Toward war's end, with the Russians closing in on Riga, the Germans began to move their Jewish captives around. Ziering believes that the SS in fact connived to keep small groups of Jews alive, so that the need to guard them would keep the Germans from being sent to the front.

The Zierings were moved to a German prison. For a while they lived in Hamburg. Prison living conditions were a distinct step up. But every week the Germans would load eighty to a hundred Jews into a truck and transport them to Bergen-Belsen for round-up.

"With German precision," says Ziering, the guards went about their task alphabetically, numbering his new companions. British troops then closed off Bergen-Belsen, and the Germans marched their remaining Jews to a Kiel concentration camp, whose signpost read: Jewish Marching Stock. Ziering and his brother were among those selected and were directed to strip the clothes from the corpses that lay there and make them their own. And on May 1, 1945, Red Cross workers arrived to take the 1,000 to Sweden. The route they traveled is dead. The camps grisly conditions killed 40 inmates daily. Another 35 males were murdered when they could not run a kilometer while carrying a heavy piece of wood. Sigi and his brother passed that test.

Then, as the Zierings heard the story, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden offered to pay Heinrich Himmler $5 million for 1,000 Jews. Whether the Count indeed made this offer or paid the money is not clear. A German in charge of the Zierings boys, who believed it not at all, that they were to be included but were unpresentable in the striped clothing they wore. Sigi and his brother were taken, where they were directed to strip the clothes from the corpses that lay there and make them their own. And on May 1, 1945, Red Cross workers arrived to take the 1,000 to Sweden. The route they traveled is dead. The camps grisly conditions killed 40 inmates daily. Another 35 males were murdered when they could not run a kilometer while carrying a heavy piece of wood. Sigi and his brother passed that test.

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