this man. This man is a real hero. Now, so remember that at this stage, the aristocratic Bernadotte is chairman of the Swedish Red Cross. Now, Neils Christian Ditleff was a Norwegian diplomat. And later on he's going to receive many awards for bravery. He came from a maritime family. He worked at the Naval Academy and then he went into the diplomatic service. By 1926, he is stationed for the Norwegians, in Warsaw. He becomes ambassador in '30, and then he goes to Czechoslovakia. And during the war, of course, he had to evacuate, but he did retain his role as an emissary. He was quite a man. He was an accomplished musician. He was a famous playwright. He was fluent in many languages in Portuguese, Swedish, of course Spanish, Polish. And he had a working, a good knowledge of German and English. Now, during the spring of 1939, he established in Warsaw a transit station for Czech Jewish refugees. Remember, after the Munich Pact, Hitler goes into the Czech cart and refugees go on the run. And he establishes in Poland at this stage, a sort of transit camp for them to help them. And to do this, he worked with another fascinating man, a man called a Odd Nansen. Can we see him please? Odd Nansen, what a name. He was a very, very special man. He had created something called Nansen Help to provide safe havens in Norway for Jewish refugees. So, and of course, Norway is going to be conquered. So the two of them are working together. Later on that Odd Nansen was the co-founder of UNICEF. And so go back please to my picture of Ditleff. Yes. So during the invasion of Poland, he's desperate, and he

manages to negotiate a four hour ceasefire to arrange the evacuation of 1,200 neutrals. Can you just imagine the situation when the German army invade Poland? They're really against the Ulani Brigade on horseback. It was such a terrible situation. Now, when the Nazis invaded Norway, he escaped to Sweden. And he was very much involved in trying to retrieve, from the Germans, Norwegian, and Danish citizens from concentration camps. Now, it's important that you all remember that the occupation of Norway and Denmark was very different to the occupation of Poland. In that mad mind of the Nazis, they were aryan. So consequently, of course it's horrific to be occupied. And of course if you resisted, you were in trouble. But it's not the same kind of horror story. So, but what had happened was by 1943, there'd been outbreaks of resistance. In fact, if you recall, the Danish government, although it's under occupation, the King and the Parliament were still in place and the Danish police were cooperating. But what then happens is that they decide, the Danes decide enough is enough. And as a result, many of the Danish police were arrested. I've already talked about this. So he goes to, Ditleff is now in Scandinavia. He's in Sweden. We've lost, the picture's gone.

- [Lauren] No, I think Trudy, that's just on your screen. We can see it.

- Oh, can you hear me clearly?

- [Lauren] Yep.

- Oh, fine. So he's now in Sweden, and he decides to try and obtain the sponsorship of Bernadotte, who is now of course, the head of the International Swedish Red Cross in order to manage to free the Norwegian and Danish prisoners who are in concentration camps in Germany. Now back in Norway, they'd been increased resistance and it had led to many, many Norwegians being transported to Germany. And they were in places like Sachsenhausen and in Dachau and in Ravensbruck, et cetera. Now, the arrests in Denmark, as I mentioned before, begin with the resignation of the Danish government in 1943. As the numbers increased, there were various relief groups, really having huge bravery. They were actually sending parcels from Norway and Denmark to their co-nationals in camps. They also kept lists of prisoners, and the lists were sent to the Norwegian government in exile. Now Ditleff is absolutely at the pinnacle of trying to sort things out. And by the end of 1944, there are 8,000 Norwegian prisoners in Germany. In addition, a Danish admiral, Carl Hammerich, he's working on plans for relief and rescue. Don't forget also that the Danes had by boat managed to take the majority of the Jewish population to Sweden. Now, Hammerson and Ditleff met in Stockholm in April and July, 1944. And what is to be done with these prisoners? The allies were asked about this. Look by the middle of 1944, don't forget you've already had D-Day, the Russians at Stalingrad. The war is coming to an end. And the Supreme headquarters, the allies decided

