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THE "CONFESSIONS" OF KURT GERSTEIN





Key Testimony on the Bełżec Camp Scrutinized

HENRI ROQUES

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By Henri Roques



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Cover Illustrations: top: Kurt Gerstein; bottom row, front, back and center: sections of various documents as reproduced in Appendix I; background: sign of the Bełżec Railway Station, photo taken in 1997 by Carlo Mattogno.

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Foreword: The Genesis of the Roques Affair

By André Chelain

Henri Roques's meeting with Paul Rassinier on 9 June 1962 was decisive, the day the latter dedicated his book *The Real Eichmann Trial or The Incorrigible Victors* (*Le Véritable Procès Eichmann ou les Vainqueurs incorrigibles*). In a strange premonition, Paul Rassinier wrote:

> *"For Henri Roques, with whom I had the pleasure of making acquaintance, and whom I immediately set to work."*

Nevertheless, Henri Roques, absorbed by other tasks, would wait almost twenty years before actually setting to work.

In early 1979, the Faurisson Affair erupted. This academic from Lyon published an article in the French daily newspaper *Le Monde* headlined "The Rumor of Auschwitz" ("*La rumeur d'Auschwitz*"), in which he denied the existence of homicidal gas chambers. This first revisionist manifesto to appear in the French press attracted the attention of Henri Roques. On 21 February 1979, the same daily *Le Monde* published a lengthy declaration by historians; the editors were Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, who had obtained the backing of thirty-two academic historians, including such well-known names as Pierre Chaunu, Fernand Braudel, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Jacques Le Goff and François Furet.[1] In the declaration was inserted a single testimony, chosen "from among so very many testimonies," as the declaration's editors put it: that of SS officer Kurt Gerstein. This categorical statement, countersigned by highly reputed historians, prompted Henri Roques to return to Paul Rassinier's works, which he had somewhat forgotten. Indeed, he recalled that this historian (who had died in 1967) had pondered at length the nature of this testimony and had concluded that it was extravagant. Rassinier had also noticed that

[1] The full text can be found starting on p. 54 of the thesis below; a reproduction of the article on p. 254; astonishingly, it does not include the signature of Georges Wellers, the great witness to Jewish consciousness. It is true, however, that Georges Wellers was a biologist, not an academic historian.

the versions presented by different authors were not identical, in particular that Léon Poliakov, claiming to reproduce extracts from the Gerstein document in several of his works, gave texts that included inexplicable variations, all the more so as Poliakov asserted that it was the same document.

The extract from the testimony, inserted in the historians' statement, ended with the following two sentences, in Gerstein's approximate French:

> *"Seven hundred to eight hundred people standing, at twenty-five square meters, at forty-five cubic meters. The doors are closing."*

(Our readers understand that this refers to the number of people crammed into the homicidal gas chamber at the Belzec Camp in Poland).

Henri Roques was not the only one to be startled by the historians' statement, and by the last sentences of the Gerstein Report quoted by Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet. Astute readers wrote to their newspapers to point out that it was absolutely impossible to cram twenty-eight to thirty-two people onto one square meter, even allowing for the presence of many children.

On 8 March 1979, *Le Monde* published a clarification by Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, stating that the Gerstein report must be considered "essentially true," despite numerous erroneous details. They explained these errors by the fact that Gerstein was very upset by what he had seen at Belzec, and also by the fact that arithmetical precision was not the SS officer's strong point (although he was an engineer).

Henri Roques quickly became convinced that the matter had to be cleared up. As his early retirement would soon give him some spare time, he conceived the idea of undertaking research into the subject, and even to write a university thesis.

In 1981, Henri Roques contacted Professor Jacques Rougeot, who taught literature at the Sorbonne. It was only natural to approach a professor of literature, as the project involved a critical thesis on texts which, for the most part, had been written by Gerstein directly in French, peppered with stylistic and spelling errors.

Jacques Rougeot had the merit (or the imprudence?) of agreeing, knowing that the subject was related to the controversial issue of homicidal gas chambers. Teacher and student agreed on the title: *The Confessions of Kurt Gerstein: A Comparative Study of the Different Versions*. The thesis's regular registration at the University of Paris-IV, Sorbonne, is dated 5 February 1982.

Henri Roques's research began in the last months of 1981. The texts left by Gerstein (or attributed to him) are scattered in archives around the

world, including the National Archives in Washington, the Archives of the Evangelical Church in Bielefeld, Westphalia, the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, etc. In France, Henri Roques submitted a request to the Minister of National Defense to be permitted to consult the file on the "war criminal" Gerstein at the Directorate of Military Justice in Paris. The Minister, Charles Hernu, could have objected to Roques's request on the grounds that such files are subject to a 100-year statute of limitations, but Charles Hernu was wise enough to grant the revisionist researcher the authorization he had requested. As a result, previously unpublished documents enriched the thesis that was evolving at the time.

In February 1983, Henri Roques learned that historian Alain Decaux was preparing a television program on *Obersturmführer* Gerstein, "God's spy," and contacted him. Alain Decaux seemed very interested in his interlocutor and invited him to dinner. Alain Decaux was keen to include Henri Roques in his program, but had to abandon the idea, as the recording was already almost complete. Instead, the academician promised Henri Roques to present the results of his research in his book, *L'Histoire en question: 2*, published by Librairie académique Perrin.

The eminent historian has kept his promise. On pages 308 to 315 of his chapter on Kurt Gerstein, he objectively sets out Henri Roques's position. In particular, he wrote:

> *"I believe that Mr. Roques is the man who currently knows the Gerstein affair best. Even if he draws conclusions from his research that are not always mine, I feel that all researchers should take his work into account from now on. In fact, on many points, I find myself in agreement with him."*

In April 1984, the thesis was completed. For two and a half years, Jacques Rougeot's helpful advice had been crucial to the successful completion of the research work and the final drafting of the thesis. But the problem that troubled Jacques Rougeot, and which he was never able to solve, was the constitution of the jury. In his own words, the professor wanted a jury "above suspicion" because of the "explosive nature" of the thesis.

With the agreement of Henri Roques, Jacques Rougeot set out to find "loyal opponents" of historical revisionism. Henri Roques suggested Pierre Vidal-Naquet. The thesis director's efforts appear to have come to nothing. For example, Jacques Bariéty, professor of contemporary history at Paris-IV, who had agreed in principle, recused himself a few weeks later, without questioning the scientific quality of Henri Roques's work. Despite his best efforts, Jacques Rougeot was unable to convince a sufficient number of academics to form a jury. He informed Henri Roques that he had found

only one professor brave enough to take a stand, François-Georges Dreyfus, Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Strasbourg.

Months went by, without the defense taking place. The 1983-1984 academic year ended unchanged. In October 1984, Henri Roques contacted his thesis supervisor again, without any further success. At the beginning of 1985, Henri Roques asked Jean-Claude Rivière to take over from J. Rougeot, and he accepted.

Henri Roques had already corresponded with Jean-Claude Rivière about his thesis, because of the latter's expertise in editing texts. Jacques Rougeot was relieved to send a letter of withdrawal. Henri Roques then took steps to transfer the file, under the most regular conditions, from Paris-IV Sorbonne to Nantes, where Jean-Claude Rivière taught. In fact, contrary to what the Alain Devaquet, France's Minister of Higher Education and Research, later asserted without providing the slightest clarification, the transfer and enrolment at the University of Nantes did not appear to involve any irregularities.

In fact, a bulletin from the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* dated 7 July 1986, states:

> *"Paul Malvy, President of the University of Nantes, and several of the university's senior staff felt on Thursday that the investigation report drawn up by the Rector and endorsed on Wednesday by Alain Devaquet, Minister of Research and Higher Education, revealed a clear ambiguity in the attitude of the university's administrative staff. In particular, the Minister of Research and Higher Education instructed Mr. Malvy to lodge a complaint against X for the forgery of the minutes of the examination. However, at a press conference on Thursday July 3, Mr. Malvy, in releasing the investigation report at the request of the Minister, made it clear that 'the administrative services are above suspicion.' In a motion issued the same day, the university's heads of department also stated that 'there was never any collusion between them and the teaching organizers of the thesis' and that 'the administrative procedure followed prior to the defense was normal for this type of thesis.' Believing that the decisions taken in this case are such as to call into question their competence, they also asked the Minister to 'immediately remove any ambiguity in this area.'"*

In Nantes, the jury was quickly constituted. In addition to Jean-Claude Rivière, the thesis rapporteur (who can claim to be in charge, since he is a text editor in the same capacity as Jacques Rougeot), it includes a Germanist, Professor Jean-Paul Allard, who teaches at the University of Lyon-III, and a historian specializing in contemporary history, Professor Pierre Zind, who teaches at Lyon-II. It is true that Jean-Claude Rivière was unable to

find sufficiently "intrepid" colleagues in Nantes to take part in the jury, particularly among history professors. Paradoxically, the failure of the Nantes teaching staff somehow reinforced the value of the jury, since it was made up of three professors from different universities.

In an advisory capacity only, Jean-Claude Rivière saw fit to call on the expertise of a contemporary history assistant, Thierry Buron, who, as he did not hold a state doctorate, could neither sit on the jury nor take part in the deliberations.

From the beginning of 1985 to June of the same year, Jean-Claude Rivière seriously studied the thesis, asking Henri Roques for changes that Jacques Rougeot had not suggested, and several pages were redrafted accordingly. In March, the administrative services of the University of Nantes agreed to the defense of the thesis with a view to a university doctorate, on condition that the date of the defense be set before 30 June 1985 (due to a change in the doctorate system on that date). Jean-Claude Rivière set the 15th of June as the date for the defense.

The presentation seems to have taken place under normal conditions. According to Jean-Claude Rivière, a poster was put up in the usual places, indicating the room and time. In addition to the three members of the jury and Henri Roques, a few friends of the candidate who had made the trip, colleagues of Jean-Claude Rivière, unknown persons and students from the University of Nantes, all in all, according to our survey, around forty people attended – a more than respectable number, as many defenses take place in front of half a dozen listeners.

As is customary, the door to the room remained open during the three-hour defense. Thierry Buron, who had cancelled three days before, did not appear. This assistant in contemporary history had acted correctly in his role as consultant, since the thesis was in his possession for around four weeks. His letter to Henri Roques expressed his interest in reading the thesis. In any case, none of the members of the jury expressed any concern at the absence of this young colleague, who was only invited as an extra.

However, Buron's name appears on the minutes as an advisory member. It is common administrative practice to type up minutes of this type in advance, and to complete them by hand for data that remains uncertain. The minutes of Henri Roques's doctoral defense, for example, include the words "Doctor de l'Université de Nantes" and "Mention très bien," as well as the precise date of the defense.

Thierry Buron did not sign the minutes, not only because he was absent, but also because he was not a full member of the jury for the reasons mentioned above.

In any case, Thierry Buron's signature was not required on the minutes. Subsequently, a forged signature was affixed, for which Dean Malvy, on the one hand, and Jean-Claude Rivière and Jean-Paul Allard, on the other, lodged a complaint for forgery and use of forgeries. The question is: who benefits from the "crime"? Certainly not the candidate, and certainly not the members of the jury. For this reason, the conclusions of the subsequent administrative investigation seem hasty, to say the least.

As is customary, Henri Roques handed over two copies of his thesis to the rapporteur for deposit in the Nantes University Library. In the early days of October 1985, a press release sent to the French news agency Agence France-Press and some one hundred and fifty journalists and historians informed them of the purpose of the thesis and the result of the defense. Orders for the thesis soon poured in and were filled, notably from the CDJC (*Centre de documentation juive contemporaine*, Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation), of which Georges Wellers is director of the historical commission, and from Pierre Joffroy, author of the book *Kurt Gerstein: God's Spy* (*…: espion de Dieu*).

Curiously enough, the one and only reaction to this explosive thesis came from Robert Poulet, who published a very favorable article in *Rivarol* (25 October 1985 issue) headlined "One step closer to the truth" ("*Un pas de plus vers la vérité*").

It wasn't until January 1986 that *Le Pamphlet*, a Lausanne periodical, published a very moderate article by history professor Mariette Paschoud, paying tribute to the objectivity of the thesis. The only hostile reaction to this article came from an editor of *La Gazette de Lausanne*; Mariette Paschoud responded with great restraint in the following month's issue.

In France, *Le Monde juif* (January-March 1986 issue), a magazine published by CDJC, opened the debate. It offers its readers a lively article by Georges Wellers (pages 1 to 18, including an eight-page appendix and bibliography), which nonetheless acknowledges the considerable amount of work accomplished by Henri Roques. His work is also described as meticulous. The issue of *Le Monde juif* was widely distributed at the University of Nantes, where each professor found a copy in his post office box, around mid-April 1986.

By a strange and paradoxical coincidence, Henri Roques received a letter from the University of Nantes at his home, dated 18 April 1986, at

about the same time. What does the letter say? It simply informs Henri Roques that he can obtain his doctorate from the Registrar's Office.

It couldn't be clearer that everything was in order, and that no scandals were brewing!

On 30 April 1986, the Loire-Atlantique edition of the French daily newspaper *Ouest-France* published an article headlined "After Faurisson, a researcher maintains in Nantes that the existence of Nazi gas chambers has not been proven" ("*Après Faurisson, un chercheur soutient à Nantes que l'existence des chambres à gaz nazies n'est pas prouvée.*"). In the wake of this article, Professor Jean-Claude Rivière was plagued by harassment of all kinds. On 5 May, in the same daily, Dean Paul Malvy, provisional administrator of the University of Nantes, made his feelings on the matter known. In essence, he stated that reading the thesis had deeply disturbed him and that "there is, alas, no ambiguity about the conclusion that emerges from the analysis of the texts studied." Unfortunately, we did not learn more, as the Dean kept his assessments to himself. Did he think the conclusion was right or wrong?

In its issue of 15 May, *La Tribune*, a left-wing weekly based in Loire-Atlantique, offered its readers three pages of investigation on the theme of "High marks for a thesis denying the gas chambers" ("*Mention Très Bien pour une thèse niant les chambres à gaz*"). The subtitle reads:

> *"Once again, a revisionist historian attempts to instill doubt about the genocide perpetrated in the concentration camps. But this time, for the first time in France, he has the backing of a university, the University of Nantes, with honors."*

Was it this investigation that tipped off the journalists of France's radio station Europe No. 1? In any case, the 6 p.m. news on 22 May mentioned the existence of the "scandalous Nantes thesis."

Following this, Henri Roques was interviewed by radio and television stations, and invited to take part in Jean-Pierre Elkabach's program "Discoveries" ("*Découvertes*"). The debate takes place on 23 Friday, from 6 to 8 p.m., in the presence of Claude Lanzmann (filmmaker and director of the film *Shoah*), Georges Wellers (already mentioned), Jean-Claude Pressac (pharmacist), Bernard Jouanneau (lawyer), Jacques Tarnero (journalist), and Roger Deweck (correspondent for the German newspaper *Die Zeit*). Guest contributors by telephone: Simone Veil (Member of the European Parliament) and two ministers, M. Noir and A. Devaquet. On the other side were Henri Roques and Mr. Éric Delcroix. It could hardly be said that this was a genuine debate, as the thesis was neither exposed nor subjected to honest criticism. The confrontation took place in a climate of total passion.

Indeed, how else to interpret the insult uttered by a man like Claude Lanzmann, who, losing all composure, said to H. Roques: "Shut your filthy rat mouth"? These excesses may well have helped to establish the credibility of Henri Roques's thesis with a wide audience.

Not to be outdone, André Frossard devoted three of his "Lone Rider" ("*Cavalier seul*") columns in *Le Figaro* (23 and 24 May, 14-15 June), in a more courteous style, to what was to become the "Roques Affair."

On 24 May, the entire French press covered the story (*Libération*, *Le Matin*, *Le Quotidien de Paris*, *Le Monde*). The following week, the weeklies took over from the dailies: *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *L'Express*, *Le Point*. All these newspapers were completely unanimous: Henri Roques's thesis had been cut to the bone. In the best of cases, the arguments put forward were about the thesis, but it clearly hadn't been read; in the worst of cases, they attacked the author himself, perfidiously recalling his political and journalistic activities, modest though they were, going back twenty-five years.

However, it should be noted that, amidst this very negative chorus for revisionist theses, only *Le Figaro* had the honesty to publish three letters from readers in favor of Henri Roques, in its issues of 29 May and 5 June.

On 30 May, François Bédarida, director of the Institute for Contemporary History (*Institut d'histoire du temps present*), brought together a number of French and foreign authors, including Georges Wellers, Pierre Vidal-Naquet, Saul Friedländer, Jean-Pierre Azéma, Harry Paape, Harlem Désir (although we don't know in what capacity), Chief Rabbi Sirat and Mme Ahrweiler. The conclusions of this round table were categorical: the Nantes thesis is absolutely void.

In the face of this almost universal hostility, with the exception of François Brigneau in the daily *Présent*, and the weekly *Rivarol*, Henri Roques exercised his right of reply in *Le Monde* (20 June) and *Le Quotidien de Paris* (23 June).

It's worth noting that Jean-Paul Allard, who presided the thesis jury, sent all the newspapers a very firm clarification concerning the very subject of the thesis, namely Kurt Gerstein's "confessions," and the conditions under which the defense had taken place. Only *Le Matin de Paris* (9 June), *Le Figaro* (12 June) and *Rivarol* (13 June) reported on it.

While we can understand the reaction of those who suffered, and that of their descendants, we are astonished by the extent of hostilities aroused by a thesis that aims only to demonstrate that the Gerstein documents may have been given too much credence. In fact, Henri Roques's thesis never

had the secondary intention of denying the existence of homicidal gas chambers. It is for this reason that Henri Roques can point to two particularly representative endorsements: The first is from Michel de Boüard, historian, member of the *Institut,* former Dean of the Faculty of Letters in Caen, former deportee to the Mauthausen Camp as part of the Resistance, Commander of the Legion of Honor, receiver of the French Resistance Medal, member of the French Committee on World-War-II History (*Comité d'histoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale*) from 1946 until 1981, current member of the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent* (*Commission Résistance et déportation*). Michel de Boüard did not hesitate to write to Henri Roques that, had he been asked to take part in the jury, he would certainly have accepted, considering that such work was useful, and amply justified the title of university doctor.

The second endorsement came from the eminent historian Alain Decaux, member of the Académie française, who, after reading the thesis in full, confirmed to Henri Roques the flattering judgment he had passed on his work in the chapter of his book *L'Histoire en question: 2*, devoted to Gerstein, "God's spy." Alain Decaux made it clear to Henri Roques, however, that the conclusions he had reached could be contested, but were by no means abusive.

On 2 July, France's Minister of Education Alain Devaquet held a noisy press conference, during which he delivered the conclusions of the administrative inquiry conducted by the Rector of the Nantes Academy. These conclusions, which pointed to administrative irregularities that many found unconvincing, led the Minister to cancel not the thesis, but simply the defense. For the first time in the history of French universities, a thesis defense was annulled for formal irregularities. This prompted a contributor to the newspaper *Libération* to report the following remarks made by a lecturer at the University of Nantes:

> *"If we have to cancel all the bogus theses, on dubious subjects, defended before juries of convenience, we have to cancel at least three hundred of them right away."*

If, on top of that, all the disturbing theses have to be annulled, what sort of total would we arrive at? On 4 July, Gérard Leclerc wrote in *Le Quotidien de Paris*:

> *"Did Alain Devaquet exceed his rights by demanding the cancellation of Henri Roques's thesis? A debate on the universities' candor."*

In the same newspaper, we note two of the most significant reactions:

– Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, whose spokesman said he was "outraged by the subject, the lack of seriousness of the thesis and the tone adopted."
– The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, which welcomed the French minister's decision, adding: "This measure shows that France recognizes […] its responsibility towards the victims of Nazi Germany."

Mr. Chirac was apparently not "outraged" by the "lack of seriousness" of the Simon-Wiesenthal Center's press release, nor by "the tone adopted."

Questioned by the media after the measures taken by the Minister, Henri Roques declared:

> *"What I find scandalous is the suspension of Professor Jean-Claude Rivière, who acted courageously in agreeing to be the rapporteur for my thesis after Jacques Rougeot withdrew. As for me, I welcome the cancellation of my defense with a great burst of laughter. I note that, unable to criticize my thesis on the merits, which would have been normal in a country where the crime of opinion does not exist, they were content to look for formal flaws in administrative procedures. It reminds me of the proverb: 'He who wants to drown his dog accuses him of rabies.' With or without a university label, my thesis now exists and, with the publicity it has received, I think many people will want to read it."*

Henri Roques's argument is true. No serious refutation of this researcher's theses has been offered to the press. In the course of our investigation, various history teachers (all of whom requested anonymity!) told us of their dismay. The content of Henri Roques's thesis offends the deepest convictions of most of them, but they have no rational argument to put against it. Is this a responsible attitude? It would be more beneficial for public opinion if a real debate could take place, and not just an exchange of invectives. This dossier is intended as a first step in that direction.

In the months that followed, the Roques Affair continued to arouse passions. A few dates mark the prolongation of this strange affair:

On 30 July 1986, Henri Roques held a press conference in a grand Parisian hotel. Mariette Paschoud, the Lausanne teacher who, long before the "scandal," was one of the first to pay tribute to the objectivity of the author of the thesis, had agreed to chair the conference; Télévision Suisse Romande sent its Paris correspondent to interview Mariette Paschoud and Henri Roques. The organizers of the meeting had not thought it necessary to provide security; had they done so, they would have been criticized for their "totalitarian methods."

It was therefore very easy for SOS Racisme to introduce twenty to thirty members of its association into the location; most of them were teenagers supervised by a few of Harlem Désir's "lieutenants." Perhaps these vigilante censors thought they can pit the youth of their activists against a "veteran Nazi nostalgist." They were right to do so, for alongside Henri Roques, they found a young teacher who had come especially from Lausanne to support him, as well as one of the editors of Polémiques, who was under 30 years of age. The "buddies" from SOS Racisme made quite a racket, which astonished most of the journalists present, especially the foreign press correspondents.

After an hour and a half of obstruction, the police were alerted and decided to remove the troublemakers from the room. Within seconds, calm returned, and the press conference could proceed normally. A number of journalists follow these "buddies," either out of ideological solidarity, weariness or professional obligation. However, a large audience remained, led by press correspondents from Egypt, Libya, Syria, China, Poland and the USA. No doubt more than one listener was perplexed by Henri Roques's alleged racism and the supposed anti-racism of Harlem Désir's followers.

Henri Roques explained his motives at length to the journalists present, who asked him numerous questions. He then announced that he had launched a legal counter-offensive, namely: an appeal for excess of power before the Nantes administrative court, with a view to regaining his university title; as well as lawsuits before Parisian courts against the weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* and the daily *Libération* for insults and defamation.

On the 1 and 2-3 August 1986, two articles appeared in the daily newspaper *Ouest-France*, marking an extremely important turning point in the "affair." As part of an investigation by Jacques Lebailly, the aforementioned historian Michel de Boüard took a public stance in favor of the Nantes thesis, not hesitating to write:

> *"If I had been on the jury, I would probably have given Mr. Roques's thesis first-class honors."*

Further on, the eminent member of the *Institut*, himself a former deportee, added:

> *"The thesis is a good critical edition. It's true that a certain bias can sometimes be felt, but what thesis is without bias? A thesis is not a catechism! A thesis is debatable…"*

At the beginning of August 1986, the "Paschoud Affair" broke out in Switzerland. After chairing Henri Roques's press conference, Mariette Paschoud returned to the canton of Vaud, where she faced an extremely

violent press campaign. Mariette Paschoud taught French and history at a secondary school in Lausanne, and was also a captain in the women's auxiliary service of the Swiss army, and a substitute military judge. These various titles added to the "scandal." The tone was set by the Chief Rabbi of Lausanne, who expressed his indignation that a member of the Vaud public education system (apparently above suspicion) should support a "forger" (sic). An administrative inquiry was opened, and Mariette Paschoud was immediately suspended from teaching history. We shall see later that the matter did not end there!

Will 1986 be remembered as the year of revisionism in France and, as we have just seen, among its closest neighbors?

Also in August, which is traditionally devoted to vacations, the press triggered the Konk affair. This cartoonist, who earned his reputation working for the newspaper *Le Monde* before joining the team at the weekly *L'Événement du jeudi*, published a comic book in June 1986: *Aux voleurs*! On the last few pages, readers will discover drawings accompanied by captions that Professor Faurisson would not disavow. This was enough to fuel the columns of several newspapers, which discussed the theme of "Konk-Roques, same fight" ("*Konk-Roques, même combat*"). The month of August ended with the publication of an investigation in *Le Matin* headlined, "How Henri Roques's emulators are preparing for the new academic year at the University of Nantes" ("Comment les émules d'Henri Roques préparent la rentrée à l'université de Nantes").

On 13 September 1986, the same daily, *Le Matin*, published a letter from a prestigious reader: Alain Decaux. The academician, "a lifelong subscriber to *Le Matin*," stated that he was surprised to read in his favorite daily that he "approved all of M. Roques's theses." Alain Decaux therefore issued a "lengthy clarification." "I found Mr. Roques's work remarkable, and I wrote it," he declared, and added:

> *"The consultation I was able to make of the daily and weekly press, and listening to radio and television broadcasts, convinced me that I must probably be one of the few to have read the thesis."*

The historian goes on to explain that he does not agree with all of Henri Roques's conclusions; it may be that, like Michel de Boüard, his colleague at the *Institut de France*, Decaux also believes that "a thesis is not a catechism."

On 1 October 1986, Mr. Delcroix, Henri Roques's lawyer, pleaded before the 1st Civil Chamber against the weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*, which had described the author of the thesis as the "Nantes forger."

In a ruling handed down on 5 November, the weekly was found guilty of insult, as it was unable to present any examples of falsification. The judgment is final, since *Le Nouvel Observateur* waived its right to appeal.

Television took an interest in the "affair" in the same tone as the newspapers sued by Henri Roques. On 7 October 1986, *Télévision Française 1* broadcast its evening program "Counter Inquiry" ("*Contre-enquête*"), the first topic of which was "Duty to respond" ("*Devoir de réponse*"). On this occasion, the weekly *L'Événement du jeudi* ran the headline in its television column: *"*Contre-enquiry answers Henri Roques" ("*Contre-enquête répond à Henri Roques*"). Although the names of the author of the thesis and the university where it was defended are not given on air, the director's intentions are unambiguous. Let's just mention one particularly absurd assertion read out during the program and presented as taken from the thesis:

> *"No Gypsies were in the gas chambers, since none of them came back to testify. Therefore, the gas chambers did not exist."*

Readers of the thesis can easily see that this unhealthy rant was never uttered by Henri Roques. On the other hand, these two sentences had been printed a few weeks earlier in *L'Événement du jeudi* to "stigmatize" the academic work that had won the award in Nantes.

The beginning of November was marked by several events. On the 5th, as mentioned earlier, the 1st Civil Chamber ruled against the weekly newspaper *Le Nouvel Observateur* and, on the same day, a case was brought before the same court against the daily newspaper *Libération*.

The two cases were identical, since both publications called Henri Roques a "forger." Paradoxically, on 7 January 1987, we learned that the daily *Libération* allegedly had acted in good faith, and that Henri Roques, who had won the case against the weekly newspaper, found this case against the left-wing daily dismissed. The unfathomable mystery of justice! To help readers understand how justice is done, we recommend that they read the explosive book *Only the Truth Hurts* (*Seule la vérité blesse*) by André Giresse, who had been president of the Paris Assize Court for ten years. This book shatters the last illusions that any citizen of good faith may have about justice. There are still judges of integrity, as André Giresse's example attests.

On 6 November, Henri Roques and Pierre Guillaume (director of the publishing house La Vieille Taupe) "escaped" to Geneva. Some time earlier, French-speaking Swiss television had approached the author of the Nantes thesis and Professor Faurisson's publisher to bring them before its cameras. For their part, revisionists from Geneva (yes, they're every-

where!) offered to rent a room to hold a press conference in the city of Calvin. Henri Roques and Pierre Guillaume showed up at the door of a room belonging to the Christian Union of Young People (*Union chrétienne des jeunes gens*, UCJG), in the early evening of 6 November. The journalists were on hand with faces that were both appalled and greedy: appalled, because it's unseemly for good Swiss to lend an ear to the Devil's words; but also greedy, because it was tempting to write an article that very evening denouncing the scandal perpetrated within the walls of their good city.

The revisionists from Paris learned that the director of the UCJG's hall was violating the rental contract, claiming that his good faith had been taken by surprise. In addition, the journalists revealed that Bernard Ziegler (head of the Department of Justice and Police) summoned them later that day to inform them that he was bringing out of oblivion a Federal Council decree dating from 1948, which had already been used a few months earlier to prevent Jean-Marie Le Pen from coming to Geneva. What does this decree say? Simply that foreigners are required to obtain prior authorization, if they wish to speak on a political subject in Switzerland. Is revisionism political? Certainly not, since its aim is to study facts that date back more than 40 years. It's about history, not politics. The side-by-side presence of Henri Roques, who has never made a secret of his right-wing views, and Pierre Guillaume, an ultra-left activist for a quarter of a century, is proof of the extra-political nature of revisionism.

The representatives of the French-language press then explained to the speakers that, even for the Devil there are arrangements with heaven. So, they directed them to a basement café where the TV cameras were then installed.

Two police inspectors courteously presented themselves and handed H. Roques and P. Guillaume a letter signed by B. Ziegler and addressed to an unknown Genevan who had booked the UCJG hall using a pseudonym. The future speakers reassured the police of their intentions, and the latter quietly moved to the back of the room to ensure that the prohibitions of the famous federal decree were not violated. At no point did the inspectors intervene; they later issued a report stating that the presentations they had heard dealt solely with the thesis put forward by H. Roques.

The French-speaking journalists that evening showed a strange lack of curiosity; they could only think of one question to ask: who invited you? It would have been understandable if the police had asked this question, but journalists…?

In turn, H. Roques and P. Guillaume took the floor; they had different sensibilities tackling the same problem, but this only highlights the richness of revisionism, which doesn't force anyone to fit into a pre-established mold.

A young editor from the Swiss daily newspaper *La Suisse* tried to make a scene before leaving the room; for her, to discuss the problem of the gas chambers by inciting doubt was to engage in anti-Semitism, and therefore to commit the most unforgivable of acts. She drew this retort from Henri Roques, which would appear in his diary the following day:

> *"In our permissive society, you can say anything, you can do anything, except cast doubt on the existence of the gas chambers!"*

The very next day, H. Roques and P. Guillaume returned to Paris, taking with them as a souvenir a flyer that had been put up that very morning in front of Geneva newsagents. What did it say? "Illegal Speakers," "Anti-Semitism within our walls."

In the last days of November, Henri Roques traveled to Germany for the release of his book in that language; the thesis was offered to German readers in a light version, with forewords by the publisher and the author, and a dossier on the "affair." In Munich and the Mannheim region, Henri Roques, accompanied by his interpreter-translator Günter Deckert, addressed attentive audiences. There was little press coverage.

Before Christmas break, two events occurred: on 3 December, the Federal Office for Foreigners in Berne, at the request of the Department of Justice and Police in Geneva, imposed on Henri Roques and Pierre Guillaume a three-year ban on entering Switzerland. Appeals against this measure were lodged in Berne by a legal adviser. Around the same time, one of the protagonists in the "Roques Affair" (and not the least), Alain Devaquet, was forced to resign from his post as Minister for Research and Higher Education, in the face of student anger unrelated to this Roques Affair. The daily newspaper *Le Monde* (issue of 4 December 1987, p. 6) published a long article intended to put some balm onto the wounds of this son of a Vosges baker who had managed, through hard work (*sic*), to find his place as a minister. Alain Devaquet, "the hinge man," the editor of *Le Monde* wrote, was sad, as those are who remain misunderstood. But to his credit, he can claim the purity of his intentions and the satisfaction of a duty accomplished:

> *"And then he strokes his hand over the thick file of congratulatory letters he received after taking a very soaring* [sic] *stance on the Nantes thesis, which attempted to deny the reality of the gas chambers. And it speaks for itself."*

However, Devaquet later qualified the praise that he had received. In March 1987, when Patrick Poivre d'Arvor interviewed him for *Le Journal du dimanche*, he let it be known that "his very severe condemnation of the Roques thesis on the concentration camps [!] at the University of Nantes, while much appreciated by most, also earned him some fierce animosity." For us, who have gathered the opinions of eminent academics from all disciplines, and in particular academic historians, this is no revelation. The year 1987 joyfully buried the year 1986, the year in which the Roques Affair erupted, which was far from over. In January, on the 7th and 19th, before the 17th Correctional Chamber, the daily *Libération* was once again sued by Mr. Roques, this time for public defamation in connection with an article published in the 24 May 1986 issue, announced on the front cover as follows: "Mandarins give precedence to an anti-Semitic thesis" ("*Des mandarins priment une thèse antisemite*"). Among the witnesses cited by *Libération* are two teachers from Nantes whose names evoke Provence and Labiche's comedies: one is called Tartarin and teaches law; the other is called Bridonneau and was, before retirement, an assistant in economics. For Mr. Tartarin, "the thesis reflects a fundamental anti-Semitism which, admittedly, does not emerge from each sentence taken in isolation, but from a set of procedures, an approach whose result is revealing."

Professor Tartarin reminds us of those shopkeepers who declare that they sell their retail goods at a loss, but intend to make up for it in quantity. M. Bridonneau, a former deportee, proclaimed in court:

> *"It's them or us. If the revisionists are right, then we're wrong. We are liars."*

Mr. Bridonneau places the debate on a purely emotional terrain that ignores rational arguments, and he forgets that the forty years that have passed since the end of the Second World War allow a certain hindsight with regard to past events, however painful they may be.

The court was nonetheless sensitive to such testimonies; it was also touched by the pleadings of Mr. Leclerc and Mr. Lévy; habitual defenders of *Libération*, they count among their clients the hero of rebellion against repressive society, Roger Knobelspiess. Nevertheless, in a judgment handed down on 18 February, the judges admitted that "perfect and complete proof of the defamatory facts has not been provided by the defendants"; however, given the "climate of astonishment and intense emotion" that prevailed when the offending article appeared, H. Roques's case was dismissed. Henri Roques rarely used his right of reply; he would have needed a special secretariat to deal with all the opportunities he was offered. How-

ever, the author of the thesis did not fail to exercise his right of reply to the journal of the association of history and geography teachers, *Historiens et géographes*, in which he had been violently taken to task. Henri Roques's text was published in the December 1986 issue; the magazine's editors added a few comments:

> *"Our friends Alain Decaux and Georges Wellers have indeed recognized the merits of H. Roques's literary work, which has brought together, compared and confronted all the reports concerning Gerstein. This is indisputable. But both Georges Wellers and Alain Decaux disagree with the conclusions of this study."*

The reply to these comments was given in advance by historian Michel de Boüard, who, it should be remembered, declared: "A thesis is not a catechism."

The change in tone adopted by the history teachers' association marks the beginning of an understanding in an affair described as scandalous without the slightest prior examination. The weekly *Rivarol*, a staunch supporter of the Nantes thesis, wrote: "It's a slow-burning story, but it's a story nonetheless." (issue of 6 March 1987).

In February 1987, there were new developments in the west: in Nantes, the Delaporte Affair erupted. Also in the east, there was news: in Lausanne, the aftermath of the Paschoud affair unfolded.

What is the Delaporte affair? André Delaporte is a historian with a doctorate in history who was applying for a professorship at the University of Nantes. All well and good, but Professor Delaporte smacks of revisionist faggots. In fact, however, his "revisionist" thesis deals with the idea of equality in the 18th Century, a far cry from the "sulphurous" subject chosen by Henri Roques. The well-known historian Pierre Chaunu, member of the Institute, whose ardent revisionism applies exclusively to events prior to 1815, supported André Delaporte. Of course, Pierre Chaunu is a respectable reference, but professors Yves Durand and Jean-Claude Rivière sat on Delaporte's thesis jury; moreover, Delaporte is known for his right-wing ideas; he even had the imprudence to entrust a few articles to an ultra-nationalist publication.

The daily *Libération*, always ready to denounce imaginary plots, headlined on 7 February: "An Henri Roques emulator at Nantes University" ("*Un émule d'Henri Roques à l'université de Nantes*"). *L'Événement du jeudi* (week of 26 February to 4 March 1987) posed a frightening question: "Does counter-revolution pass through the University of Nantes?" ("*La contre-révolution passe-t-elle par la fac de Nantes?*"). It's obvious to the consciences of the self-righteous left that counter-revolution won't pass

through Nantes or anywhere else, any more than "fascism" will. In Lausanne, too, the media that manufacture opinion were calling for mobilization against the "scandalous" Mariette Paschoud. First of all, "they" found out that the conclusions of the administrative inquiry into her case were a long time coming. The editorialist at *La Gazette de Lausanne,* who would have liked to see "the matter settled in 48 hours," complained that this was "appalling."

At prime time (8:05 PM) on 19 February, viewers of French-speaking Swiss television found out all about… revisionism thanks to the program *Temps présent*.

André Frossard became famous "by meeting God," and Télévision Suisse Romande seems to have drawn inspiration from his example. "The Devil exists, I've met him" ("*Le Diable existe, je l'ai rencontré*") is the leitmotif of the program. The Devil? Perhaps it's Henri Roques who, through the unhealthy seduction of his thesis, distracted a young civil servant from her duty of confidentiality. The Devil? He also takes the form of Professor Faurisson, the master thinker of French revisionism, who came to speak in Switzerland in October 1986; just as diabolical is Pierre Guillaume, the publisher who still claims to be of the ultra-left; here is this or that figure of Vaud revisionists, for example Gaston-Armand Amaudruz, director of the newsletter *Courrier du continent*, guilty of sympathy for ideological "polluters" from France. Fortunately, there are exorcists: Professor Pierre Vidal-Naquet, militant journalist Annette Lévy-Willard, Pierre du Bois, who teaches at Geneva's Institute for European Studies, and above all pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac, a repentant revisionist (according to some sources, he's about to switch sides again!), who benefited from Serge Klarsfeld's logistical support to carry out research on the Auschwitz site. This Pressac, the supreme hope of some "exterminationists," cherishes the ambition of publishing a magisterial book, to "bring the truth to light." Proof, if proof were needed, that the truth hasn't come out for over forty years!

Forty-eight hours after this edifying television broadcast, readers in French-speaking Switzerland learned from their usual newspapers that Mariette Paschoud will not be the subject of a disciplinary investigation; she will merely receive an admonition, and is strongly advised to be less "naïve" and more reserved in her assessments in the future. Such leniency outraged the Vaud guardians of both moral and historical orthodoxy. Press campaigns, manipulation of Madame Paschoud's students by local SOS Racisme activists, an exhibition on concentration camps organized at the

city's university-prep school (*lycée*) where the "accursed" woman teaches: nothing was spared for a month, before the Conseil d'État finally "condemned unreservedly the opinions expressed by revisionists." A few more weeks of pressure and perfidious maneuvering and, around mid-April, Mariette Paschoud left her teaching post to be transferred to an archive under the Department of Public Education and Religious Affairs in Lausanne. Official history is not to be trifled with! But one wonders about the disproportion between the "official" reaction (which was hardly spontaneous, by the way) and the young Swiss teacher's courageous but symbolic participation in a press conference, where she took her place as president with honor. Is this enough to make her a martyr for the revisionist cause in her own country?