that Norwegian and Danish prisoners should actually stay put until liberation. But people like Ditleff were very worried about this. They saw that if, particularly if the Germans were defeated, would it be Götterdämmerung? And on September '44, Ditleff raises the point with Bernadotte. And he actually sends him a very long memo, the reasons for a Swedish operation for rescuing prisoners. Now, by the 29th of November, the Norwegian government decided, Norwegian government in London, decided there should be a rescue plan. Can we move on please? To the next now? Go on one more please. Thank you. This is where it all becomes very, very strange. And I'm taking you almost into the realms of fantasy, but it is in fact fact. Now enter the picture a man called Felix Kersten. He was a Baltic German. He had an estate in Sweden, but he was Himmler's personal masseur. He acted as an emissary between the Swedish Foreign Office and Walter Schellenberg. You remember last week I talked about Schellenberg. He had actually been in charge of the, basically of the great spy network in Germany. He was very close to Himmler. A very cold, austere lawyer, but he is prepared to negotiate. He was sensible enough to realise that the war was lost and what possibly could happen. And he's putting pressure on Himmler for a separate peace with the Western allies. And with Kersten's help meetings are going to be arranged between Himmler, Bernadotte and even Dolies and even a few Jews, because Himmler is going to play the double game. And Sweden gives Bernadotte the green light, "Can you get concessions from Himmler to get the Swedes, to get the Danes and the Norwegians out of Germany?" The Swedish army was prepared to supply the needed transport. And it's based, as I said, on the plans that are already being created by the Danes and the Norwegians. So meetings begin to occur. And what happens is the Swedes are beginning to change sides. They see the writing on the wall. Look, you've got to remember that this is a very, very ambiguous situation that Williams already talked about. The Swedes had needed German coal. The Germans had needed Swedish iron ore. And not only were there many relationships, there was not only geography, history, strategic aims, emotional sympathies. But at by this stage they realised, the Swedes realised, the British are going to win the war. And this is what the British diplomat, Peter Tennant wrote, "The Swedish humanitarian efforts during and after the war did much to renounce the dishonour of Sweden." Because what is going to happen is that Bernadotte is going to have four different meetings with Himmler. And as a result, the white buses are going to go in. Shall we see the white buses, please? If you go on a bit and then go back. The next person you will see is Schellenberg, who I've already talked about. And go back a little, Heinrich Himmler. Then go to Heinrich Himmler, please. Heinrich Himmler, one of the most evil men that walked the world. An absolutely insane racist, a chicken farmer who'd believed in selected breeding. He, that little man, was in charge of the SS, but he's very close to his masseur. And now he realises that the allies are going to win the war. He's disassociating himself from Hitler. Hitler doesn't find out right till the end. And then he wants to kill Himmler. He wants him arrested for treason. What happens to Himmler, in fact, is he is

captured by the British and he took cyanide. And there's a bit of a mystery about this. But here you have a meeting with Heinrich Himmler and Bernadotte to discuss a Swedish rescue. And what happened was the Swedish government, under Bernadotte is going to send in the buses and they're going to be white. Why white? Because of the allied raids. And over 17,000 prisoners are going to be transported via Denmark to Sweden. They actually set up, they release them from Sachsenhausen, from Ravensbruck. They are collected. And where is it all set up? Can we go on please? Can you go onto the next slide? In Friedrichsrub Manor. Now this is the residence of Otto Bismarck, who is a very close friend of Bernadotte.

Let's have a look at the next slide, please. This is Otto Bismarck getting married to a Swedish countess. So the point is, Bismarck allows his castle to be used as Bernadotte's headquarters whilst Bernadotte, in the north of Germany, while Bernadotte worked on this plan. So it's formally a Red Cross detachment, but it's in reality, it's the Swedish army and it's all paid for by the Swedish governments. Now, why on earth were they painted white? Not just to stop the air bombings, but also to distinguish them from German vehicles. And Bernadotte had actually arrived in Berlin on the 16th of February '45. He had four meetings with Himmler initially to intervene for Scandinavian prisoners. But on the 26th of March, 1945, he received new instructions from the Swedish Foreign Office, extending his mandate to non Scandinavians and the transfer of a number of Jews. Some 3,000 women were brought out of Ravensbruck by the white buses. And 4,000 others were transported from Ravensbruck to Denmark and onto Sweden. Now, Hillel Storch, who was of the World Jewish Congress. The World Jewish Congress had been set up in 1936 to do as much as it could to help the Jews. Can you imagine what it was like in 1936 with Hitler? And they, although they'd set up office in Paris, they moved to New York, but they had representatives in the main office was in Geneva so they could deal with the League of Nations. But Hillel Storch of the World Jewish Congress, he estimated that Bernadotte was responsible for saving about 5,000 Jews before the end of the war. He also was a very interesting man. He was born in Latvia. He died in Sweden in 1983. Now, there's another point to talk about in this story. And that is a course, why? So when Bernadotte manages to bring all these people out, he is totally regarded as a hero. And in the victory celebrations, he appears on the balcony in Stockholm with the Swedish royal family. He is a great hero of Sweden. Now, going back to the Himmler story, why on earth was Himmler prepared to negotiate? Did he really think he could get away with anything? And don't forget, it's also tied up with the Jews of Hungary that we've already talked about. There was another man involved in the negotiations, another Jew, a man called Norbert Masur, who was the Swedish, another Swedish representative of the World Jewish Congress. And he actually had a meeting with Himmler, again arranged by Felix Kersten. And why on earth would the World Jewish Congress attend a meeting with Himmler? Because frankly, don't you deal with the devil if you think that devil