But here's something new in the East, and even in the Middle East. On 15 March 1987, the *Tehran Times*, an English-language Iranian daily newspaper, published a major article on the "Jewish myth." The headline reads: "Student loses his doctorate for exposing Jewish myth." Two weeks later, *Le Nouvel Observateur* reported the article, which, according to the weekly, had caused concern in Iranian Jewish circles. Why this concern? Has Iran's Jewish community suffered from the "Holocaust"?

The *Tehran Times* article was signed "Muslimedia," the name of a famous news agency in the Arab-Muslim world. This fact is to be compared with the publication of two large articles with photographs by Henri Roques, under the title "A persecuted man" ("*Un homme persécuté*") in the leading Egyptian daily *Al Ahram*, in July 1986.

The weekly *Rivarol*, commenting on the comments published in *Historiens et géographes* following Henri Roques's right of reply, wrote in April 1987:

> *"It will have been noticed that the association* [of history professors]*, when Mr. Roques mentioned to them: 'Decaux and de Boüard', they replied with: 'Decaux and Wellers'. And yet, for an association of professors, one would expect the great academic Professor de Boüard, whose career has honored the University of Caen, to precede* […] *Alain Decaux and the highly committed researcher Georges Wellers. Not at all: it is only the latter that the association calls 'our' friends. Professor de Boüard has no right to that title, or even to be named."*

Has *Rivarol* been heard? Is time working for the revisionist cause? The 1st-quarter issue of 1987 of the *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* was published in April. This is a journal reserved for specialist academics; its contents include a study by Michèle Cointet of the University of Poitiers, and Rainer Riemenschneider of the German Historical Institute in

Paris. Its title: "History, ethics and the media: about the Roques Affair." The authors offer their colleagues a wealth of documentation "to give an account of both the course of the affair and the workings of revisionism"; references to Michel de Boüard's position are numerous, and his interview given to *Ouest-France* on 2 August 1986 is published in full. The final chapter of the study is headlined: "The revisionist approach: a successful revisionist procedure?" When a question is asked in this way, the answer is not far off. In his oral defense, Henri Roques said that one of the aims of his thesis was "to contribute in some way to the revisionist school being recognized as having a right to exist in the university," in other words, to a debate between historians of different opinions. Timidly, this debate seems to be getting underway.

In a completely different "register," the satirical monthly *Zéro*, whose editorial staff includes Gébé (Georges Blondeaux), Cavanna and Wolinski, is also interested in revisionism. In April, it published interviews with Pierre Guillaume, Robert Faurisson and Pierre Vidal-Naquet; in its May issue, editor Michel Folco reported on his interviews with Georges Wellers and Henri Roques. The latter, in his biography, sheds some light on his militant past, which Annette Lévy-Willard had not failed to "demonize" in *Libération* and on Télévision Suisse Romande. "Faurisson denies the existence of the gas chambers. As for me," said Henri Roques,

> *"I don't believe in them very much, but I do doubt them… The determination of my opponents and their bad faith in defending this highly suspect testimony, the Gerstein report, cannot dispel my doubts; on the contrary, it can only contribute to increasing them."*

"Sometimes you can count even more on your adversaries than on your friends when it comes to celebrating anniversaries," remarked Henri Roques recently, as he leafed through the daily newspaper *Ouest-France*. Indeed, in the Loire-Atlantique edition, the 16-17 May 1987 front-page headline read: "The Roques Affair: What to Do with the 'Complicit' Teacher from Nantes?" ("*L'affaire Roques: que faire de l'enseignant nantais 'complice'?*"). Even with quotation marks, the word "complicit" is certainly considered shocking by the eminent historian and member of the *Institut*, Michel de Boüard, who courageously gave his full support to Professor Jean-Claude Rivière, well before he was suspended from his duties by the short-lived Minister Alain Devaquet.

Suspended for a year, J.-C. Rivière was transferred to the National Center for Remote Learning (*Centre national d'enseignement à distance*, CNED) at the start of the 1987-1988 academic year. On Monday, 18 May, *Ouest-France* returned to the subject:

> *"At a time when the Barbie trial has opened in Lyon, is it appropriate to pass over in silence the double anniversary of Henri Roques's thesis: from its practically clandestine defense in Nantes in June 1985?"*

We know what to think of this "clandestinity" and of the scandal caused in the spring of 1986 by its delayed discovery… A strange "discovery" indeed: that of a document deposited very regularly at the end of the defense at the Nantes university library, then announced in October 1985 by a press release sent to one hundred and fifty people!

"Teachers who ask this question, naturally answer in the negative," continues the daily, which announced an information and discussion day on 20 May at the University of Nantes, titled "Talking about the Nazi genocide today."

After the relative calm of the summer vacation break, the press was back on the "Roques Affair" whenever it seemed useful to raise the specter of racism and anti-Semitism.

Jean-Marie Le Pen and the French right-wing party Front National are often the first targets, especially since the *Grand Jury RTL Le Monde* trap show of 13 September 1987. On that evening, J.-M. Le Pen said he was "a partisan of the freedom of the mind." What a scandal! On the subject of the gas chambers, the leader of the Front National said he had some questions. He said, verbatim: "I'm not saying that gas chambers didn't exist." Professor Faurisson, on the other hand, says: "Homicidal gas chambers have never existed." It is therefore impossible for anyone acting in good faith to say that Le Pen and Faurisson share the same point of view on this issue. This did not stop Bernard-Henri Lévy from writing in a weekly magazine that "Le Pen speaks like Faurisson…." Is B.-H.L. making fun of his readers?

A certain Jean-Pierre Rioux, who professes to be a historian, wrote an article in particularly bad faith in the daily *Le Monde* of 22 September 1987. This J.-P. Rioux, who belongs to the "stable" of François Bédarida, director of the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent*, awkwardly took up some of the criticisms levelled by Georges Wellers and Pierre Vidal-Naquet against Henri Roques's thesis; Rioux then went on to give the professors on the Nantes jury a swift kick in the ass. He didn't hesitate to speak of a "jury of accomplices." Accomplices or not, J.-P. Rioux himself could not have taken part in this jury, lacking the necessary qualifications to sit on it.

No man is a prophet in his own country. Historical revisionism is international; the first issues of the periodical *Annales d'histoire révisionniste* bear witness to this in the nationalities of its contributors (the Italian Carlo Mattogno, the American Howard F. Stein, the British Jessie Aitken, Arthur

Ponsonby…). The leading revisionist authors took it in turns to attend the annual meeting in Los Angeles organized by the Institute for Historical Review. The 8th International Revisionist Conference was held in 1987. Henri Roques met up with Professor Robert Faurisson, one of the regular speakers at these Californian gatherings. Henri Roques was warmly welcomed by the delegates, to whom he addressed the paper whose text is presented to our readers in Appendix VII starting on p. 421. We would like to thank Mr. Roques for allowing us to reproduce his text.

In October from Los Angeles, Henri Roques issued a challenge to ex-minister Devaquet and his accomplices.

Was it in response to this challenge that a colloquium was organized on 9-11 December 1987 at the Sorbonne on the following topic: "Nazi extermination policy"? What is a colloquium? A meeting where points of view are compared. Logically, the revisionists should have been invited to present their ideas. Henri Roques therefore sent a request for an invitation to Hélène Ahrweiler, rector of the Académie de Paris. We cannot resist the pleasure of reproducing below the reply received by H. Roques:

> *"Sir,*
> *Acknowledging receipt of your letter of 2 December, I have the honor of informing you that the international colloquium on Nazi extermination policy will include papers by French and foreign academics without any debate. Please believe me. Sir,"* etc.

A colloquium without any debate! Let's face it, it's a worrisome novelty.

Naturally, these undemocratic measures did not prevent revisionists from indirectly obtaining invitation cards and attending the various colloquium sessions. Professor Faurisson, publisher Pierre Guillaume, Henri Roques and a few of their friends were among the attentive and somewhat snide listeners.

We witnessed a series of exterminationist High Masses, particularly soporific. Not a single new idea was put forward, not a single irrefutable reply to revisionist theses. In fact, revisionism was not even on the conference agenda. What a paradox, when the demonstration was organized against it!

Only Pierre Vidal-Naquet merely scratched the surface of the subject. He sententiously declared that the historian cannot neglect anything, even garbage; he described revisionist ideas verbatim as "intellectual excrement." Of course, it's easier to insult than to discuss.

At the Sunday morning symposium, Alain Devaquet, Alfred Grosser, Alain Finkielkraut, Claude Lanzmann and the inevitable Simone Veil were in the spotlight. At the start of the symposium, Hélène Ahrweiler, Sor-

bonne housemistress, announced that written questions could be submitted, which would be answered at the end of the session. Professor Faurisson asked a question, as did Henri Roques, who sent us the text of his question addressed to former minister Devaquet:

> *"Mr. Devaquet, have you read my thesis? If so, and if you think its aim is to deny the existence of the gas chambers, how do you explain that historians like Alain Decaux and Michel de Boüard think the opposite and pay tribute to the seriousness of my work?"*

The written question was passed first to Hélène Ahrweiler, then to Alain Devaquet. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Devaquet leaned over to Mrs. Ahrweiler to confide in her. It's easy to guess what it was. In any case, at question time, Hélène Ahrweiler was heard to make an announcement, which said in substance: "After Mme Veil's speech, only meditation is appropriate. The questions that have been asked will not be answered."

I mentioned earlier a High Mass. After the preacher's sermon, would we have the idea of opening a debate? But, then, what the heck! Why call this religious ceremony a "colloquium"? 1987 was drawing to a close, and 1988 was just around the corner. The Roques Affair, far from over, entered into a new phase. On 14 January 1988, Henri Roques's appeal to the administrative court in Nantes was heard in open court.

I'd probably be naive if I wrote that the appeal for excess of power has been examined. In fact, the young and ambitious government commissioner went to great lengths for an hour and a half to demonstrate that, while it was impossible to annul the deliberations of a jury, on the other hand a university president could perfectly well refuse to award a diploma on the grounds of administrative irregularity.

The judges were in a hurry to blindly follow the government commissioner's conclusions in order to get rid of a cumbersome case, so they issued a "circumstantial judgment" four days later. This ludicrously short four-day period is proof, if proof were needed, that the hearing was superfluous.

Henri Roques thus found himself proclaimed Doctor of the University of Nantes by a jury whose deliberations had not been annulled, but deprived of a beautiful document which the University of Nantes had itself offered to send him in a letter dated 18 April 1986. This situation, which defies all common sense, would have inspired Georges Courteline (French satirist). Henri Roques immediately lodged a complaint with the Conseil d'Etat.

The Roques Affair, with its many twists and turns, is not all failure. The obstinacy of the revisionists sometimes yields encouraging results.

A lecture by Pierre Vidal-Naquet was scheduled to take place at the University of Nanterre (section political sciences) on 15 February 1988, announced in *Le Monde*, *Libération* and *Le Parisien*. On the same 15 February, *Le Parisien* published an interview with Henri Roques, in which he declared that he was ready to appear before any jury in France, and why not at Nanterre. In anticipation of a possible thesis defense at Nanterre, more than a dozen revisionists, including Henri Roques and Pierre Guillaume, sat in the room where Pierre Vidal-Naquet was to speak about "revisionist historians." Sixty to seventy students were present. Everyone was looking at their watches, waiting for Pierre Vidal-Naquet to arrive. Everyone was disappointed: Pierre Vidal-Naquet didn't show up! The revisionists, now masters of the field by forfeiture, were able to engage in conversations with the students and distribute leaflets. Was this Pierre Vidal-Naquet's aim, who recently wrote:

> *"We must discuss about the revisionists.* […] *One does not discuss with the revisionists.* […] *I have nothing to say to them, and I won't say anything to them."*

A strange concept of democratic debate… The fact remains that Pierre Vidal-Naquet, contacted by telephone in the early afternoon of 15 February, declared that he had forgotten about the meeting.

The author of the book titled *The Assassins of Memory* has worrisome memory holes.

Defense of the Thesis

on 15 June 1985 at the University of Nantes

Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen,

I discovered Gerstein's story almost a quarter of a century ago. At that time, and for several years already, I had been a reader of Paul Rassinier. I was immediately won over by the intellectual honesty of this teacher of history and geography, a pre-war pacifist activist who had experienced the Buchenwald and Dora camps as a deportee. He had returned from the camps in 1945, lying on a stretcher, his health so badly damaged that he was pensioned with 100% disability.

But despite his ordeals, Rassinier never gave in to hatred like so many others. He never advocated *Vae Victis* (woe to the vanquished). Passionate for the truth, he always refused to fall for Ulysses's lies and, to my knowledge, he was the only one to publicly proclaim his refusal.

Ulysses's Lie (*Le Mensonge d'Ulysse*) was the title of Rassinier's first book about his own concentration-camp experience. At the time of the book's publication, Gerstein's account was still little known, and Rassinier makes no mention of it. Paul Rassinier's second book appeared in 1961. Its title: *Ulysses betrayed by his own kind* (*Ulysse trahi par les siens*). In a footnote on pages 30 and 31, the Gerstein document is discreetly cited. The author refers to a testimony introduced during the Nuremberg Tribunal in January 1947 for the doctors' trial; a strange document in which 700 to 800 people were gassed in a chamber measuring 5 x 5 m and 1.80 m high. The name of the witness is not mentioned by Paul Rassinier. Perhaps he thought that such extravagant testimony would have a short life. He was mistaken.

In his subsequent works: *The Real Eichmann Trial or The Incorrigible Victors* (*Le Véritable Procès Eichmann ou les Vainqueurs incorrigibles*, 1962) and *The Drama of Europe's Jews* (*Le drame des juifs européens*, 1964), Rassinier devotes entire chapters to the Gerstein document and to Gerstein himself. He discovered both while reading specialized works on concentration-camp literature. With Léon Poliakov, he goes from surprise

to surprise. Why, asked Rassinier, does this author give figures that are not those of his colleagues? Why does he have difficulty reading the original document, while others do not? Why, when he claims to reproduce the same document, does he present texts that are completely different from one another? Gerstein's story, the honest Rassinier remarked, is a singular document which does not say the same things to different people.

In August 1965, Rassinier published a new book: *Operation Deputy* (*L'Opération Vicaire*). It was a response to a German Protestant writer, Rolf Hochhuth, who had staged a play in Berlin in February 1963 titled *The Deputy* (*Der Stellvertreter*), translated into French as *Le Vicaire*. Gerstein plays a leading role in this play. He is the accuser of Pius XII, suspected of complacency towards the National Socialists, and, through the Pope, the accuser of the whole world. Here, Gerstein is indeed the Righteous Among the Gentiles, as defined by Léon Poliakov himself at the same time. The play's author, Hochhuth, multiplies his press statements around the world, and I noted this astonishing phrase:

> *"I'm not attacking the Pope as a man or as the Pope, but because he was the representative of the guilt of us all."*

The words have been said: we are all guilty of what happened, or is said to have happened, in the National-Socialist concentration camps, and Gerstein's character is used in this way to try to establish a myth of collective guilt.

Paradoxically, in France, it was Rassinier, an unbeliever, who most vigorously defended Pope Pius XII and, at the same time, the cause of humanity. Knowing Rassinier's chivalrous spirit, we're not surprised. Generally speaking, Paul Rassinier's knowledge of Gerstein and his testimony remained fragmentary. He had gathered them in the course of his readings, without doing any personal research on the subject. He sometimes made assumptions that turned out to be inaccurate, but he was (to his credit) the first to see the essential point: firstly, that the Gerstein document, because of its implausibilities, had to be examined with the utmost caution; secondly, that this same document had given rise to reproductions in which inexplicable differences were noted. In conclusion, anyone acting in good faith at the time could not help but be puzzled by the historical value of what was widely referred to as the "Gerstein Report."

It was at this time that I realized the need to do a complete job on the subject, but I had no idea that I would ever do it myself.

In 1967, Rassinier died, most probably as a result of his deportation. In the same year, 1967, Saul Friedländer, a professor in Tel Aviv and Geneva,

published a book titled *Kurt Gerstein or The Ambiguity of Goodness* (*Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*). The face of the hero Gerstein took shape, but there were still a few grey areas. Two years later, the shadows have disappeared. Pierre Joffroy takes over from Saul Friedländer, and this time there's not even a question of ambiguity. Joffroy believes he has sealed Kurt Gerstein's luminous destiny for posterity: he is a "saint lost in the century." Indeed, the title and subtitle of his book are unequivocal*: God's Spy: The Passion of Kurt Gerstein* (*L'espion de dieu. La passion de Kurt Gerstein)*.

Ten years went by, when, on 21 February 1979, the newspaper *Le Monde* published a half-page spread with the evocative title: "Hitler's Policy of Extermination: A Declaration by Historians." In this declaration, a single testimony was cited. It had been chosen "from amongst so very much evidence" by the declaration's authors, and that testimony was that of Gerstein. Thirty-four historians, and not the least among them (I cited some of them in my thesis), had endorsed the declaration by agreeing to countersign it. Exactly two weeks later, on 8 March 1979, the same newspaper *Le Monde* published an update on Gerstein's testimony. Readers who may not have been historians, but who certainly had common sense, had written to the newspaper to express astonishment at the implausible figures published in the extract quoted from Gerstein's account. The authors of the statement, Léon Poliakov and Professor Pierre Vidal-Naquet, basically stated that Gerstein was mistaken; he was mistaken in the details, but his testimony is essentially true, rest assured.

With time on my hands, I picked up the books I'd already read by Rassinier, Léon Poliakov, Saul Friedlander and Pierre Joffroy, as well as various publications such as *Le Monde juif*, and a brochure titled *The Final Solution and Neo-Nazi Mythomania* (*La Solution finale et la mythomanie néo-nazie*) by Georges Wellers. I even wrote to Léon Poliakov on several occasions to ask him to explain the differences in his reproductions of the same Gerstein document, and each time he gave me the same reply: "Go to the CDJC, i.e. the *Centre de documentation juive contemporaine*, and you'll find in its archives everything that concerns you."

Professor Pierre Vidal-Naquet was personally committed to Léon Poliakov. I also wrote to him. He sent me two letters. In the second, he acknowledged that Poliakov's text, given in various publications, was wrong on several points, and I have these letters in my file for the jury, should they wish to read them.

I had to face the facts. There was no reference text for this famous Gerstein document. I decided to get to the bottom of it, and to this end, to prepare a thesis. First of all, I had to compile a critical edition of all the texts left by the former SS officer or attributed to him, then study their authenticity, and finally assess their veracity.

My first task was to gather the documents. Where could I find them? How many were there? That was the first difficulty. The best-known version bears the acronym PS-1553. PS stands for Paris Storey; Storey was the name of the colonel who headed the Documentation Division based in Paris in 1945. So I went to the National Archives in Washington to ask for photocopies of the documents in their possession on the Gerstein affair, and obtained photocopies of three versions: PS-1553, i.e. the typed version in French dated 26 April 1945; PS-2170, the typed version in German dated 6 March 1945, plus a text written in French, typed, dated 6 May 1945, and headlined "Rapport du docteur Gerstein." I also learned that there was a file on Gerstein in the archives of the Evangelical Church in Bielefeld, Westphalia. I made the journey and brought back a wealth of documents. The three other versions presented in my thesis, as well as a few drafts and a few separate sheets, come from Bielefeld. In 1972, Gerstein's widow handed them over to the Bielefeld archives.