might help. Now what was Himmler's main purpose? Most historians now think that he wanted to really have a proper communication with the Western Allies. He knew that Hitler would never give in. it would be Götterdämmerung. He wanted to take over the state. He wanted to do a deal with the Western Allies and go against Russia. Fascinating speculation that, isn't it? And he believed that he was the man who could take over the state. This man who'd been head of SS. This maniac who believed in the runes, who believed in all the mystical notions of Nordic supremacy, he is now prepared to talk to Jews. And he actually said, "I want," this is Antony Bieber's research, "I want to bury the hatchet between us and the Jews. If I had my own way, things would've been done differently." Well, that's absolute rubbish because we know he was the one who, of course, made that ghastly speech in 1943 to a group of SS officers when he talks about the murders. When he actually talks about, he actually talks about the annihilation of the Jewish people. And he said, "Isn't it extraordinary we have remained decent?" But he is deluded enough to think and he's meeting up with Bernadotte, the aristocratic, Schellenberg, also very aristocratic. And now he even meets with Jews.

Now, what it led to though, if you're actually looking about salvation of the women from Sachsenhausen, half of them were Jewish and they came from 40 different nations. And after the liberation, they were actually housed in southern Sweden. Now I'm going to read you, because obviously as I'm telling this tale, I'm sure there's lots of emotions flying all over the place. Bernadotte was a very cool aristocrat. He kept the negotiations going. Could he have done more to save the Jews? Also, there was huge animosity between Bernadotte and Felix Kersten. After the war, they both wrote their memoirs and Bernadotte gave Kersten no credit. And this feud actually came to the attention of the Jewish, of the English historian Hugh Trevor-Roper. And in an article, Kersten said, "According to Hitler, Bernadotte was opposed to the rescue of the Jews and understood the necessity quote of our fight against world Jewry." Now, most historians now believe that that was a fabrication, that the point was, it was in the air. I'm going to read you, whenever there's a huge controversy, I turn to Yehuda Bauer as my benchmark. We all have to have one. He is for me, is the greatest historian of the Shoah. He is an absolute, he's in his late nineties now. He's an incredible, man. And really, if you want to get into that terribly dark study, then I would suggest this is the, he's the man to read. And let me just read what he said. "During the last weeks of The Reich, Himmler continued to negotiate with Count Folke Bernadotte. He even met a representative of the World Jewish Congress, Norbert Masur on April the 21st, 1945." Remember Hitler commits suicide on the 30th of April. "Contrary," now this is very important, "Contrary to the wishes of the extreme SS faction, Carlton Bruner Eichmann and others. Never forget that Eichmann disobeyed Himmler's orders and went back to help the Arrowed Cross murder Jews. Himmler wanted to keep some Jews alive to serve as hostages. Occasionally his associates intervened to prevent the mass murders that the extreme faction demanded. In that

sense, negotiation served until the end. Ravensbruck, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, and other camps were abandoned by the Allies without fighting." And actually that did save Jewish lives. But it's a very complicated picture. So here you have Bernadotte by 1943 as head of the Red Cross. He did save and he becomes a great hero. Now I'm going to turn to the next part of Bernadotte's life. So can we please go on to the UN General Assembly, please? There you see the white buses. Let's stop there for a minute, if you don't mind, Lauren. Thank you. The United Nations General Assembly. Bernadotte, the great hero who would save, the great Swedish negotiator. He's fluent in so many languages and he is appointed on the 20th of May, 1948 as the first mediator in UN history. And of course, I don't have to tell you where the mediation is to be. When Israel declared independence on the 14th of May, 1948, she was attacked by five Arab armies. The Americans and the Russians had given de jure and also de facto recognition. But Israel really was on its own. And Bernadotte is to be sent to Israel, Palestine because if you remember, the United Nations partition plan was to take what is now Israel, the Golan Heights, and Israel and the Golan Heights, and divide between Palestine and the West Bank, and divide between Palestinian Arabs, and Palestinian Jews. It would've given Israel a state the size of Wales and eight miles wide of Tel Aviv. Now, ironically, the day that the partition agreement was announced, Israel of course accepted it. It was a great triumph for Zionism. But the next night, Palestine, which was still under the British, was invaded by armies of Arabic irregulars. And for six months, before the creation of the state of Israel, you had this extraordinary situation where under the British mandate, the Jews and the Arabs were fighting it out. And the United Nations, the newly formed United Nations, formed out what? Formed out of the old idea of the League of Nations to stop there being another war. I mean, what are we all listening to on the news now? So the United Nations, what are they going to do? Has the United Nations really ever had any teeth? So he does, Bernadotte goes to what is now Israel and Palestine, where the Arabs are not prepared to any accommodation. He visits Cairo, Beirut, Amman, and Tel Aviv. He actually believed the UN plan was totally unworkable and he proposed a new plan. He suggested that the Arabs and Jews, listen to this very carefully, it's important, form a union consisting of a small Jewish entity and an enlarged Transjordan. And Heifer and Lod would be free zones. Israel would receive the Western Galilee and unlimited immigration for two years, after which the UN would take control. Also, he wanted between 250,000 and 300,000 Arab refugees to return to Arab territory with compensation. And Transjordan, remember the British trained Arab Legion, and it's very much the British putting pressure on here would control the Negev and Jerusalem.

Now ironically, the Arabs rejected the terms. A Syrian officer, Namir Al Khabib, he said, "Most of these mediators are spies for the Jews anyway." And of course, Israel hated the idea of relinking Jerusalem. Now fighting resumed on July the 8th. And Israel, it's getting better

now. And there was a second UN ceasefire with no time limit and with a threat of economic sanctions against any country that broke it. So Bernadotte's second plan, the first plan, let me repeat it, annexation to Jordan of Arab Jerusalem and a Jewish enclave under Jordanian sovereignty with limited Jewish immigration. That's rejected by both Jews and Arabs. The next one, recognise existence of Israel and internationalisation of Jerusalem in view of a lot of the large Jewish population and special status, annexation of the Negev to Jordan and Egypt, the fate of the Arabs area to be decided by the Arabs. Don't forget that the Palestinian Arabs, their leadership was so tragic as far as they're concerned. Haj Amin al-Husseini was still officially in control, although he wasn't allowed into Palestine because he was a war criminal according to the British. He also was very, very strong on the problem of refugees. And this is what he said, this is Bernadotte, "The exodus of Palestinian Arabs resulting from panic created by the fighting in their communities, by rumours concerning real or alleged acts of terrorism or expulsion, it will be an offence against the principles of elemental justice if these innocent victims were denied the right to return whilst Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine and offer the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who've been in the land for centuries." Now, so what then happens though, is that, can we move on please? Yeah. There you see Bernadotte on his way to Palestine. Now Lehi, which was the extreme group, now, I'm sure most of you know this, but let me quickly recap because now we're talking about, this is post this creation of the state of Israel. Before the creation of Israel, you of course had had the Haganah and the Plamach. That becomes the idea. The Irgun under Bevin after the Altalena incident actually folded itself into the IDF. Lehi, a group within Lehi, Lehi was an extreme group within the Irgun. They had broken away originally under Avraham Stern, but of course he died in British custody in 1942. And one of the main leaders now of course, was Shamir, who later became the eighth president of Israel. Now Lehi, they publicly called Bernadotte a British agent. They said he'd worked for the Nazis during the war. And what they wanted of course was Israel, both sides of the Jordan. Now this is where you come to really the nub of the tragedy because I mean, if you think about Shamir, his father was actually murdered by Polish fascists. And his last words, according to a friend who managed to reach Shamir in Palestine, was "Avenge me." It's very complex at this particular stage to have any kind of rational opinion on this because Lehi is completely wound up. They see the British, from a Jewish point of view, and certainly from the point of view of Lehi, 6 million Jews had been murdered. And in the main, the world stood by and let it happen. And now is the UN representative in Israel actually going to stop them creating a state? I'm not saying that's my view. I'm saying this is Lehi's view. And what they did, they started training men. They have decided that they actually are going to kill him, and they managed to obtain details of his schedule from sympathetic journalists. You know, I was discussing this and other assassinations with Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, who I quite often use as a mentor. And I may have told you