At the CDJC in Paris, I also discovered an English version of "Dr. Gerstein's" report, of which I already possessed the French version sent by the National Archives in Washington. Finally, at the Directorate of Military Justice in Paris, where I had been authorized to carry out research, I was able to complete my collection of texts with the minutes of Gerstein's interrogations before French military examining magistrates in June and July 1945, as well as with fragments of documents mysteriously mislaid by the former SS officer in his Cherche-Midi cell.

I was faced with six complete versions and a few drafts. I undertook a careful reading of the whole. My first hurdle was to overcome doubt. Were such incoherent, implausible stories worthy of in-depth study? But, considering the way in which these protean versions were being used by a growing number of historians and authors with historical pretensions, I answered in the affirmative, and set myself the task of rigorously analyzing texts that appeared to me to be the work of a mythomaniac or mystifier.

Indeed, following Gerstein means leaving the rational world behind. One must renounce logic and simple common sense. Has this militant of the Confessing Church glimpsed the torments of hell as others glimpse heavenly bliss? Is he a hallucination of the *Unterwelt* (underworld) of

which Nietzsche speaks? Wars give rise to myths. The enemy is always a barbaric monster who must be exterminated, because he stands in the way of the new golden age promised by the victors.

After the end of the First World War, Marxists brought paradise down to earth. This paradise was located in the land of the Soviets, and some believed in it for decades. Already, in the late 1930s, André Gide and Louis-Ferdinand Céline returned from the USSR disillusioned. The illusion continued until his own successors denounced Stalin's crimes after his death. Since then, the image of the Soviet paradise has been tarnished, and the development of tourism has enabled many people to see for themselves what life in the Soviet Union was really like.

Once the Second World War was over, there was an agreement among the victors – we'd now say a consensus – to raise hell on earth. Hell had existed in the National-Socialist empire, most notably in its concentration camps. The belief in the absolute evil secreted by the National-Socialist regime is still tenacious: "absolute evil." And tourism, in this case, is powerless. It's not possible to verify the veracity of the horror stories we're saturated with.

May I say that we seem to be facing a kind of new religion that is being imposed on us? We could call it the religion of the Holocaust, with its high priests, Elijah Wiesel, Samuel Pisar and a few others, with its liturgy and its expiatory ceremonies at sacred sites: Auschwitz, Treblinka, etc.

Just recently, when the great Zionist organs were unleashed against President Reagan on the occasion of his visit to Bitburg, Shimon Peres placed the problem squarely, not hesitating to declare:

"The last world conflict was mankind's struggle against Satan."

It's true that the world of the concentration camp was appalling – you only have to read Paul Rassinier to realize that – but there's no need to go into that now. In Buchenwald, there were other deportees, Paul Rassinier's fellow prisoners, who wrote down their memories of the deportation. Among them were academics. They belonged to the Strasbourg faculty, which had been transplanted to Clermont-Ferrand after the armistice in 1940. And at the end of 1943, the Germans, believing they had discovered a hotbed of resistance there, deported many of the professors and some of the students. A book was published after the war, written by these professors and students. Its title: *From the University to the Concentration Camp. Testimonies from Strasbourg* (*De l'Université au camp de concentration. Témoignages strasbourgeois*). In this book, the best rubs shoulders with the worst. The best, for example, is the chapter headlined "Arrival at Buch-

enwald" ("*L'arrivée à Buchenwald*"), written by Georges Straka, professor of Romance linguistics. His account is very harrowing and certainly corresponds to reality. On the subject of gas chambers, he writes simply: "We knew that in some camps there were gas chambers, but the *Lagerschutz* told us that in Buchenwald there were none." (The *Lagerschutz* was an inmate who performed camp guard duties.) When Straka says: "We knew," he naturally means: we had heard, we were convinced. This proves that the rumor about the gas chambers was already extremely widespread in 1944, when the unfortunate academics arrived at the Buchenwald Camp. And yet, for several decades now, no one in Buchenwald has claimed that there were gas chambers. Well, when it comes to Buchenwald, where no one claims anymore that there were homicidal gas chambers, there was one academic who saw them and described them in such detail that he left Gerstein himself far behind. This scholar, gifted with an uncommon imagination, is the theologian Charles Hauter, and I'll quickly read you what he has written on the subject.

His chapter is headlined "Reflections of a survivor" ("*Réflexions d'un rescapé*"). In the same book, *From the University to the Concentration Camp,* there are blatant contradictions. One (as we have just seen) clearly states that there was no gas chamber at Buchenwald; the other, the theologian Charles Hauter, describes it as follows:

> *"Machinism literally abounded when it came to extermination. Extermination had to be carried out quickly, and required special industrialization. Gas chambers met this need in a variety of ways. Some, of refined taste, were supported by pillars of porous material, inside which the gas was formed and then passed through the walls. Others were simpler in structure, but all were sumptuous in appearance. It was easy to see that the architects had designed them with pleasure, giving them their full attention and the resources of their aesthetic sense. They were the only parts of the camp truly built with love."*

Theologian Charles Hauter had a vivid imagination, and I'll spare you the rest: corpses thrown onto conveyor belts, tattooed skins prepared for lampshades, and so on. Professor Pierre Vidal-Naquet, in his book titled *Jews, Memory and the Present* (*Les Juifs, la mémoire et le présent*), admitted himself that this pastor had never seen gas chambers and was delirious about them.

Supposing Pastor Hauter's accounts had applied to Auschwitz, Belzec or Treblinka, i.e. to one of the five camps in Poland where the most moderate opponents of revisionism claim there were gas chambers, wouldn't this testimony have been proffered like Gerstein's?

In horror, as in everything else, moderation is required.

Throughout my work, I've kept in mind the need to dispassionate the debate. We are dealing with a serious historical issue. Let's study it calmly. Gerstein's testimony has never really been examined until now. On the other hand, it has been much quoted and, in a way, invoked. A few sentences, even a few words, are written. In a pinch, Gerstein's name alone would suffice: he is the Righteous One among the Gentiles, the only Christian we can respect, and he has become a kind of talisman against evil spirits, meaning, against skeptics.

Céline, our great Louis-Ferdinand Céline, found a wonderful adjective to describe gas chambers. In his post-war correspondence, perhaps to Albert Paraz,[1] he spoke of a "magical gas chamber." Indeed, to penetrate the world of the gas chambers, one needed a master magician, and Gerstein fit the bill perfectly.

With him, and with others too, the gas chambers became immaterial, and their power of attraction grew with their immateriality. I tried to help break this magic circle. I have considered and studied the Gerstein document in its six versions, as I would any other document claimed to have historical value.

My thesis does not prove the non-existence of gas chambers. Researchers who are more qualified than I am, are taking it upon themselves to make the results of their work known to us. I'm thinking in particular of Professor Faurisson's work in France, Dr. Stäglich's in Germany and Arthur Butz's in the United States. But if my thesis does not add anything concrete to the problem of the gigantic human slaughterhouses that allegedly operated in certain camps in Poland, it does perhaps make it clear that the proponents of official history are not very fussy about the quality of the documents they proffer as proof of what they assert. Would they be so limited in their choice? The proverb says that, if you try to prove too much, you prove nothing.

My ambition has therefore been deliberately limited: on the one hand, I wanted to demonstrate that Gerstein's testimony has no evidential value; it is more akin to a bad chapter in a soap opera than a historical document. On the other hand, I wondered about the motives of those who insist on

[1] It was in a letter to Albert Paraz that Céline wrote about the magical gas chamber. In volume 6 of *Cahiers Céline* (1980), on page 276, letter 195, we read: "Rassinier is entirely an honest man… His admirable book is going to make a lot of noise. Even so, it tends to cast doubt on the magical gas chamber…! That's no mean feat! A whole world of haters will be forced to yelp at the iconoclast! The gas chamber was everything! It made everything possible! The devil has to come up with something else… Oh, I'm quite at peace!"

using such a suspect, incoherent account. Have they really read it? Have they just skimmed it? It's impossible for them to have exercised their critical faculties.

This story could serve as a test for all people of good faith. There are some. There are those who believe in the gas chambers. There are those who don't believe in them, and there are those who doubt, who haven't studied the subject in particular, who wonder, because they have an inquiring mind. And it seems to me that both could agree to eliminate the Gerstein evidence.

As for me, I've stuck to the exact texts, refusing to make them say anything other than what they say. In a way, my work is a response to Professor Pierre Vidal-Naquet. In his aforementioned book, *Jews, Memory and the Present*, he refers again to Gerstein's testimony, and writes:

> *"Testimonies that are in reality very different are mixed together under the same name. Kurt Gerstein, for example, the main witness to the extermination process at Belzec in 1942, an anti-Nazi Christian dressed in SS garb, cannot be compared with the commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss. Yet his testimony, challenged for a variety of reasons, not all of which were bad (the obviously erroneous nature of the numerical details, the poor quality of early publications), has stood the test victoriously."*

You will have noticed that Professor Vidal-Naquet alludes to the fact that the testimony was called into question for reasons that were not all bad. Why does he do this? He does so because in 1981, in May, there were the proceedings of the trial between Léon Poliakov and Robert Faurisson, and because I had written to him a few months earlier, drawing his attention to certain implausibilities in the story and to the incorrect reproductions by Léon Poliakov. Nevertheless, P. Vidal-Naquet concludes by talking about the victory of Gerstein's story after the ordeal. As for me, I have endeavored to have it recognized that, contrary to Pierre Vidal-Naquet's assertion, Gerstein's story did not emerge victorious from the ordeal. I think it is implausible and will remain so.

What goals have I set myself in preparing this thesis? My first aim is very simple: to serve the truth. I wanted to provide historians with complete texts in which they could place their trust. I wanted to prevent them from unwittingly falling into the errors of their predecessors. My second aim? To make a small contribution to ensuring that the revisionist school of thought, which is dedicated to bringing the history of the Second World War into line with the facts, is recognized as having a place in academia, and that the slander is brought to an end.

Revisionists are not fantasists, still less forgers, as some people are not afraid to say; they are competent people of good faith with whom it can be enriching to discuss, even and especially when we don't share their opinion.

In France, we know how the university treated Professor Faurisson, but fortunately there are still independent professors who respect freedom of research. In Germany, the situation is much worse than in France. Three or four years ago, in Göttingen, a council of German professors was so consumed by the virus of guilt-tripping that it stripped a jurist, Dr. Wilhelm Stäglich, of his doctorate. And what was Dr. Stäglich's crime? Publishing a revisionist book titled *The Auschwitz Myth* (*Der Auschwitz-Mythos*).

I believe that the revisionist school must live on and open up to those who doubt, to all those who ask questions. Those who hold to the official truth do not tolerate doubt.

So, anyone who doubts has a place among the revisionists. Those who hold to the official truth prove on a daily basis that they do not tolerate doubt, by presenting us with a monolithic history for which they demand full and complete adherence. But it's easier to doubt than to deny. It's hard to get rid of beliefs that are 40 years old, and for younger people, these are beliefs that go back even to their birth. I'd be delighted if a simple university thesis, the importance of which I'm not exaggerating, could be the start of a wide-ranging debate on subjects that are still taboo today. For some time now, there has been a certain disquiet and disarray among the opponents of the revisionists. In this respect, an article published very recently by the major regional newspaper *Ouest-France* is very significant. The article is headlined: "Death camps, the living memory of witnesses." The author is Michel de Boüard, a Resistance deportee. He was deported to the Mauthausen Camp, where he was registered with number 63584. Michel de Boüard is an eminent academic, as Honorary Dean of the Faculty of Letters in Caen, member of the Comité d'histoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale from 1946 to 1980, and current member of the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent*. He writes:

> *"Between 1933 and 1945, the world of concentration camps had many different facets, and at the same time, there were quite a few differences between them. Historians must be careful not to confuse the two. The statistics, skillfully and patiently compiled by the Comité d'histoire de la* [Deuxième] *Guerre mondiale, should also be published without further delay. Because they showed lower mortality rates than previously believed, the Committee postponed their release for the following reason: under cur-*

rent conditions (this was in 1973), it is not appropriate to consider publication. The deportees' associations were reluctant."

And Michel de Boüard continues:

"However, by failing to overcome these reservations, we have left the field open to the perfidious propaganda of those who deny the reality of the concentration camps. [Henri Roques's remark: I know of no revisionist who denies the reality of concentration camps] *It's easy for them to refute the simplifications and systematic generalizations to which many writers, often former deportees, give in. In 50 years' time, what will historians conclude when they have to choose between the two theses?"*

This is an astonishing development on the part of this member of the Comité d'histoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. But "in order not to leave the field open to revisionists," as he puts it, what better solution than to listen to their arguments and discuss them?[2]

A young philosopher who disappeared during the last war – I'll tell you her name, it was Simone Weil, but with a W [light laughter in the room] – left us this bitter thought:

"Justice is the eternal fugitive from the camp of the vanquished."

It could be the motto of the revisionist school…

Forty years after the end of the Second World War, does it make sense to perpetuate the distinction between executioners and victims, between victors and vanquished? In Europe, there are only the defeated, and the defeated are searching for their lost identity. To regain it, isn't it imperative to demand the return of justice?

[2] We know that Dean de Boüard courageously chose to support the Nantes thesis and its author. Readers will find in this book a summary of the interview he gave on this subject to the Christian-democratic daily *Ouest-France* (issue dated 2-3 August 1986).

Introduction

Why were the "confessions" of the German Kurt Gerstein chosen as the subject of this thesis? Mainly for the following reasons:

– Since 1945, these "confessions" have been used by numerous French and foreign authors in books, magazine articles and newspapers.
– Attentive readers of these books or articles have been baffled by the significant differences in the reproduction of the texts, as well as in the dates attributed to the "confessions"; the latter do indeed exist in several versions, which justifies a comparative study.
– We are faced with an enigma, due in particular to Gerstein's strange personality, and a critical examination of his "confessions" could eventually help us to solve it. However, the Gerstein enigma will not be the focus of our work, since this is not a historical study. We will only touch on it through the books devoted to him by three authors (see the section starting on p. 48), as well as the letters sent to us by his widow.
– The texts left to us by the former SS officer represent a key piece in the case of homicidal gas chambers, whose existence in the National-Socialist wartime camps is strongly disputed by revisionist authors.[1]
– Not only all revisionist authors, but also some non-revisionists, want a university thesis to establish the exact texts. Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet both declared, during a trial between Léon Poliakov and Robert Faurisson on 29 May 1981,[2] that, if any additions, deletions or

[1] Revisionists are authors who, in the aftermath of the First and Second World Wars, felt that, in reaction to the excesses of war propaganda, it was necessary to review or revise the historiography of these two conflicts in order to bring historiography into accord with the facts. The main revisionists of the First World War are the American Harry Elmer Barnes, the British Lord Ponsonby and the French Jean Norton Cru (*Témoins*, *Du témoignage*). The main revisionists of the Second World War are Frenchman Paul Rassinier (1906-1967) and his successor Robert Faurisson, US-American Arthur Robert Butz and German Wilhelm Stäglich.

[2] A stenographic record of the hearing was drawn up by the firm J. Fleury, approved by the Paris Tribunal de Grande Instance. A copy of this document was used in the preparation of this thesis. References to this report are indicated in parentheses by the words "*Compte rendu sténographique*, 1981." We felt that this account of a trial could not be overlooked, at the center of which were Gerstein's "confessions" and in which not only L. Poliakov, P. Joffroy and P. Vidal-Naquet took part, but also witnesses from 1942

errors could be found in L. Poliakov's publications concerning Gerstein's account, the fault was venial, since it was not a university thesis.

This uncertainty as to the exact texts of the "confessions," their authenticity and veracity, justifies, it seems to us, the present thesis being defended within the framework of a French-language study and research unit. First of all, it is important to solve a problem of text editing, even if the style of these stories is mediocre, given that the author did not write in his mother tongue. Although the author is German, of the six versions of the "confessions" known to us, four are written in French. Gerstein, who had studied our language in high school, surrendered to the troops of the French 1st Army occupying Württemberg at the end of April 1945, and wrote his "confessions" for them in French. His French is often clumsy and incorrect, but sufficiently comprehensible to eliminate the risk of misunderstanding.

Our decision to call the texts left by Gerstein "confessions" is questionable. They have generally been called "reports" by the authors who have reproduced or discussed them. The term "report" does not seem appropriate to us either; the texts of the former SS officer have neither the rigor nor the dryness that one would expect from a report.

To avoid repeating the word "confessions" too often, we have sometimes used the words "narrative" and "document" in the course of our thesis, but these terms are too neutral to qualify the different versions.

Given the tone, form and contents of these texts, we agree with Olga Wormser-Migot (*Le Système concentrationnaire nazi*, p. 11 and p. 426) that the word "confession" is the most appropriate.

However, we have placed the word "confession" in quotation marks, since it is our choice and not Gerstein's.

A Hot Topic?

The subject is certainly topical. On 21 February 1979, the French daily newspaper *Le Monde* published a "Declaration by Historians" on "Hitler's Policy of Extermination" (see the translated text starting on p. 54 and the reproduction of the article on p. 254). The text was written by Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, who obtained the signatures of thirty-two colleagues, including academics such as Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Pierre Chaunu, J.-P. Vernant, Jacques Le Goff, François Furet, Fernand Braudel…

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and 1943: Baron von Otter, a diplomat stationed in Berlin, and two Dutchmen, also free workers in Berlin.

The statement reads:

"From among so very many testimonies, which obviously cannot come from those who have been killed, is it necessary to drag in that of the SS officer Gerstein, who tried in vain to alert, as early as 1942, the civil and religious authorities on what was happening in these camps? Written by himself on 26 April 1945 for the French authorities in hesitant French, his account of what he saw at Belzec, indisputable in its essentials, is all the more moving: […]*"*

This is followed by 55 lines spread over two columns of the newspaper on page 23; they are taken from Gerstein's typed account in French, bearing the symbol PS-1553, under which he was mentioned, but not accepted, by the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal on 30 January 1946. The partial reproduction of this text (which we will refer to as T II in this thesis) is faithful to the original.

The Most Convincing Evidence of the Existence of Homicidal Gas Chambers?

The two historians who chose Gerstein's testimony "among so very many testimonies" probably consider it to be the most convincing evidence for the existence of homicidal gas chambers. These testimonies can only be considered numerous if we take into account the often vague and contradictory testimonies of former deportees and combatants arriving in the camps just after having been evacuated by their guards. There is no need here to question the value being attached to these testimonies. Only the written testimonies are of interest to us; they are rare, and the editors of the historians' declaration were therefore very limited in their choice.

A Unique Case

To Pierre Joffroy, who testified on behalf of L. Poliakov during the 29 May 1981 trial, a lawyer asked the following question:

"Can the witness tell the Tribunal whether he is aware of any other testimony concerning the existence and operation of gas chambers from a high ranking SS officer, or at least of Mr. Gerstein's rank, that is available? In other words, are there any other accessible sources from SS people that we know of during the war and not after the liberation?"

Pierre Joffroy's answer:

"To the best of my knowledge, no. I think that's why Gerstein's testimony is important; that's why I felt, when writing my book, almost invested with a kind of mission, to say that this man was true, was sincere. I think the rea-

> *son people are trying to demolish this testimony is because it comes from inside the SS, and there is no other that I know of."* (*Compte rendu sténographique*, 1981)

Shortly before, at the same hearing, P. Joffroy had spontaneously declared of Gerstein:

> *"He was – I hesitate to use the word because it seems to me inadequate – he was a hero, I should say a saint."* (*Compte rendu sténographique*, 1981)

This explains the title given by Joffroy to his book on Gerstein: *God's Spy: The Passion of Kurt Gerstein*.