this before because her view is, and remember she was in Auschwitz, and I've heard this from other survivors, another friend of mine, and they say, "You shall not kill." No human has a right to take another life. I don't know what you believe, but I'm just putting this into the equation. But the Lehi who believed that Bernadotte had not tried enough to save Jews, and first remember he was saving Scandinavians. They are whipped up by the horror of what had happened during the war. And they're a sympathisers and they decide to execute him when he's on a way to a meeting with the military governor of New Jerusalem, a man called Dove Bernadotte, Dov Joseph, beg your pardon. Bernadotte's plans changed, but Lehi, they managed to get hold of an Israeli military group and four assassins were sent to intercept his transport. They killed both Bernadotte and Seraut, who was the French UN official.

Shall we, can we come onto the next slide, please? And that is the headline in, that is actually the headline in, I can't remember the paper. I think it's in the, let's have a look, yeah, it's in the Jerusalem Post, I think. Of course, it's completely condemned in Israel. It's condemned by Bangorian. It's condemned by practically everybody. And what happened though, the Lehi men, they escaped into the religious community of, just in Jerusalem, where they hid with Haredi supporters before fleeing back to Tel Aviv. On September the 18th, can we see the next slide, please? Yeah, and who do you see in that picture mourning Bernadotte? There of course you see Bevin in the middle of the picture, you see Ernest Bevin, who have been so implacable in trying to prevent the creation of a Jewish state. And so his body has flown back to Sweden, where actually he was buried on his wife's birthday. So you can imagine what's going on throughout the world. What on earth has happened? The Israeli government, 'cause Israeli government now, they crack down on Lehi. They arrested, they confiscated arms. Many Israelis were horrified by it. It's publicly condemned by the government, but others saw it as this is a death in war. And of course it also prevented the internationalisation of Jerusalem. But it made Bernadotte a martyr. And the Swedish government believed he'd been assassinated by Israeli government agents. They actually attacked the Israeli investigation and campaigned to delay Israel's admission to the United Nations where they were backed by the British. In fact, they were unsuccessful and Israel was actually admitted to the United Nations. And on his death, on his death, another negotiator Ralph Bunche took on his role and he actually successfully mediated the 1949 armors agreement. Before I come back to the end of Bernadotte, I want to talk a little bit about Ralph Bunche because he's fascinating. And he's really someone and can we come onto the next slide, please. There's there of course is Shamir. Complicated, huh? Complicated. Go on please. There you see Ralph Bunche. He's a political scientist. He's the first African American to be involved. He's first African American to become a mediator for the United Nations. He was a political scientist. He was a brilliant diplomat, And he's very heavily involved in the decolonization

process. He's also heavily involved in the United States Civil Rights Movement. And he was the first person of African descent to be awarded the Nobel Prize. He was also in 1963, awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Kennedy. And he was the man who managed to create an armistice between Israel and Egypt, and that's why he got the Nobel Prize. And he continued to work on crisis situations for the United Nations in Suez in '56, the Congo 1960, Yemen, 1963, Cypress '64. He was a brilliant, brilliant diplomat. He was a huge humanitarian. And he also set up all sorts of study groups dealing with the problems of water in the Middle East. Little did he know that one day the Israelis would come up with the desalinization of the ocean. He had a hell of a war career. Between 1941 and 1943, he worked for the OSS. He was involved in the charter conference when the governing document got the governing document was actually drafted with Eleanor Roosevelt. And he worked on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He was the first African-American to really get involved in these very serious issues. And when he retired, he was called the visionary for peace. And this is what was said about him at the UN. "He championed the principles of human rights for everyone regardless of race or creed and thought no problem in human relations is insoluble." And he was very important, as I said, this must never be forgotten, in dismantling the old colonial situation. It's a tragedy, is it not that there aren't more people like that? He'd served in Palestine UNSCOP. And he was first in Palestine, in Israel, he was aide to Bernadotte. And he made head his headquarters in Rhodes. He worked closely with Moshe Dayan. They were very close friends. And he actually participated in the Great March in Washington. You remember the great speech, the "I Have A Dream" speech. And he was in the Selma March and he turned down Washington jobs during his period at the UN. He said because of the Jim Crow legislation. And interesting, he turned down admission to country clubs because they were prepared to make an exception of him but he wouldn't have anything of it. So he was quite a man and he did pull it off. But going back to Bernadotte. You can imagine what the Swedes did about the assassination. He becomes a great hero in Sweden. There's no plaque in Israel to mark the spot of the assassination, although it was condemned later on the United Nations, because of the Swedish, the Swedes actually demanded compensation from the Israeli government for the damage caused to the United Nations by the assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte. And the Israelis had to answer it. And the Swedes, they said, "This is what the Israelis didn't do. They failed to take," I'm working now from the UN document. "They failed to take immediate steps for the apprehension of the criminals. They failed to cordon off the scene of the crime. There was a delay in carrying a thorough examination of the scene. They failed to examine the leading vehicle of the mediator's convoy. They failed to collect evidence. They failed to take steps to examine the weapons taken from the Stern group. Inactivity regarding the apprehension of the Jeep used by the assassins. There was failure to hold an identification parade," et cetera, et cetera.

Now Israel then has to reply. And this is how they reply. "The tragic events of 17th September '48 took place barely four months after Israel emerged as an independent state from the chaos which prevailed in Palestine during the closing phase of the Mandatory Regime and two months after the second truce. At that time, the state was only just beginning to feel its way along the path of normality. Beset by enemies on every side, the provisional government had not yet succeeded in restoring firm administrative order, particularly in Jerusalem, where in spite of the nominal truths, hostilities of varying intensity continued into the late autumn. Under these circumstances and in view, particularly of inadequate communications and of a lack of established procedure, the detention of the murders of Count Bernadotte was bound to present exceptional. And as the event proved insuperable difficulties." And they go on to say that because of internal security, they cannot make a full report. But what they do do, they do give \$54,000 in compensation. But I want to read the final part of the Israeli statement. "The government of Israel expresses the hope that this unhappy incident, which is marked the history of the state of Israel and has cast its shadow over relations between Israel and the UN, can now be brought to a close. The Jewish people have every cause to be grateful to Count Bernadotte for his manifold activities during the Second World War on behalf of the victims of Nazi persecution. Israel too can recall with gratitude, his sincere efforts to restore peace. Differences of opinion, which may have existed over the best means to do this or not lose in his honoured place in history. The good work, which he did in his lifetime and his personal contribution towards making United Nations an effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace, are his lasting memorial." And that's signed by Moshe Sharett. So, in Sweden he is totally honoured. It's not until 1995 that Shimon Peres officially expressed regret that he was killed in a terrorist way. And it did for a long time mar relations between Sweden and Israel. And in '88, 2 former members of Lehi, Yehoshua Zeitler and Markover, they said that they directed the operation. And was Shamir involved? Well, the Swedes certainly believed he was. Difficult, difficult times when you are really dealing, when you are in hell. Who can pass judgments? I mean, could Bernadotte have donemore? Should he have been murdered in that way? These are the questions you have to ask yourself. Anyway, maybe it's one of the reasons that the Arab-Israeli conflict is one of the naughtiest problems in the world today. Should we have a look at the questions? There's a lot of them.

Q & A and Comments

– Shelly Shapiro, I haven't yet seen the, she's asking if I've seen the Ken Burns film.

– No, because it's six hours and I know what I'm like. I now know I

can get hold of it, so I will sit.

- Yes, Gita, I am off to a (indistinct). I'm going to the opera.

- Now, this is from Carmela. "I love it when people tell us history. My father's late first cousin, Ada Grad, a Jewish was saved by Bernadotte to Sweden. She was originally from Wojda, Poland. She lived the rest of her life in Bourask, where she married and had children and grandchildren. I met her and her family, who are all lovely people. I'm close to her granddaughter-in-law although I live in Canada. Thank you."