In the same spirit, Léon Poliakov wrote in 1964 (*Le Monde juif*, March-April, p. 4):

> *"The German Gerstein was a Righteous among the Gentiles."*

Faced with such a presentation of Gerstein's character and writings, the author of the present thesis will not say, as Pierre Joffroy did, that he feels invested with some kind of mission, but more simply that it seemed urgent to him to establish what the former SS officer's "confessions" really are, to make a comparative study of the different versions, and to assess as accurately as possible the degree of credibility that can be accorded to them.

Six Known Versions and Several Drafts

More fortunate than Pierre Joffroy, who knows of only three versions, Saul Friedländer, who lists four, and Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, who cite five, we have the privilege of knowing six, plus a few separate sheets, which were used as drafts at some point.

It is not certain that we have all the documents still in existence. It is certain, however, that many documents written either in French or in German have disappeared; details on the latter point will be provided in the course of this thesis.

Therefore, we have six complete texts, each constituting a version of the "confessions"; they bear dates between 26 April and 6 May 1945 inclusive. The originals or their duplicates (some originals having disappeared) are kept in various archives, whose names and addresses we will give as we study each of them. Here is a chronological list of these six texts, with the acronym we have assigned to them:

– T I: Handwritten text dated 26 April 1945 in French;
– T II: Typed text dated 26 April 1945 in French (PS-1553);
– T III: Typed text dated 4 May 1945 in German;
– T IV: Handwritten text dated 6 May 1945 in French;

– T V: Typed text dated 6 May 1945, in French, headlined "Rapport du Dr. Gerstein de Tübingen." There are three versions: a) the ORCG[3] version, which is the first of the three (T Va); b) a version derived from the previous one, but with a few variations and transcription errors; this is the text preserved in the National Archives in Washington, with the declassification reference 01.0813 (T Vb); c) an English translation, headed "Translation," obviously based on the second version, with the same reference 01.0813 from the National Archives in Washington (T Vc).
– T VI: Typed text dated 6 May 1945 in German (PS-2170).

In addition to these six texts, we present:

– Additions and drafts (to which we will not assign an acronym).
– Gerstein's last letter to his wife, dated 26 May 1945.
– Two interrogations of Gerstein by the French military justice system in June and July 1945 in Paris.
– An article published in *France-Soir* on 4 July 1945.
– Gerstein's request for a lawyer, written in capital letters on 15 July 1945.
– Some fragments of documents found after Gerstein's death, in his cell in the Cherche-Midi prison.

No Text Prior to 1945

Hypotheses concerning the existence of "Gerstein reports" (*sic*) as early as 1942 have been put forward by certain authors. It seems essential to study this question, and to state our conviction on this point.

The historians' statement published in *Le Monde* in 1979 recalled the efforts of SS officer Gerstein "who tried in vain to alert, as early as 1942, the civil and religious authorities on what was happening in these camps."

The SS officer did speak to a number of witnesses who confirmed this. The Swedish diplomat von Otter and two Dutchmen who were working in Berlin in 1943 confirmed this. A number of Protestant pastors, including Otto Dibelius and Kurt Rehling, were less forthcoming, admitting that they had spoken to Gerstein about his experiences in the Polish camps.

At no point do the texts of the "confessions" state that Gerstein made a written report to anyone; indeed, one of the two Dutchmen quoted above stated as a witness at the 29 May 1981 trial:

> *"Gerstein told us that he could not write about it [i.e. about the gassings at Belzec and Treblinka]"* (*Compte rendu sténographique*, 1981)

[3] ORCG: *Organe de recherche des crimes de guerre*, War Crimes Investigation Branch. In 1945, it was a French service based at 48 rue de Villejust in Paris.

Nevertheless, Saul Friedländer wrote:

> *"In August 1942, Gerstein, who had just witnessed gas extermination operations, tried to be received by the Nuncio Orsenigo, but was turned away. He then sent a report to the legal adviser of Archbishop Preysing of Berlin, asking that it be forwarded to the Holy See. There is no reason to believe that the text was not sent to Rome. The Gerstein report of 1942 was probably virtually identical to the one he wrote on 4 May 1945, since it describes the same event.* […] *In view of the fact that to this day the Holy See has not denied having received the Gerstein report during the war, we are entitled to assume that a text substantially identical to the one we are about to quote was transmitted to the Supreme Pontiff by Archbishop Preysing at the end of 1942."* (*Pius XII et le IIIe Reich*, 1964, p. 123)

Historian Friedländer's deduction seems adventurous. In fact, the fact that a supposed recipient did not deny having received a supposed document does not suffice to consider that this document is very likely to have existed.

Saul Friedländer's assumptions are almost on a par with the theatrical license used by Protestant Rolf Hochhuth in his play *The Deputy*. Gerstein plays an important role, as does Pope Pius XII. On stage, Gerstein, who has entered the Vatican on leave, is reunited with the nuncio, Archbishop Orsenigo, with whom he has already spoken in Berlin (this last point is untrue: the former SS officer himself wrote in his "confessions" that he had been turned away as soon as he presented himself at the Berlin nunciature). In Rome, Gerstein talks to prelates very close to the Pope, and vehemently criticizes them for the pontiff's silence in the face of the exterminations of Jews in Poland. Hochhuth presents us with situations that are pure invention, and his theatrical outrages have caused scandals the world over. But it must be said in his defense that Rolf Hochhuth did not present himself as a historian, but as a playwright.

In conclusion, there is not the slightest indication that Gerstein wrote any text in 1942 or later, before April 1945.[4]

Gerstein's Biographers

Three books have thoroughly dealt with the Gerstein case; all three were published in the 1960s, after the almost worldwide tour of R. Hochhuth's play *The Deputy*, which we've just mentioned.

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[4] A document written in Dutch and dated 25 March 1943 exists; we know about it, but it is so suspect that none of Gerstein's biographers has seen fit to point it out. It could be a backdated forgery.

The legend of SS officer Gerstein, who during the war is said to have tried to make the whole world aware of the mass extermination of Jews in homicidal gas chambers, was woven into a theatrical work. Some Protestant and Israelite circles sought to have Gerstein rehabilitated; indeed, posthumously, the former SS officer had not been absolved in 1950 by a denazification chamber, which merely granted him extenuating circumstances. The desired rehabilitation came in 1965. The play *The Deputy* was released at the end of 1962, the same year as the opening of the Second Vatican Council, convened by Pope John XXIII.

The first biography of Kurt Gerstein appeared in Zurich in 1964; it was written by the German Helmut Franz, himself the brother of a pastor, and was titled *Kurt Gerstein, Maverick of the Church's Resistance against Hitler* (*Kurt Gerstein. Aussenseiter des Widerstandes der Kirche gegen Hitler*). A long-time friend of Gerstein, Franz frequented the youth movements of the Evangelical Church with him between 1925 and 1933. He remained in contact with him, and saw him several times during the war. At the end of his book, Franz reproduces with accuracy, but also with omissions that he points out, the typed account in German dated 4 May 1945, evidently the only one he was aware of, thanks to Hans Rothfels's reproduction (*Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1953).

The second biography, by Saul Friedländer, was published in France in 1967. Its title: *Kurt Gerstein or the Ambiguity of Goodness* (*Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*). This book contains a wealth of information on Gerstein's life before and during the war. Our own research has convinced us that some of this information is not accurate. As for the texts by the former SS officer, it is clear that S. Friedländer borrowed them from L. Poliakov. We'll see later how he used them.

Also in France, in 1969, Pierre Joffroy took a decisive step forward with his book *God's Spy: The Passion of Kurt Gerstein*. In this book, there is no longer any question of ambiguity, as S. Friedländer had suggested. P. Joffroy endeavors to share with his readers his conviction that Gerstein is a kind of saint, an intermediary between God and men. The latter did not understand him and were, either directly or indirectly, responsible for his death in a Parisian prison. There are three texts of the "confessions" known to P. Joffroy (*op. cit.*, p. 283). The author reproduces in full and faithfully the one we call T II, without even improving the often approximate French of the former SS man, which may put off the reader (*op. cit.*, pp. 283-290). We have only noted two minor errors, which are probably typing mistakes or misprints.

The Metamorphosis of the "Confessions"

In 1951, Léon Poliakov published his book *Breviary of Hate* (*Bréviaire de la haine*), with a preface by François Mauriac. Pages 220 to 224 contain a lengthy extract from a story by Gerstein. Which story is it? Léon Poliakov writes that it bears "the certain date of 5 May 1945," but none of the six texts bears this date. In fact, Léon Poliakov used the typed French version dated 26 April 1945 (which we call T II) and reproduced it in part, with serious distortions and omissions.

In 1953, in Germany, Professor Dr. Hans Rothfels reproduced the German version dated 4 May 1945 (which we call T III) in the periodical *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (No. 2, April 1953). This reproduction is faithful, but incomplete: the historian pointed out that some omissions had been made, and none of the supplements (*Ergänzungen*) had been included.

In France, Léon Poliakov's book *Breviary of Hate* was republished three times (in 1960, 1974 and 1979); the author maintained the unfaithful 1951 text, and inserted sentences taken from the German version that Hans Rothfels had made public in 1953. He failed to inform the reader of these additions.

Léon Poliakov, Hans Rothfels and a number of other authors who copied the publications of the first two had an attentive and critical reader in France in the person of Paul Rassinier.[5] The latter was intrigued by the differences he noted from one text to the next. In particular, he took Léon Poliakov to task, accusing him of presenting different texts attributed to the former SS man, while claiming each time to reproduce the same document. L. Poliakov did not respond to Paul Rassinier's criticisms, nor did he take them into account.

If we attempt to sum up the use of the six versions known to us, we can see the following:

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[5] From an early age, Rassinier was active in libertarian movements; in 1939, he belonged to the left wing of the French Section of the Workers' International (*Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière*, SFIO) and was a resolute pacifist. During the German occupation, he was one of the founders of a resistance movement; arrested and tortured by the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*) in 1943, he was deported to the Buchenwald and Dora camps. In 1945, he was declared 100% disabled. He held several decorations, including the *Rosette de la Résistance*. After a brief stint in the French National Assembly as the SFIO deputy for Belfort, he retired from political life to devote himself to historical research into the Nazi concentration-camp system. His research was based on personal experience. Later, he became interested in the behavior of the victors towards the vanquished, and questioned the causes of the Second World War.

1. T II and T III were the most widely used versions for reproductions that were sometimes complete, but more often partial and distorted·
2. T V has never been published in its entirety; only very fragmentary samples have been used, and the source of these samples has never been accurately identified.
3. T VI, although reported by Saul Friedländer (*K. G.*, 1967, p. 11), has never been published, not even in part.
4. Until now, T I has only been known to readers through the facsimile of pages 3 and 4 in Friedländer's book (*op. cit.*, pp. 100-103).
5. T IV, a handwritten text in French dated 6 May 1945, was discovered by us in the archives of the Evangelical Church in Bielefeld (Westphalia), since no one, to our knowledge, had reported its existence.
6. The supplements ("*Ergänzungen*") to the "confessions" T III and T IV were never published.

The following is a list, which may not be exhaustive, of reproductions from T II, T III and T V:

1) T II (Typed in French on 26 April 45) Has Been Reproduced:

1. Completely and correctly by:

– Pierre Joffroy (*L'espion de dieu*, 1969, pp. 283-290), who has only eliminated the biographical elements at the beginning and the list of people Gerstein presents as anti-Nazis at the end.
– Arthur R. Butz, a revisionist author (*The Hoax of the Twentieth* Century, 1976, pp. 251-258) who made a few minor errors, notably in the spelling of proper names. His English text comes from the official American translation of PS-1553. The most unfortunate error is the omission of the adverb "also" from a sentence in the story. It reads: "Naked in winter" instead of "Naked also in winter." Given that Gerstein's visit to the Belzec Camp took place in August, one gets the false impression due to this error that the SS officer placed this month in winter.

2. Completely but incorrectly by:

– Léon Poliakov (*Le Monde juif*, March-April 1964, pp. 4-12).

3. Partially and correctly by:

– Adalbert Rückerl (*N.S. Vernichtungslager*, 1977, pp. 61-66) in a German translation.

– Léon Poliakov (*Le Procès de Jérusalem*, 1963, pp. 224-228), who, in 1963, presented a text very different from those he had published previously and those he would publish later.

4. Partially and incorrectly by:

– Léon Poliakov (*Bréviaire de la haine*, 1951 edition, pp. 220-224), who claims to reproduce the same document in the reprints of 1960, 1974 and 1979, even though these publications are even less faithful to the original text than in the 1951 edition. In each edition, the reproduction stops just before the sentence in which Gerstein estimates the extravagant victim number of 25 million for the Belzec and Treblinka camps alone.
– J. Heydecker and J. Leeb (*Der Nürnberger Prozess*, 1958, pp. 456-460) in a German translation, with serious inaccuracies, different from those found in L. Poliakov.

2) T III (Typed in German on 4 May 45) Has Been Reproduced:

1. Correctly, but with omissions, by:

– Hans Rothfels (*Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1953, pp. 177-194), who pointed out all the omissions and gave numerous explanatory notes; the supplements ("*Ergänzungen*") are among the omissions.
– Helmut Krausnick (*Dokumentation zur Massenvergasung*, 1956), which repeats H. Rothfels's transcript, but with fewer explanatory notes;
– Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf (*Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, 1955, pp. 101-115), who reprint H. Rothfels's transcript, with the same omissions, more or less indicated, and fewer explanatory notes;

2. Incorrectly and with omissions by:

– Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf *(Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs*, 1959, pp. 107-119). This French text is presented as a translation of the German text (*op. cit.*, 1955, pp. 101-115); however, it differs in several respects from the original text, and the inaccuracies noted cannot be explained simply by translation errors.

3. Partially and incorrectly by:

– Robert Neumann (*Hitler. Aufstieg und Untergang des Dritten Reiches*, 1961, pp. 190-192), who replaced the 700-800 people crammed into a room of 25 m² with 170-180 people.

3) T V (Typed in French on 6 May 1945) Has Been Reproduced:

1. Fragmentarily but correctly by:

– Pierre Joffroy (*op. cit.*), who took samples from T V and reproduced them on various pages of his book.

2. Fragmentarily and incorrectly by:

– Léon Poliakov (*Le Monde juif*, March-April 1964, pp. 7-11), who inserted six paragraphs borrowed from T V into Gerstein's account, which was wrongly presented as a reproduction of T II. Of these six paragraphs, printed indented from the rest of the text, two are faithfully reproduced and four contain serious inaccuracies.

In the above list, we have cited neither Saul Friedländer (*Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, 1967, pp. 34, 73, 96-99, 104-108, 118-119, 143, 156-158), nor François Delpech (*Historiens et géographes*, No. 273, May-June 1979, pp. 628f.), as both simply reprinted the texts reproduced by Léon Poliakov. Finally, other authors – and these are the most numerous – have spoken of Gerstein, his presumed role, his revelations, but without publishing extracts from any of his "confessions." They include:

– Gerald Reitlinger: *The Final Solution* (1953), *The SS* (1956)
– Raul Hilberg: *The Destruction of the European Jews* (1961)
– Rolf Hochhuth: *Der Stellvertreter*, play written in 1963, translated into several languages, including French under the title *Le Vicaire*
– Jacques Nobécourt*: "The Deputy" and History* (1963)
– Lucy S. Dawidowicz: *The War against the Jews* (1975)
– Gideon Hausner: *Justice in Jerusalem*, French translation, 1976
– John Toland: *Adolf Hitler* (1976), etc.

To this list should be added the historian Olga Wormser-Migot, who defended and published her thesis *Le Système concentrationnaire nazi* (Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 1968). But while the other authors quoted do not question the veracity of Gerstein's statements, O. Wormser-Migot expresses skepticism. In particular, she writes:

> *"The leitmotifs of the confession, including the victims' prayers, are so identical to fifty other evocations – including those in Höss's Memoirs – that we for our part find it difficult to admit the complete authenticity of Kurt Gerstein's confession or the veracity of all its elements."* (*op. cit*., p. 426)

As we began this thesis, we had before our eyes:

– six versions of the "confessions" written in three different languages;
– often partial and distorted reproductions of only three of them;

– the uses to which these stories were put by many authors who were content to give a partial summary.

The overriding task then became apparent: to establish the texts with rigorous accuracy.

* * *

Below is reproduced the English translation of the article published in *Le Monde* on 21 February 1979, referred to on p. 44 (translated by Ronald V. Percival):

Hitler's Policy of Extermination: A Declaration by Historians

Since the end of the Second World War, it has happened on several occasions that publicists, sometimes taking the title of historians, have cast doubt on the veracity of the evidence on the Hitler policy of extermination. This evidence had, in 1945, a glaring obviousness. The great majority of the deportees today are dead. Their writings remain in the archives on the Third Reich, but this documentation does not always prevent reactions which are in the form of a "critique" in appearance only. To contend that Zyklon B merely exterminated lice, it is really necessary to admit in one's conscience that the Jews, the Gypsies or if need be the Slavs, or men worn out by labor, were really only lice.

That said, it is natural that the generation which did not receive the shock of 1945 today asks itself questions. It is for their use, and not in reply to just any Tom, Dick or Harry, that we are publishing this present declaration. We do so in our capacity as historians, which gives us no right but only a duty, that of being, through the schools of thought of which we are members, the servants of the humble truth, with only one mission, that long since put into words by the "Father of History": "To prevent what men have done from being erased, by time, from human memory."

"Human Animals

1. It is generally estimated that 6 million Jews, 200,000 Gypsies and 100,000 Germans, the latter considered hereditarily degenerate, were exterminated in the course of the war. We must add to that several million Poles, Russians and other Slavs, whose numbers were to be artificially re-

duced by hunger, the limitation on births or extermination by reason of the needs of the SS state, its living space and its contempt for "subhumans," for those whom Himmler called "human animals."

To these collective exterminations should be added their individual killings by the most varied methods – including poisoning by gas – of very many deportees: anti-Nazi Germans, resisters from the countries of western Europe – particularly the French – even common-law prisoners. Some of these killings arose from a "political" decision, others finished off the bodies of those who had become incapable of further work for the National-Socialist war machine.

2. The solidarity of the facts is established at the same time by the evidence of thousands of deportees, by the administrative documents coming from the archives of the Third Reich and which remain meaningful, even when written in what Eichmann called "*Amtsprache*" (bureaucrates), and, lastly, by the detailed confessions of the executioners.

3. This policy has gone through several stages. As far back as 1 September 1939, Hitler gave the order to kill off the German mentally ill, described as useless mouths. Six extermination centers with gas chambers were installed in Germany (Brandenburg, Grafeneck, Bernburg, Sonnenstein, Hartheim, Hadamar). In the face of public protests of the German clergy, Hitler was, however, compelled in August 1941 to suspend this "euthanasia program."

In anticipation of the attack against the Soviet Union, Hitler ordered the extermination of racial enemies in the territories to be conquered: the Jews, ideological adversaries, the communist "commissars," "asocial" elements, the Gypsies. At first, this extermination was essentially the work of special detachments, the "*Einsatzgruppen*." They killed – principally by shooting but also by means of trucks equipped with an apparatus for gassing the occupants – a number of human beings difficult to estimate, perhaps two million. These methods involved psychological difficulties for the military and civil authorities, and were not applied outside Soviet territory, the field par excellence of the ideological war. Everywhere else, the exterminations were effected thanks to the creation of special installations, principally on Polish territory. During the first months of 1942, five extermination camps over and above that of Auschwitz, which existed previously and which was then situated in the territory of the Reich, were created with all necessary installations and notably with gas chambers: Chełmno,[1] Belzec, Sobibor,

[1] At Chełmno, a camp established in December 1941, there were not stationary gas chambers, but a garage which housed "gas vans" similar to those which were used in Russia by the *Einsatzgruppen*. [Footnote in the original text.]