- "It was Gene Simmons in the film, "Desiree." Thank you." I thought. Gene Simmons and Marlon Brando. Thank you. If ever I get anything wrong, there are so many people who can tell me.

- Yes. This is Joni. "A forest was dedicated to the memory of late Count Folke Bernadotte." Joni, I'd love to know when. "It's located near Neve ilan, a settlement near Jerusalem where I've lived for 50 years."

- "He was assassinated by Lehi." Yes, Mare, I said he was assassinated by Lehi. What I said was, Lehi had broken away from the Irgun back in, what happened was in 1939 when war broke out. Can you just imagine the horror of it all? Look, when war broke out, the Haganah and the Irgun decided to join the British Army. They weren't allowed to. But later on a break, and in fact it was David Raziel, head of the Irgun, who worked with the British in Iraq. So, you know, the Irgun did their bit as well. Lehi was a small group under the command of Avraham Stern who was killed in 1942. It is a breakaway group, yeah.

- This is from Fannie. "Our mother, Hela Dax, was rescued in April '45 by Folke Bernadotte from the Ravensbruck concentration camp. She was transported by the white Red Cross buses via Denmark to Sweden. Bernadotte have all the prisoners a picture of himself, which my mother has kept all her life. It's in the Holocaust Museum in Washington and a copy in our home, Fannie and Zaharva Bernstein." Oh, that is absolutely amazing. You see, he did save. You see, you've got to be careful here. He saved. I don't know whether, this is so complex, isn't it? I think the problem was also of Swedish neutrality. I think many people, the fact that they were set, that so many Swedish companies became so rich. I'm not saying Bernadotte did. He was a Swedish aristocrat. He's not involved in that kind of thing.

- And this is from Alan. He's wishing us all a happy new year, you, Wendy, and all the colleagues and thank you so much.

- It's actually from Evelyn and her husband. Hillary, oh this is from Hillary Botayami. "I went to see the play "The End Of The Night" about the meeting between Norbert Masur with Himmler at Dr. Felix Kersten's

estate." That is so bizarre that meeting. At some stage, we must go deeper into it. It's interesting because Wendy and I have been talking about bringing more focus on what creates leadership. And particularly as we're going to be embarking on France and we are bearing that in mind, what creates leadership, both good and bad? What creates political leaders? Moral leaders? You see a couple of the characters I've looked at, like Ditleff, to me, he's a great hero. So was Odd Nansen. Bernadotte, he loved the glory, there's no doubt about it. But in the end he did save. And I don't have any problems.

- Oh, Pamela, I don't have any problems with the fact that he was vain and all the rest of it. The fact is he did save people and that matters.

- [Wendy] Do we have any, a blanket?

- You see, I only think the problem at the end of the war was that there was such anger and upset at the number had died. It was almost beyond, it was almost beyond imagination and knowledge. And I think it led many people to, if you like, lose the thread.

- Now Paula, Otto von Bismark was born in 1815 and died in 1898. Is this a different one?

- And Steve Maslow said, "Of course it is. It's the same family." Yeah, it's the same family. And Dr. Lekki is wishing everyone at Lockdown.

- Oh, this is interesting. Mayra, "Hillel Storch, the father of my cousin by marriage." How many times do I have to say this to you? There's no group like you. No, I haven't yet watched Ken Burns, but I promise I'm going to.

- And Anita Ecar is saying, "Abigail, is your family originally from Poland? My grandparents' surname was Hirsch." Okay, that's Anita Ecar inquiring of Abigail Hirsch.

- This is from Kathy, "A Polish friend of mine was in Ravensbruck. She told me a wonderful day when they all walked through the open gates to freedom. She was sent to Sweden and lived there until she got a letter from a friend inviting her to Manchester." And don't forget what I told you last week, it was Sweden who had the great initiative in Holocaust education. You know, it was the Swedish Prime Minister who created really the ITF, which led to IHRA.

Q: "Who and what book did you recommend for Holocaust history?"

A: Shelly, there are thousands of books on the Holocaust. What I said was this, when there's lots of debate, I tend to go to the great Yehuda Bauer. He's written a dozen books. His history of the Holocaust

is the clearest to start with. That gives you the overview. And he's a great thoughtful man. He was also the intellectual head of the ITF IHRA as Elie Wiesel was its president. And if you will remember, Wendy arranged for his son to talk to us last year.