Treblinka, and Maidanek. An adequate setting of the scene (disguise of the buildings as ordinary railway stations with the aid of appropriate posters and signs) was intended to mislead the victims, to prevent any desperate rebellions at the last moment. From among so very many testimonies, which obviously cannot come from those who have been killed, is it necessary to drag in that of the SS officer Gerstein, who tried in vain to alert, as early as 1942, the civil and religious authorities on what was happening in these camps? Written by himself on 26 April 1945 for the French authorities in hesitant French, his account of what he saw at Belzec, indisputable in its essentials, is all the more moving:

> *"Myself with the Hauptmann Wirth, police, we find ourselves before the chambers of death. Totally naked, the men, the women, the young girls, the children, the babies, those with only one leg, all naked, pass. In a corner, a strong SS man, with a high unctuous voice, says to the poor people: 'Nothing will happen to you! It will not be necessary for you to do anything but breathe deeply, this makes the lungs strong, this inhalation, it is necessary against contagious diseases, it is a fine disinfection!' Asked what would be their fate, he says to them: 'Truly, the men must work, to build streets and houses. But the women are not obliged. Only if they wish they can help with the housework or in the kitchen.' For some of these poor people, little hope once more, enough to make them walk without resistance to the chambers of death, the majority know everything, the smell tells them their fate! Then they mount the little stairway and see the truth! Mothers, nursing mothers, the babies at the breast, naked, many children of all age, naked they hesitate, but they enter into the chambers of death, most without saying a word, pushed by the others behind them, harried by the horsewhips of the SS. A Jewess, 40 years about, eyes like torches, calls down the blood of their children on their murderers. Receiving five blows of the horsewhip in the face from Hauptmann of police Wirth himself, she disappears into the gas chamber. A great many make their prayers, some others say: 'Who is it who gives the water for death?' (Israelite rite?) In the chambers, the SS push the men. 'Fill up well' the Hauptmann has ordered. The naked men are standing on the feet of the others, 700-800 to 25 m², to 45 m³! The doors close."*

Auschwitz

On 20 January 1942, explaining in front of a group of fifteen high officials what was already called "the final solution of the Jewish problem," the Minister of Police, Reinhard Heydrich, was content to say that a large part of the deported Jews "will eliminate themselves quite naturally by reason of their state of physical deficiency, and that those remaining at the end of

the account – whom we must consider as the most resistant – must be treated in consequence." Here we have a double euphemism: "to treat in consequence" meant in reality "to gas," and the least resistant elements, the women, the children, the aged, were treated in consequence upon their arrival at the places of extermination.

It was at Auschwitz that the National-Socialist plan of extermination was brought to perfection. Created in the summer of 1940, at first for political prisoners or Polish or German criminals, this camp, or this gigantic complex rather, covering some dozens of square kilometers, became at the same time a place for immediate extermination, and a labor camp of especially inhumane working conditions. The average life expectancy of the detained was six months. It was in June 1941 that Himmler charged Rudolph Hoess [sic], commandant of Auschwitz, with establishing an extermination camp there. After preliminary experiments carried out on Soviet prisoners, Hoess opted for the gas "Zyklon B," an insecticide product which was then in use by the German army. From the springtime of 1942, convoys of Jews of all nationalities, including convoys from France, flocked to Auschwitz.

In each convoy, about three quarters of the deportees – the children, the aged, most of the women – straightaway took the path to the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Their corpses were incinerated in vast crematoria adjoining the asphyxiation installations. It was at Auschwitz also where, during the summer of 1944, the Gypsies of German nationality were exterminated. Finally, it was again at Auschwitz where numerous "medical experiments" were carried out, including the dissection alive of human beings.

These practices continued right up to the month of November 1944. On the orders of Himmler, the installations for murder, gas chambers, cremation furnaces, were then destroyed, as one year previously the similar equipment at the Polish camps – with the sole exception of Majdanek – had been destroyed.

The Auschwitz camp was evacuated before the Soviet advance at the very beginning of 1945. R. Hoess estimated the number of victims at two-and-a-half million gassed, and a half million dead in the so-called proper camp; these figures are certainly exaggerated, but it is not possible to give sure figures: the SS did not keep records of those who were taken immediately to the gas chamber.

The Evidence

4. A witness, a document, is always suspect. The criticism of texts is one of the fundamental rules of our profession. It is not possible, however, to suspect a gigantic collection of corroborative evidence, emanating from persons of all professions, of all levels of education; evidence which, in some instances, has been produced from legal proceedings in the course of a trial, where one has seen the judges, including German judges, become proportionately more and more strict as to the quality of the proof, as the immediate impression of horror which marked the end of the war has become more distant. Is it necessary to detail what all those have witnessed who have participated in the extermination process at whatever level, from the members of the "*Sonderkommando*" responsible for taking the victims to the gas chamber and for plundering the corpses, right up to the commandant of Auschwitz in person?

5. One last word to finish. Everyone is free to interpret a phenomenon such as the Hitlerian genocide according to his own philosophy. Everyone is free either to compare it or not with other murder enterprises, previous, contemporary, subsequent. Everyone is free to refer to such and such sort of explanation; everyone is free, to the limit, to imagine or to dream that these monstrous deeds did not take place. Unfortunately, they did take place, and no one can deny their existence without committing an outrage against the truth. It is not necessary to ask oneself how, *technically*, such a mass murder was possible. It was technically possible because it took place. Such is the obligatory point of departure for all historic inquiry on the subject. It concerns us simply to recall this truth: there is not, there cannot be, any debate on the existence of the gas chambers.

This text has been signed by the historians whose names follow and who work or teach at the College of France, at the National Center for Scientific Research, at the Universities of Paris and the provinces, at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Science, at the Practical School of Advanced Studies: Philippe Aries, Alain Besançon, Robert Bonnaud, Fernand Braudel, Pierre Chaunu, Monique Clavel-Leveque, Mark Ferro, François Furet, Yvon Garlan, Jacques Juillard, Ernest Labrousse, Jacques Le Goff, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Pierre Leveque, Nicole Loraux, Robert Mandrou, Claude Mosse, Roland Mousnier.

Chapter I: Establishing the Texts

General Remarks

The reading and comparative study of the six texts we know is tedious. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, testifying at the 29 May 1981 trial, said that their reproduction, exactly as they appear in the originals, in what he called a diplomatic edition, would be virtually unreadable (*Compte rendu sténographique*, 1981). In fact, this publication is not unreadable, only tiresome.

In our chapter "Establishing the Texts" of this English edition of our thesis, we provide an English translation of each French and German version, in line with the originals. However, the translations of the French versions have been cleansed in the sense that Gerstein's original French is full of errors and false word choices, which would be impossible or inappropriate to reproduce in any translation. In some cases, we have placed Gerstein's awkward choices of French words in brackets, to enable the reader to track our improved word choices. We have made two omissions to lighten the reading of the documents:

– The first omission is at the beginning; it contains biographical information on Gerstein for the period 1905-1938.
– The second omission is at the end; in some versions, Gerstein wrote an additional page with a list of people whom the SS officer presented as anti-Nazi. We have not reproduced this additional page.

The original documents are reproduced completely in Appendix I of this English edition of our thesis. These reproductions therefore include the passages which, in our translations, were the subject of the two omissions mentioned earlier. It should be noted that the text of the omissions is uncontested and varies very little from one version to another.[1]

[1] In the "confessions" of 26 April 1945 (T I and T II) Gerstein made a mistake as to the date of his marriage. Instead of 2 November 1937 (date of the religious ceremony), the text reads 2 May 1937. When asked about this, Frau Gerstein replied that 2 May is actually her birthday. This is a minor error, but we feel it's our duty to point it out.

[For better readability and in contrast to the original French version of this thesis and the first English edition, we have kept the English translations of all six text together as one text block, uninterrupted by headlines, as was done in the other editions mentioned. In each case, we indicate on which page of the original the translation starts. The page breaks of the original are indicated in curly braces, for instance the break from the 1st to the 2nd page: {1|2}. Where the break occurs in mid-sentence, the location given is only approximate both due to the different sentence structure of the English translation, and because in some cases text of the previous page is repeated on the next page; the Editor.]

Text T I

It is handwritten in French, dated 26 April 1945. The original is kept at the *Landeskirchliches Archiv der Evangelischen Kirche von Westfalen* in Bielefeld/Westphalia. It is item No. 32 in *Bestand* ("fonds") 5,2. The Bielefeld archives bear the acronym LKA, which will be used in this study. T I was handed over to LKA by Elfriede Gerstein, widow of the former SS officer, on 14 August 1972.

T I is made up of ten fully written pages, plus two further pages in the form of drafts, which partially repeat passages from the previous ten pages.

The tenth page, numbered 9 (the reason for which will be explained later), is not included by LKA in Document No. 32, but filed separately, although there is no doubt that it should be a part of that document. Indeed, the ninth page of T I ends with the words: "I had them written in my name" ("*Je les ai fait écrire à mon nom*") and the tenth page begins with the words: "for – as I said – discretion, in truth to be somewhat free in disposition…" ("pour – comme j'ai dit – discrétion, en véritée pour être quelquement libre dans la disposition…"). The connection is perfect from page to page.

[The below translation starts on the second page of the original, numbered "— 2 —," roughly in the middle of the written text, at the end of the second line of the second paragraph. Page breaks given follow the number of pages, not Gerstein's flawed numbering, which has two number 2s; hence, there is an offset in our counting and Gerstein's numbering starting at page 3, his page numbering "2)".]

* * *

Hearing about the massacres of imbeciles & the insane, shocked and wounded inside, having such a case in my family, I had only one desire: to see, to see into all this machinery and then to shout out to all the people!

Armed with two references from the two Gestapo employees who had dealt with my case, it was not difficult to join the SS Army. 10 March –2 June 1941, basic soldier training in Hamburg-Langenhoorn, Arnhem & Oranienburg[2] with 40 doctors – for my dual studies – technical & medical – I was ordered to join the medico-technical department of the SS FuehrungsHauptamt – SS Army Medical Service.

At this place of duty, I myself chose the task of immediately constructing {2|3} stationary and motorized disinfection devices, and drinking-water filters for troops and prison camps. Thanks to my thorough knowledge of the industry, I soon succeeded, as my predecessors had not. So it was possible to lower the death toll considerably. For my success, I soon became a lieutenant. December 1941, once again, great danger. Hearing by chance of my entry into the SS, the NSDAP judge who had pronounced my exclusion, made great efforts to hunt and persecute me. But my boss, delighted with my success, declared me sincere and indispensable. Because a large part of the disinfection service was carried out using prussic acid (Cyankali),[3] I had to take over this service too, but exclusively for disinfection.

On 8 June 1942, SS Sturmbannführer Guenther of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, unknown to me, entered my duty room in civilian clothes. He ordered me to take 100 kgs of prussic acid from a truck and go to a location known only to the driver. We set off. At Kollin, near Prague, we loaded the truck with the acid and drove to Lublin/Poland. There, SS Gruppenführer Globocnek [recte: Globocnik] was waiting for us. As there was still room in the car, I had taken the SS Obersturmbannführer Professor Dr. Pfannenstiel with me. Globocnek told us: "This is one of the most secret things there is. Anyone who talks about it will be shot immediately. Yesterday, two talkers died. Then he explained: Just now, on 17 August 1942, there are 3 installations:

1) Belzec on the road Lublin-Lemberg in the sector at the Russian demarcation line. Maximum 15,000 per day (seen!)

2) Sobibor (I don't know exactly where, not seen!) 20,000 per day maximum –

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2 Generally known as Sachsenhausen, which is a district of the city of Oranienburg.

3 Editors remark: Prussic acid – proper name: hydrogen cyanide (HCN) – is not identical with *Cyankali*, an old German term for potassium cyanide (KCN), which is the potassium salt of the weak acid hydrogen cyanide.

3) Tréblinca – 120 km NNE of Warsawa [sic], seen, 25,000 per day maximum –

4) Maidanneck, near Lublin, (seen) in preparation.

You'll need – says Globocnek – to disinfect very large quantities of clothing, ten or twenty times the result of the *Spinnstoff-Sammlung*,[4] which was done only to conceal the origin of Jewish clothing. Then Globocnek: {3|4}

Your second duty: to change our gas chambers, now running on exhaust from an old "Diesel" engine, to something more toxic and faster, that is, prussic acid. But the Führer and Himmler, who were here on 15 August (the day before yesterday), made it my duty: anyone who has to see the death factories must be accompanied by me (Globocnek) myself. Then Professor Pfannenstiel: What does the Fuhrer say?

Then Glob.: Faster, faster, finish all the action, he says. Then Ministerialdirektor Dr. Lindner from the Innenministerium: Wasn't it better to burn the bodies instead of burying them? Perhaps another generation will think differently.

Then Globocnek: Gentlemen, if a generation should ever come after us that does not understand our work, so good, so necessary, that is so cowardly [*carieuse*] and rotten, then, gentlemen, all National Socialism was for nothing. On the contrary, we would have to bury tables of bronze [*bronce*] to which it is fixed that we, we had the courage to accomplish this gigantic work. Then Hitler: Yes, my good Globocnek, that's the word, it is also my opinion! –

The other day, we were off to Belcek. A small station leans against the yellow sand hill, immediately to the left (=N!) of the street and the railway. To the south, near the highway, a few service houses with the sign: Belcek Service Site of the SS Army – Globocnek introduced me to Hauptsturmfuehrer Obermeyer from Pirmasens, who showed me the facilities with great reluctance. On this day, we didn't see the dead, but the smell of the whole area, including the road, was pestilential. Next to the small station, there was a large "Cloakroom" hut with a "Valuables" counter. Then, a 100-chair "Hairdressers" room. Then, a 150 m corridor in the open air with barbed wire and signs: To the baths & inhalations! {4|5}

Before us a house like a bathing institute, to the right and left a large concrete pot with geranium or begonia (flowers). After climbing a small staircase, to the right and left, three and three rooms like garages, 4 x 5 m, 1.90 high. On the way back, wooden exits. On the roof, a copper Star of

[4] Collection of clothes and textiles for the war effort.

David. Before the building, inscription: "Heckenholt Foundation." I didn't see anything more in the afternoon.

Another morning, a few minutes before 7 a.m., I was told: after 10 minutes, the 1st train! In fact, after just a few minutes, the first train arrived from Lemberg. 45 railway cars, containing 6,700 people, 1,450 already dead on arrival. Behind the little barbed-wire skylights, children, yellow with fear, women and men. The train arrives. 200 Ukrainians [*Ukrains*], forced into this service, rip open the doors and, using leather horsewhips, chase the people out of the railway cars.

Then a loudspeaker gives instructions: in the open air – some in barracks – strip off all clothing, including prostheses and glasses. With a small string, given by a 3-4-year-old Jewish boy, tie the shoes together. Return all valuables and money at the counter, without vouchers or tickets. Then women, girls to the hairdressers – have the hair cut with one or two cuts, which disappears into big potato sacks, to make some special things for the submarines (linings, etc.), tells me the SS Unterscharfuehrer on duty.

Then the march begins: to the right, to the left, the barbed wire, behind the naked procession, two dozen Ukrainians with bayonets [*bajonets*] and SS men with their leather horsewhips.[5] Guided by an extraordinarily beautiful young girl, {5|6} the procession moves on. Myself with the greatest murderer of all time (Hitler and Himmler excepted), this Hauptmann of police Wirth, a little Swabian [*Suebe*] with a bald head, golden spectacles.

We find ourselves before the death chambers. Totally naked, men, women, girls, children, babies, men with only one leg, all naked pass through. At the corner, a strong SS man says loudly to the unfortunates: "Nothing will happen to you! You'll need nothing more than to inhale, it's very good for the lungs, this inhalation is necessary against contagious diseases, it's a nice disinfection. Asked what their fate would be, he told them: True, men have to work, building streets and houses. But women don't have to. Only if they want to, they can help in the household or in the kitchen.

For some of these poor people, small hope once again, enough to make them walk without resistance to the death chambers. The majority know everything – the smell tells them their fate! Then they climb the little staircase and – see the truth. Mothers, nursing mothers with their babies on their breasts, naked, many children of all ages, naked they hesitate and en-

[5] Not the light carriage whip seen today. This horsewhip, in common use where motorized transport was not possible, was made with a heavy wooden butt about 18 inches long – the size of a policeman's truncheon/night stick – and with thongs that could easily reach 15 feet in length. It was used to control teams of 6 horses or oxen.

ter the death chambers, most without a word, pushed by others behind them, harried by the horsewhips of the SS. A Jewish woman, some 45 years, her eyes like torches, calls down the blood of their children on their murderers. Many say their prayers. Others say: Who lends us the water of death? (Israelite rite?) The Jewess with the blazing eyes receives 4, 5 blows in the face from Hauptman Wirth's horsewhip personally. In the rooms, the SS urges the men, "fill up properly," Hauptmann Wirth has ordered. The naked people are standing on each other's feet, 700-800 on 25 m², 45 m³!– The doors close. Meanwhile, the rest of the train, naked, waits. Also in winter naked. They can catch their death, they say! But, that's why they're here for, was the reply of a young SS man – At this moment, I understand why "Heckenholt foundation." Heckenholt, – that's the mechanic of the diesel engine, whose exhaust is destined to kill the unfortunates. SS Unterscharfuehrer Heckenholt goes to some trouble to get the Diesel going. But it doesn't work! Hauptmann Wirth arrives. You can see he is frightened, because me, I see the disaster. Yes, I see and I wait. My "stop" watch has timed everything – 50 minutes, 70 minutes – the Diesel doesn't work! The people wait in their chamber. In vain – we listen to them crying "like in the synagogue" says SS Sturmbannfuehrer Professor Doctor Pfannenstiel, ordinarius of hygiene at the University of Marburg/Lahn, his ear to the wooden door. {6|7}

Hauptmann Wirth furious, takes up his horsewhip [*carache*]: 11, 12 blows to the face of the Ukrainian [*Ukrain*], who is helping Heckenholt. After two hours 49 minutes – the "stop" watch has recorded everything – the Diesel starts. Up to this moment, the people in the already filled 4 chambers live, live, 4 times 750 people in 4 times 45 m³!

Again, 25 minutes pass: many, it's true, are dead. We see through the small window in which the electric lamp allows us to see, for a moment, the inside of the room. After 28 minutes, only a few survive; after 32, finally, all are dead! On the other side, Jewish workers open the wooden doors. For their terrible service, they were promised freedom and a few percentages [*procents*] of the valuables.

Like basalt columns, the dead are still standing, with not the least room to fall or lean over. Even dead, one still recognizes the families who clasp hands while still dead. It is difficult to separate them, to empty the rooms for the next load. The blue bodies are thrown, moist with sweat [*soudre*] and urine, legs full of excrement and periodic blood. Among them, babies, children's bodies. But there's no time. Two dozen workers are busy checking the mouths, which they open with iron hooks. "Gold to the left, no gold

to the right! Others check anuses and genitals for coins, diamonds, gold. Dentists pull out gold teeth, bridges and crowns with a hammer [*martel*]. Among them all, Hauptmann Wirth. He's in his element, lending me a large tin filled with gold teeth, he tells me: Feel the weight of gold, only yesterday and the day before! And you wouldn't believe [*croyez*] what we find daily: dollars, gems, gold! But see for yourself. Then he led me to a Jewish jeweler, who was in charge of all these valuables. I was also shown the head of the "Kaufhaus des Westens,"[6] Berlin, who had duties in the labor commando, and a little man with a violin [*violine*], the head of this commando of Jewish workers. "He's a captain in the Austrian KK[7] Army, knight of the German Iron Cross first class!"