– Tanya wishes us a happy new year. Kathy, her friend, was a boy she'd known in her hometown. When he arrived, he proposed, and they married. Marta painted many pictures based on her memories of Ravensbruck. Oh, extraordinary. Sorry Joan, did I say he was president? Of course, Shamir was Prime Minister.

– Sheila. Now Sheila asked an interesting question –

Q: "Was Count Bernadotte involved with the cross, the Red Cross when they visited Theres in 1944? I think he was. "And if he served vice president of Swedish and involved in negotiations with him?"

A: You know what happened, the Red Cross visited Theresienstadt in June '44. And the Germans did an incredible slight of hand to try and prove it was a model concentration camp. I don't know to what extent Bernadotte was. He's president of the Swedish Red Cross. That needs a bit of looking at Sheila. I will have to investigate. That's very important. This is from Sheila Zettler.

On to Freida now, "Was saved by one of the white buses from Ravensbruck. She was very disappointed. She wasn't allowed on the first bus and had to get on the second bus. Fate stepped in as the first bus was not identified by the allied forces. One was hit and no one survived." Oh God, yes, of course. "She then worked as a nurse in Sweden until she joined her aunt in Cape Town where she met him married Philip Zettler." Oh, what memories you all have. This is bringing history to life.

Q: "Why wasn't Transjordan considered the Arab division of the British mandate?"

A: Oh, Shelly, you've asked a question that will take 24 hours to answer. I can't answer that quickly at all. It's a very important question. And we have covered the, a long time ago, a couple of years ago, we did look at the British and Palestine from 1917 to 1948. We did cover it all, for months and months. And please don't ask me for one book on that. I can't give you one book.

– New York Times, "Thank you, Joan. How are you, Joan? Happy New Year." Yes, thank you Marilyn. And Sheila said, "It would've been Palestine Post. Only became the Jerusalem Post after '48." Was it after '48? Because remember this is September '48. "Good point, but it seems to have been the New York Times." Yes, thank you. It was the New York Times.

- Melvin Litchich has asked a brilliant question -

Q: "How much difference the Israeli to the Arab-Israeli conflict would it transpired had not Haj Amin al-Husseini not escaped while in French custody?"

A: That is a brilliant question of the ifs and butts of history, which some historians love. If Haj Amin, if the Nasibiya family had taken control of, if the Na Sibir family had come to the fore rather than the Husseini clan in the 1920s, you might have had a different outcome. There are so many like this.

- And Susan tells us, "Abba Ivan attended Bernadotte's funeral" Roman, "This anti-revenge violence view interests many including you and I. How do you think this plays out in history and Jewish identity?" That's an incredibly important question. And Wendy and I, we've been having a, whilst Wendy was in London, we had a wonderful meeting. And how are we going to go deeper in certain areas, really in motivational? And I think that's very important. Is it the (indistinct) Conflict again?

- Yes, I realise I misspoke. Shamir was Prime Minister. This is interesting. Dr. Leki tells us there's a plaque near to the spot of the assassination in Rehov HaPalmach adjacent to the Islamic Museum, which also holds The Timepiece Collection of the founders of Joe Lyons' Corner Houses. Oh, I love it. You are at such a wonderful mine of information.

- Oh, Susan Mendez Foundation is discussing the Ken Burns documentary tonight. Thank you, Monica. Dr. Leki, "Stern was murdered by the British." Yes, I did say that. I said he, no, I said he died in police custody, didn't I? He died in British custody.

- And this is Arlene. "The UN did a good thing. It stopped the war in Cyprus." Now don't forget, that Ralph Bunche becomes a very important negotiator.

- Lillian wishes us all happy new year. So does Susan. So does Barbara. And Joni is giving us the dedication to the forest in memory of Bernadotte, dedicated in 1952.

- Nanette wishes us Shana Tova. Okay, I think that's it, Lauren. Okay, everybody and I won't see you before Yuntif, so may I wish you all a happy new year, a sweet new year. Let's hope and pray for peace. And it's just, you're just such a wonderful group. It's like being part of a, I don't know, an extraordinary team. So love to everyone. And Lauren, thank you for keeping me on the straight and narrow. All right, bye.