The naked corpses were then thrown into large ditches measuring 100 x 20 x 12 meters, located next to the death chambers. After a few days, the bodies would swell and rise 2-3 meters by means of the gas formed in the corpses. {7|8}

After some days, the swelling was over, the bodies fell together. Another day, the ditches were filled again and covered with 10 cm of sand.

[*On an unnumbered supplementary page – the last but one page of this set reproduced in the appendix, which appears to be a draft, one reads on the four last lines the following text:*

Sometime later – I heard – grills were made of railway rails, and the corpses were burned by means of Diesel oil and gasoline, to make the corpses disappear.]

Another day, we drove in Hauptmann Wirth's car to Treblinca, about 120 km north-northeast from Warsawa. The setup of this place of death was almost the same as at Belzec, but even bigger – 8 gas chambers and real mountains of clothes and underwear 35-40 meters high. Then, in our honor, a banquet was held with all the SS employees. Obersturmbannführer Professor Dr. med. Pfannenstiel gave a speech [*sermon*]: your work is a great duty, and a much-needed duty. When one sees the bodies of the Jews, one understands the greatness of your good work. The dinner itself was simple, but on Himmler's own orders, the employees [*occupés*] of this service received what they wanted of butter, meat and so on. When we left [*Au Congé*], we were offered several kilos of butter and a large number of bottles of alcohol. I lied that I had enough of everything from our farm. For this reason, Pfannenstiel also took my portion.

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6 "The Department Store of the West," famous upscale, large, multi-story department store in West Berlin.

7 "Kaiserliche und Königliche" = Imperial and Royal, combined Austrian (*Kaiserliche*) and Hungarian (*Königliche*) army.

We took the car to Warsawa. Sleeping cars already having left, I waited for the other train. Waiting in vain for a free bunk, I met the secretary of the Swedish legation, Baron von Otter. With all the bunks occupied, we spent the night in the corridor of the sleeping car. Then, under the fresh impression, I told him everything, with the plea to refer everything to his government and the allies. He asked me for a reference of my own. I gave him the address of General Superintendent Dr. Otto Dibelius, Berlin-Lichterfelde, Brüderweg 2, a friend of Father Martin Niemöller[8] and leader of the Protestant resistance against Nazism. After a few weeks, I saw Mr. Councilor of Legation von Otter again. He told me that he had made his report to the government of Sweden, a report which, in his words, had great influence on the relations between Sweden and Germany. My attempt to refer all this to the head of the Holy Father's legation met with little success. {8|9}

I was asked whether I was a soldier. Then they refused to talk to me. Then I had all this told to him by Mgr. Doctor Winter, secretary of the Catholic episcopate of Berlin. On leaving the Holy Father's legation at Rauchstrasse in Berlin, I was pursued by a police officer who, after a few very unpleasant minutes of following me, left me [*me quitta*].

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[8] Throughout the Second World War, Pastor Martin Niemöller was regularly cited by the Allies' press, radio, etc., as the outstanding hero of German resistance to the Nazis. If Gerstein listened to BBC and Voice of America, he would have known this.

During the First World War, Niemöller had been a submarine commander; after the war, he became a Pastor and, from 1924, an active Nazi supporter. In 1934, he published a biography *Vom U-Boot zur Kanzel* (*From Submarine to Pulpit*) which was highly praised in the National-Socialist press and very widely read in Germany. He became the head of Germany's twenty-eight Protestant sects, the *Bekenntniskirche* (the "Confessional Church" mentioned by Gerstein in his "confessions"), and on that occasion, on 25 January 1934, he wrote to Chancellor Hitler: "We have no need to assure you how grateful we are to you for having uprooted the German people from internal and external disintegration and for having freed its spirit for a new flowering."

His opposition to the policies of the Third Reich showed itself only in June 1937: Niemöller complained of the Nazi regime's interference in ecclesiastical affairs. Arrested on 1 July 1937, he was sent to the Dachau Concentration Camp (near Munich, in Bavaria) as the "personal prisoner of the Führer." He was released when the U.S. army overran Dachau in the spring of 1945.

At the start of the Second World War, in September 1939, he had asked the government to be allowed to serve as a volunteer in the German armed forces, but his request was denied. This fortunate occurrence put him in good standing after the German capitulation in May 1945.

In postwar Germany, he became noted for his intransigence in demanding the purge of all those who had served the Nazi regime. In the early 1960s, he was one of the most ardent inspirers of the Protestant writer Rolf Hochhuth, whose play *The Deputy* caused deep offense for its unjustified accusation of Pope Pius XII.

In my apartments in Berlin W 15, Buelowstrasse 47/1, I had a circle of anti-Nazis around me. One of the members came some time later with the press attaché of the Swiss Legation in Berlin, Dr. Hochstrasser, to whom, like the other members, I told everything I knew. Another member of this circle was Father Buchholz, priest of Ploetzensee prison, who accompanied the officers to their deaths on 20 July 1944.[9] Father Buchholz and Father Niemöller received from me from time to time often [*couwent*] many cigarettes and cigars and other tokens of love [*dotations d'amour*].

[Starting at the very bottom of the previously mentioned unnumbered supplementary page and continuing on another such page, whose text appears to be a draft (last two pages of this set in the appendix's reproduction), one reads the following text:

At Belcec and Treblinca, they didn't bother counting the number of people killed in any accurate way. If we had found passports, etc…, it would only be a very small part of the total number of dead. Most died anonymously. The same applies to the Poles and Czechoslovakians Nr. III who disappeared in the same death chambers. They were chosen for death by commissions of pseudo-physicians, simple young men in limousines and white coats, who toured the villages in order to earmark on sight the elderly, sick, etc., who were no longer worthy of living because they could not work anymore.

Hauptmann Wirth asked me not to suggest any other method to Berlin, and to leave everything as it was. I lied – that's what I had done anyway – that the prussic acid had already been destroyed during transport and was very dangerous, and to being forced to bury the acid, which was done immediately.]

I must add that, in early 1944, SS Sturmbannführer Günther asked me for large supplies of prussic acid for some obscure purpose [*dessein*]. The acid was to be supplied to Oranienburg and Auschwitz concentration camps [*champs*]. I had the acid sent faithfully as desired. But as soon as it arrived, I diverted it for disinfection. It was somewhat dangerous for me, but if someone had asked me where the acid was, I would have said: it was already in a dangerous state of dissolution, and that's why I had to use it for disinfection. I'm sure that Günther, according to his own words, had orders to procure it in order to eventually kill many people. I have on me the invoices [*notas*] for this supply, a total of 2,175 kg, enough to kill several million people. I had them written in my name, {9|10} for – as I said –

[9] Date of the attempt on Hitler's life by an army conspiracy.

the sake of discretion, in truth to be somewhat free about the disposition and to better make the toxic acid disappear.

I never paid for the delivery. The director of the company, Dr. G. Peters, Friedberg/Hessen, who supplied the acid, told me that he supplied – to kill people – prussic acid in vials.

On 22 April 1945, I waited for the city of Metzingen/Württemberg to be taken. I had advised the citizens and town council of Metzingen to surrender the town to the French. With the inhabitants being ready, German troops were announced to hold Metzingen. So I crossed the French lines and presented myself as a volunteer to the French commander of the town of Reutlingen. I presented to him my papers, which were:

– 2 Gestapo arrest warrants – exclusion from NSDAP party
– special reference from the office of Pastor Martin Niemöller
– military documents.

Having examined [*éprouvés*] the papers, Mr. Commandant of Reutlingen gave me a paper with the following text: "The incumbent is not a true SS man and should not be treated as such, but, on the contrary, with every consideration."

It was Mr. Commandant of Reutlingen who proposed, according to my wishes, that I be introduced to a place of service which would be interested in my knowledge of Nazism and perhaps make use of my anti-Nazism. Unfortunately, the papers (2 Gestapo arrest warrants, etc.) remained in Tübingen, Gartenstr. 24, in the hallway of my house, where I was still allowed to take my shirt, toothbrush.

[*Having found no other pages beyond this page 9 in the Bielefeld Archives (LKA), I note that this is where the handwritten confession in French of 26 April 1945 abruptly ends. There are 2 further pages, which essentially repeat passages from the previous pages; what is new has been inserted by us into the confession as a whole and announced by an introduction.*]

Text T II, Edited Transcript of T I

It is typed, written in French and dated 26 April 1945. It consists of six pages (the last of which bears the handwritten signature: Kurt Gerstein), plus an unsigned seventh page headlined: "Kurt Gerstein – Suplement."

We have a photocopy from the National Archives in Washington, D.C.; at the bottom of each page is a number applied with a dial stamp, preceded by a B. The seven pages are thus numbered from B 49357 to B 49363.

[The below translation starts on the original's page 1, in the middle of the second line of the second paragraph, a little over halfway down the page.]

* * *

Hearing about the massacres of imbeciles and the insane in Grafeneck, Hadamar etc., shocked and wounded inside, having such a case in my family, I had only one desire: to see, to see into all this machinery and then to shout out to all the people! – Armed with two references from the two Gestapo employees who had dealt with my case, it was not difficult to join the SS Army. 10 March – 2 June 1941, basic soldier training in Hamburg-Langenhoorn, Arnhem and Oranienburg with 40 doctors. For my dual studies – technical and medical – I was ordered to join the medico-technical department of the SS-Fuehrungshauptamt – SS Army Medical Service – Amtsgruppe D, Hygiene. – At this place of duty, I chose myself the task of immediately building disinfection equipment and drinking-water filters for the troops and for the prison and concentration camps. I soon succeeded – my predecessors had not. Thus, it was possible to reduce the number of dead prisoners considerably. – For my success, I soon became a lieutenant. – December 1941, the court that had ordered my expulsion from the NSDAP was informed of my entry into the SS army. Great efforts were made to hunt and persecute me. In January 1942, I was appointed head of the technical disinfection department, which also contained the service of severely toxic gases for disinfection.– On 8 June 1942, SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Guenther of the {1|2}

Reich Security Main Office, in civilian clothes, unknown to me. He ordered me to take 100 kg of prussic acid and go with it to a place known only to the truck driver. We left for the potash factory near Collin (Prague). The loaded truck took us to Lublin-Poland. We took with us Professor Dr. med. Pfannenstiel, professor of hygiene at the University of Marburg/Lahn. – At Lublin, SS-Gruppenfuehrer Globocnek was waiting for us. He told us: this is one of the most secret things there is, and even the m o s t s e c r e t . Anyone who talks about it will be shot immediately. Yesterday, two talkers died. Then he explained: At the moment – 17 August 1942 – there are 3 installations:

1.) B e l c e c , on the Lublin-Lemberg road, in the sector at the Russian demarcation line. Maximum 15,000 persons (seen!)

2.) Sobibor, I don't know exactly, where. not seen. 20,000 pers. p. day.
3.) Treblinca, 120 km NNE of Warsawa. 25,000 per day. seen!
4.) Maidannek; near Loublin, seen in preparation. –

– Globocnek says: You'll have to disinfect huge quantities of clothing, ten or twenty times the result of the "Spinnstoffsammlung" (collection of clothing and textiles), which is only done to conceal the origin of Jewish, Polish, Czech etc. clothing. – Your other duty will be: to change the service of our gas chambers, now powered by the exhaust of an old "Diesel" engine, to something more toxic and working faster, that is, prussic acid. But the Fuehrer and Himmler, who were here on August 15 – that's the day before yesterday – obliged me to accompany anyone who needed to see the installations. – Then Professor Pfannenstiel: What does the Fuehrer say? – Then Globocnek, now Chief of Police and SS Adriatic river [recte: coast] in Triest: Faster, faster, carry out all the action! –he says. Then Ministry Director Dr. Herbert Lindner, Ministry of the Interior: Were it not better to burn the bodies instead of burying them? Perhaps another generation would think differently. –Then Globocnek: But gentlemen, if ever, after us, there were a generation so cowardly, so rotten, that it didn't understand our work, so good, so necessary, then – gentlemen – all National Socialism was for nothing. – But, on the contrary, we would have to bury bronze tables, on which it is inscribed that it was we, we, who had the courage to carry out this gigantic work! Hitler: Yes, my brave Globocnek, that's the word, that's also my opinion! – The other day, we were leaving for Belcek. A small special station with two platforms leans against the yellow sand hill, immediately north of the Lublin-Lemberg road and railroad. To the south, near the highway, a few service buildings with the sign: "Belcec Service Site of the SS Army"–. Globocnec introduced me to SS-Hauptsturmfuehrer Obermeyer from Pirmasens, who showed me the facilities with great reluctance. That day, we didn't see the dead, but the smell of the whole area, including the main roadway, was pungent. Next to the small station, there was a large hut "Cloakroom" with a counter "Valuables." Then a room with 100 chairs, "Hairdressers". Then a 150-meter-long corridor in the open air, barbed wire on both sides, and signs reading: "To the baths and inhalations"! – Before us, a house like a bathing facility, with large concrete pots with geraniums or other flowers on the left and right. After climbing a small staircase, to the right and left, three and three rooms like garages, 4x5 meters, 1.90 meters high. On the way back, not visible, wooden exits. On the roof, a Star of David made of copper. Before the building, inscription: "Heckenholt Foundation." – More – this afternoon – I

did not see. – Another morning, a few minutes before 7 a.m., it was announced to me: {2|3}

After ten minutes the first train will arrive! – That's right, after just a few minutes, the first train arrived from Lemberg. 45 cars, containing 6,700 people, 1,450 already dead on arrival. Behind the little barbed-wire skylights, children, yellow with fear, women and men. The train arrives: 200 Ukrainians [*Ucrains*], forced into this service, rip off the doors and, with leather horsewhips, chase the people out of the cars. Then a large loudspeaker gives the instructions: In the open air, some in the hut, strip off all clothing, including prosthesis and glasses. With a small piece of string, given by a 4-year-old Jewish boy, tie the shoes together. Return all valuables and money to the "Valuables" counter without a voucher or receipt. Then the women, the girls at the hairdresser's – to have, with one or two cuts, their hair cut, which disappears into big potato sacks "to make some special things for the submarines, linings etc." – says the department's SS-Unterscharfuehrer. – Then the march begins: to the right, to the left the barbed wire, behind it two dozen Ukrainians with rifles, guided by an extraordinarily beautiful young girl, they get closer. Myself and Hauptmann Wirth, police, stand before the death chambers. Completely naked, men, women, girls, children, babies, the one-legged ones, all pass by. At the corner, a strong SS man, in a loud pastoral voice, says to the poor people: Not the slightest thing will happen to you! All you need to do is breathe, it strengthens the lungs, this inhalation is necessary against contagious diseases, it's a great disinfectant! – Asked what their fate would be, he said: Truly, the men have to work, constructing streets and houses. But women don't have to. Only if they want, they can help in the household or in the kitchen. – For some of these poor people, a little hope once again, enough to make them walk unresisting to the chambers of death – the majority know everything, the smell tells them their fate! – Then they climb the little staircase and see the truth! Mothers, nursing mothers, babies on their breast, naked, many children of all ages – naked – they hesitate, but they enter the death chambers, most of them without a word, pushed by others behind them, harried by the horsewhips of the SS. – A Jewish woman, around 40, her eyes like torches, calls down the blood of their children on their murderers. Receiving 5 strokes to the face from police Hauptmann Wirth himself, she disappears into the gas chamber. Many say their prayers, others say: Who is this who gives us water for death? (Israeli ritual?) – In the chambers, the SS push the men. "Fill up well" – Hauptmann Wirth ordered. The naked people are standing on each other's feet, 700-800 on 25

square meters, in 45 cubic meters! – The doors close. Meanwhile, the rest of the queue, naked, are waiting. I'm told: also in winter naked! – But they can catch their death! – Well, that's what they are here for! – was the answer! – At that moment, I understood why "Heckenholt Foundation." – Heckenholt is the operator of the "Diesel," whose exhausts are designed to kill the poor people! SS-Unterscharfuehrer Heckenholt goes to some trouble to get the Diesel engine running. But it doesn't work! Hauptmann Wirth arrives. You can see he is frightened, because me, I can see the disaster. Yes, I see everything, and I wait. My "stop" watch has timed everything. 50 minutes, 70 minutes – the Diesel doesn't work! – The men wait in their gas chambers. In vain. We listen to them cry. "Just like in the synagogue" – says SS-Sturmbannführer Professor Dr. Pfannenstiel, tenured professor of hygiene at the University of Marburg/Lahn, his ear to the wooden door. Hauptmann Wirth, furious, lashes 11, 12 horsewhip blows into the face of the Ukrainian who is helping Heckenholt. – After two hours 49 minutes – the stopwatch has recorded everything – the Diesel starts. Up to this moment, the people in the already-filled 4 chambers live, live, 4 times 750 people in 4 times 45 cubic meters! – Again {3|4} 25 minutes pass: Many, it's true, are dead. This is what we see through the small window, through which the electric lamp lets us see the inside of the room for a moment. After 28 minutes, only a few survive. After 32 minutes, finally – all dead! –On the other side, Jewish workers open the wooden doors. They have been promised – for their terrible service – freedom and a few percent of the result of the valuables and money found. Like columns of basalt, the dead are still standing, with not the slightest room to fall or lean over. Even dead, one still recognizes the families, who still clasp hands. It is difficult to separate them, to empty the rooms for the next load. The bodies are thrown, blue, moist with sweat and urine, their legs full of excrement and menstrual blood. Among them, babies and children's corpses. –But there is no time! Two dozen workers are busy checking the mouths, which they open with iron hooks. "Gold to the left, no gold to the right! –Others check anuses and genitals for coins, diamonds, gold etc. –Dentists hammer out gold teeth, bridges and crowns. Among them all, hauptmann Wirth. He is in his element, lending me a large tin filled with teeth, he says: See for yourself the weight of gold! It is only from yesterday and the day before! –And you wouldn't believe what we find every day! Dollars, diamonds, gold! –But see for yourself: –So he guided me to a jeweler who was responsible for all these valuables. – I was also shown one of the heads of the Kaufhaus des Westens department store in Berlin, and a

little man who was being made to play the violin, head of the Jewish workers' commando. "That is a captain in the K and K [imperial and royal] Austrian army, knight of the German Iron Cross I Class – Hauptsturmfuehrer Obermeyer told me. –Then the naked bodies were thrown into large pits measuring around 100 x 20 x 12 meters, located next to the death chambers. –After a few days, the bodies began to swell, and the whole thing rose by 2-3 meters by means of gas, which formed in the corpses. After a few days, when the swelling was over, the bodies fell together. Another day, the pits were filled again and covered with 10 cm of sand. –Sometime later – I heard – grills were made of railway rails, and the corpses were burned with diesel oil and gasoline, to make them disappear. At Belcek and at Treblinca, no one bothered counting the number of people killed in any accurate way. The numbers, known to the British Broadcasting Co – wireless radio, are not accurate, in truth it will be some 25,000,000 people altogether! Not Jews, only, but preferably Poles and Czechs, biologically without value according to the opinion of the Nazis. Most died anonymously. Commissions of pseudo- physicians, simple young SS men in white coats and limousines, toured the villages and towns of Poland and Czechoslovakia to select out the old, consumptives, sick in order to make them disappear into the gas chambers sometime later. These were the Poles, the Czechs of No. III [a classification criterion defined by the SS], who were no longer worthy of life for not being able still to work. –Police Hauptmann Wirth asked me not to propose any other method of gas chambers to Berlin, and to leave everything as it was. –I lied – which I had done in any case – that the prussic acid had already been destroyed by transport and had become very dangerous. Then I will be forced to bury it – which I did immediately. – Another day, we went in Hauptmann Wirth's car to Treblinca. About 120 km NNE of Warsawa [Warsaw]. The setup at this place of death was almost the same as in Belcec, but even bigger. 8 gas chambers and real mountains of clothes and underwear, about 35-40 m high. Then, in our "honor," a banquet was held with all the installation's employees. Obersturmbannfuehrer professor Dr. med. Pfannenstiel, tenured professor of hygiene at the University of Marburg Lahn, gave a speech: Your work is a great duty, and a duty so useful and so {4|5} necessary. To me alone, he spoke of this institution as "the beauty of work, and a humane thing. To all: If we see the bodies of Jews, we understand the greatness of your good work! – The dinner itself was simple, but, according to Himmler's orders, the employees of this service received whatever they wanted of butter, meat, alcohol and so on. –On leaving, we were offered several kilos of but-

ter and a large number of bottles of liquor. I had trouble lying about having enough of everything from our farm. For this reason, Pfannenstiel took also my share. – We went by car to Warsaw. Waiting in vain for a free bed, I met the secretary of the Swedish legation, Mr. Baron von Otter. All the beds occupied, we spent the night in the corridor of the sleeping car. There, under recent impression, I told him everything with the plea to report everything to his government and all the Allies. He asked for a reference from me. I gave him as such the address of Mr. Generalsuperintendent D. Otto Dibelius, Berlin-Lichterfelde West, Bruederweg 2, friend of Martin Niemoeller and leader of the Protestant resistance against Nazism. After a few weeks, I saw Baron von Otter twice more. He told me that he had made his report to the Swedish government, a report which, in his words, had a great influence on relations between Sweden and Germany. My attempt to refer all this to the head of the Holy Father's legation met with little success. I was asked whether I was a soldier. I was refused all discussion. So I made a detailed report to the secretary of the Berlin episcopate, Mr. Dr. Winter, to refer all this to his bishop in Berlin and thus to the Holy Father's legation. – Leaving the Holy Father's legation in Berlin's Rauchstrasse, I had a dangerous encounter with a police officer, who pursued me, but, after a few very unpleasant minutes, he let me escape.

I should also add that, in early 1944, SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Guenther of the Reich Security Main Office asked me for very large supplies of prussic acid for some obscure purpose. The acid was to be supplied to Berlin, Kurfuerstenstrasse, to his place of duty. I managed to make him believe that this was not possible in the face of great danger. We were talking about several freight cars of toxic acid, enough to kill many people, millions of them! He told me that he wasn't sure if, when, for what circle of people, in what way, where this poison would be needed. I don't know exactly what the intention of the Reich Security Main Office and the SD was. But I later thought of Goebbels's words to "close the doors behind them, if Nazism would never succeed." Maybe they wanted to kill a large part of the German people, maybe the foreign workers, maybe the prisoners of war – I don't know! In any case, I made the acid disappear as soon as it arrived, for disinfection purposes. It was quite dangerous for me, but if someone had asked me where the toxic acid was, I would have answered: It was already in a dangerous state of dissolution, and that's why I had to use it for disinfection! – I'm sure that Guenther, the son of Rassen-Guenther – in his own words – had the order to procure the acid to eventually kill millions of people, perhaps even in the concentration camps. I have the invoices of

2,175 kg with me, but in truth it is some 8,500 kgs, enough to kill 8 million people. I had the invoices written in my name for – as I said – the sake of discretion, in truth to be somewhat free about the disposition and to better make the toxic acid disappear. I never paid for these deliveries to avoid reimburse-{5|6}ment and to remind the SD of this stock. The director of Degesch, who had made this delivery, told me that he had supplied prussic acid in vials to kill people. – On another occasion, Guenther consulted me about the possibility of killing large numbers of Jews in the open air in the fortification moats of Maria-Theresienstadt.[10] To prevent this diabolical idea, I declared this method impossible. Sometime later, I heard that the SD had obtained prussic acid in another way to kill those poor people in Theresienstadt. – The most detestable concentration camps were not Oranienburg or Dachau or Belsen – but Auschwitz (Oswice [sic]) and Mauthausen-Gus[en] near Linz/Donau. It was here that millions of men disappeared in gas chambers, in cars [used] as gas chambers. The method used to kill children was to hold a wad of prussic acid under the nose.

I myself have seen experiments carried on until death with living people in concentration camps. For example, SS-Hauptsturmführer Gundlach, Dr. med., carried out such experiments at the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp near Fuerstenberg-Mecklenburg. I have read many reports – at my place of work – of such experiments at Buchenwald, e.g. experiments with up to 100 tablets of Pervitine a day. Other experiments – every time some 100-200 people – were carried out until death, using serum, lymph, etc. Himmler himself had reserved [to give] permission for such experiments.

One day, in Oranienburg, a concentration camp, I saw all the prisoners disappear in a single day, who were there for being perverts (homosexuals).

I avoided visiting concentration camps often, because it was customary – preferably at Mauthausen Gusen near Linz – to hang one or two prisoners in honor of visitors. In Mauthausen, it was customary to make the Jews work in a quarry of great height. After a while, the SS men on duty had dinner: Watch out, after a few minutes there'll be some misfortune! In fact, a minute or two later, several Jews were hurled from the quarry, falling dead at our feet. "Labor accidents" – the papers of the dead recorded. –

[10] Theresienstadt (today called Terezín) is a town that grew around a large castle/fortifications complex some 35 miles northwest of Prague, Czechia, named for the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa (1717-1780). That old fortress was used as a ghetto for mostly elderly German Jews, many of the men among them with military decorations from World War One.

The anti-Nazi Dr. Fritz Krantz, SS-Hauptsturmfuehrer, often told me of such things, which he strongly condemned and often made known.

The crimes uncovered at Belsen, Oranienburg etc. are not significant compared to those at Auschwitz and Mauthausen.

It is my intention to write a book about my adventures with the Nazis.

I am ready to swear an oath that all my statements are completely true.

Text T III

It is typewritten in German, dated 4 May 1945. It is unsigned. It consists of twenty-four half pages numbered from 1 to 24, plus a handwritten half-page inserted ("*zu 7*") between half-page 7 and half-page 8, and moreover eight half-pages of supplements ("*Ergänzungen*"). This is Document 31 from LKA, which is a duplicate of the typed document. Dr. Steinberg, Director of LKA, told us that the original has never been found.

T III was handed over to LKA by Elfriede Gerstein on 31 July 1972.

We have photocopies measuring 21 cm × 29.5 cm (DIN A4), each with two half-pages. The photocopied pages are numbered by hand, top right, from 244 to 261.

The translation of the German into English for this edition was done by Ronald V. Percival, with a few corrections and edits for this edition. For the original French edition of this thesis, we had intended to use the translation published in *Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs* (1959) by Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, but we quickly gave up. Indeed, as early as half-page 3, we noticed that the authors mentioned above translated the German words "*in diesen Öfen und Kammern hineinzuschauen*," as "throw a glance in these places" ("*jeter un regard en ces lieux*"). In reality, it should be translated: "to take a look into these furnaces and these chambers." Perhaps Poliakov and Wulf thought it illogical that Gerstein should seem to know *in advance* that he was going to find furnaces and homicidal gas chambers? We also found numerous inaccuracies which we had to correct. Finally, the published text contained several omissions in the main "confession" and completely neglected the supplements (*Ergänzungen*), which have never been published to this day.

Broadly speaking, the authors of *Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs* have translated the account already published by Professor Dr. Hans Rothfels in 1953 in *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, No. 2, but they did not justify their

omissions with notes, as H. Rothfels had done, nor did they mention the existence of the supplements which the German historian wrote were not eyewitness accounts, but hearsay ("*Hörensagen*").

[The below translation begins after the curriculum vitae on half-page 3, last paragraph.]

* * *

When I heard of the beginning killings of the mentally sick at Grafeneck, Hadamar and elsewhere, I decided in any event to take a look into these furnaces and chambers in order to know what is going on. The more so because {3|4} a sister-in-law by marriage – Bertha Ebeling – was forcefully killed at Hadamar. Supplied with two references by Gestapo officials who handled my case, I succeeded without difficulty in joining the SS. These gentlemen were of the opinion that my idealism, which they probably admired, would not fail to serve the Nazi cause.– I joined the SS on 10 March 1941. I received my basic training at Hamburg-Langenhoorn, at Arnhem/Holland and at Oranienburg. In Holland, I immediately contacted the Dutch resistance movement (certified engineer Ubbink, Doesburg). Due to my double university studies, I was soon accepted by the technical medical services, and assigned to the SS Leadership Main Office, Office Group D – Sanitary Service of the Waffen SS, Department Hygiene. I did my training with a medical course attended by 40 physicians. In the hygiene service, I was free to determine my own activities. I designed mobile and stationary disinfection devices for the troops, for prisoner [of war] camps and concentration camps. With this, I had undeservedly great successes, and from that moment I passed for a sort of technical genius. In fact, we managed at least to stem somewhat the terrible wave of epidemic typhus of 1941 {4|5} in the camps. Due to my successes, I soon became second lieutenant and first lieutenant. At Christmas 1941, the tribunal which had ordered my expulsion from the party learned of my entry into the SS to a position of command. There followed a strong smear campaign against me. But because of my great successes and my personality, my office protected me and kept me. In January 1942, I became department head of the department health technology, and I was at the same time assigned to double duty in the same section by the surgeon general (*Reichsarzt*) of SS and police. In this capacity, I took over the entire technical disinfection service, including disinfection with highly toxic gases.

It was while in this capacity that I received, on 8 June 1942, the visit of SS-Sturmbannführer Günther, of the Reich Security main Office, Berlin W, Kurfürstenstrasse, a person unknown to me until then. Günther came in

civilian clothes. He gave me the order to acquire immediately, for an extremely secret Reich assignment, 100 kg of prussic acid, and to drive with it in a car to an unknown place known only to the driver of the vehicle. Then, several weeks later, we drove {5|6} to Prague. I could roughly imagine the kind of assignment this was, but I accepted it because by chance it here presented me with a long-awaited opportunity to get an insight into these matters. In addition, in my position as expert on prussic acid, I was so authoritarian [sic, meaning being an authority] and competent that it had to be easy for me in any circumstances to declare under whatever pretext that the prussic acid was unusable – because [it was] decomposed or something like that – and to prevent its use for the actual murderous purpose. With us – rather by chance – drove also Professor Dr. med. Pfannenstiel, SS-Obersturmbannführer, tenured professor of hygiene at the University of Marburg-Lahn. Next, we drove by car to Lublin, where SS-Gruppenführer Globocnek was waiting for us. At the factory at Collin, I had purposely given hints that the acid was intended to kill human beings. Promptly, in the afternoon, a person appeared who showed a great deal of interest in the vehicle and who, as soon as he had been noticed, fled at breakneck speed.– Globocnek said: All this affair is one of the most secret things in existence at this moment, one can say the most secret. Anyone who speaks about it will be shot on the spot. {6|7}

Just yesterday, two blabbermouths were shot.– Then he explained to us: At this moment – this was 17 August 1942 – we have three installations in service, which are:

1) Belzec, on the road and railway Lublin-Lemberg,[11] at the intersection of the demarcation line with Russia. Maximum capacity per day 15,000 persons.

2) Sobibor. Also in Poland, I do not know exactly where. Maximum capacity 20,000 persons per day.

3) Treblinca, 120 km north-north-east of Warsaw. Maximum capacity 25,000 persons per day.

4) – Still in Preparation – Maidanek, near Lublin.

Together with the director of these establishments – Captain of Police Wirth – I personally inspected thoroughly Belcec, Treblinka and Maidanek.

Globocnek addressed himself exclusively to me in saying: It is your task to carry out successfully the disinfection of very large quantities of textiles. The collection of textiles has in fact been done only in order to

[11] Once part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, it is today the western Ukrainian city of Lviv.

explain the origin of the clothes for the workers in the East etc., and to present them as the result of the sacrifice by the German people. In reality, the output of our establishments is from 10 to 20 times as much as the whole collection of textiles.

{7| handwritten insertion "zu 7"}

I afterwards discussed with the most productive firms the possibility of disinfecting in the existing laundries and disinfection facilities such quantities of textiles – this was about an accumulated stockpile of about 40 million kilograms, 60 freight trains full. But it was completely impossible to place such large orders. I used all these negotiations to make known or cleverly hint at the fact of the murder of the Jews. Globocnek was then satisfied that all this stuff was sprayed with some detenoline, so that it at least smelled disinfected. Which was then done.

{handwritten insertion "zu 7"|8}

– Your other – still much more important task is to adapt our gas chambers, which currently operate with the Diesel exhaust gases, to something better and more rapid. I am thinking above all of prussic acid. The Führer and Himmler were here the day before yesterday. In accordance with their instructions, I must take you there personally; I must not issue passes or entry permits to anyone.– Thereupon, Pfannenstiel asked: What did the Führer say?– Glob. : Faster, carry out the whole operation faster. His companion, ministerial counsellor Dr. Herbert Lindner, then asked: Herr Globocnek, do you believe that it is good and correct to bury all these corpses instead of burning them? After us could come a generation who will not understand the whole thing! – Glb. replied: Gentlemen, if ever after us comes a generation so feeble and soft that they do not understand our great task, then all the National Socialism will have been in vain, indeed. On the contrary, I am of the opinion that we should put down bronze plaques commemorating that it is us, we, who have had the courage to accomplish this great and so necessary deed. Then the Fuhrer: Good, Globocnek, that is my opinion too! – later, the {8|9} other opinion prevailed. The corpses were burned on large grills improvised with railway rails, with the help of gasoline and diesel oil.

The other day, we left for Belcec. For this purpose, a special little station had been constructed close to a hill directly north of the route Lublin-Lemberg in the left corner of the demarcation line. South of the route, some houses carrying the inscription "Special Unit of the Waffen-SS at Belcec." Since the actual head of all the killing facilities, Captain of Police Wirth, was not yet there, Globocnek introduced me to SS-Hauptsturm-

führer Obermeyer (of Pirmasens). This latter let me see that afternoon only what he absolutely had to show me. I did not see any dead that day, only the smell which prevailed in the surroundings was pestilential in that scorching month of August, and there were flies everywhere by the millions.– Close to the little station of two lines, there was a large hut, the so-called cloakroom, with a large service window for valuables. Then came a room with a hundred chairs, the hair-dresser room. Then a little alley in the open air planted with birch trees, bordered to the right and left with a double row of barbed wire, with the signs: To the inhalation rooms and bathrooms! –{9|10}

Before us, a kind of bathing house, large concrete pots with geraniums to the right and left in front of it, then a small stairway, and afterwards at the right and left each 3 rooms 5 x 5 meters, 1.90 m high, with wooden doors like garages. In the back wall, not clearly visible in the darkness, large wooden ramp doors. On the roof, as a "small thoughtful joke," the Star of David!! In front of the building, a sign: Heckenholt Foundation! – I did not see more that afternoon.– The following morning, a little before 7 o'clock, I am told: the first transport arrives in ten minutes!– In fact, after several minutes, the first train coming from Lemberg arrives: 45 cars with 6,700 persons, of whom 1,450 were already dead on their arrival. Behind the barred openings, terribly pale and frightened, children were looking out, their eyes full of the anguish of death, as well as men and women. The train enters the station: 200 Ukrainians rip open the doors and whip the people out of the cars with their leather whips. A big loudspeaker gives further instructions: to undress completely, also remove prostheses, spectacles, etc. Deliver objects of value to the service window, without vouchers or receipts. Carefully tie the shoes together (in view of the collection of textiles), {10|11} otherwise, in the pile which rose easily to 25 meters in height, no one would have been able to retrieve the shoes which belonged together. Then the women and young girls pass to the hairdresser who, in two or three cuts with the scissors, cuts all the hair and lets it disappear into large potato sacks. "This is intended for some special purpose or other for submarines, for the caulking or something like that!" – the SS-Unterscharführer tells me who is on duty at this place. – Then the line of people starts to move. At the head, a very picture-perfect young girl, this is how they follow the alley, all naked, men, women, children, without prostheses. I myself am standing above, on the ramp, between the chambers, with Captain Wirth. Mothers with nursing babies at the breast, they come up, hesitate, enter into the death chambers. In a corner is standing a sturdy SS man

who says in an unctuous voice to these unfortunates: Not the least thing will happen to you! You only have to breathe deeply in the chambers, this expands the lungs, this inhalation is necessary because of the sicknesses and the epidemics. To the question what might become of them, he replies: Yes, of course, the men will have to work, to build houses or make roads, but the women will not need to work. Only if they wish, they can help with housework or in the kitchen. For some of these unfortunates a little {11|12} glimmer of hope, which suffices to make them walk without resistance the few steps which lead them to the chambers – the majority is in the know, the smell tells them their fate! – They climb up the little stairway – and then they see everything. Mothers with their children at the breast, small naked children, adults, men and women, all naked – they hesitate – but they enter into the chambers of death, pushed forward by those behind them or by the leather whips of the SS. The majority without saying a word. A Jewess of about 40 years, with eyes aflame, calls the blood shed here upon the murderers. She receives 5 or 6 blows with the horsewhip in the face by Captain Wirth personally – then she too disappears into the chamber. – Many pray. I pray with them. I squeeze myself into a corner and I cry in a loud voice to my God and theirs. How I would have loved to go into the chambers with them, how I would have loved to die their death. They then would have found an SS officer in uniform in their chambers – the affair would have been interpreted and treated as an accident, and it would have been quietly shelved. But I still do not have the right to do it, I must first reveal what I see here! – The chambers fill up. Pack tightly – so Captain Wirth has ordered. The {12|13} people are stepping on each other's feet, 700-800 on 25 square meters, in 45 cubic meters. The SS men press them physically one against the other as much as they can. The doors close. Meanwhile, the others are waiting outside in the open air, naked. Someone says to me: even in winter exactly like this! Yes, but they can catch their death, I say. Well, that's exactly what they are here for! – retorts an SS man in his dialect. Now, I finally also understand why the facility is called "Heckenholt foundation." Heckenholt is the operator of the Diesel engine, a small technician, at the same time the constructor of the device. The people are to be put to death with the Diesel exhaust gases. But the Diesel does not work! Captain Wirth arrives. One sees that it is embarrassing to him that this has to happen today of all days when I am here. Yes, I see everything! and I wait. My stopwatch has dutifully recorded everything. 50 minutes, 70 minutes, the Diesel does not start. The people wait in their gas chambers. In vain. One hears them weep, sob. "Like in the syna-

gogue," remarks Professor Pfannenstiel, his ear against the wooden door. With his horsewhip, Captain Wirth beats the Ukrainian who is supposed to help Unterscharführer Heckenholt with the Diesel, 12 or 13 times in the face. After 2 hours 49 minutes – the stopwatch has recorded everything – the Diesel starts. Up to that moment, {13|14} the people remain alive in these 4 chambers, 4 times 750 persons in 4 times 45 cubic meters. Once more, 25 minutes pass. Correct,[12] many are now dead. One sees it through the small window in which the electric light illuminates the chamber for an instant. At the end of 28 minutes, only some still live. At long last, after 32 minutes, everyone is dead!– From the other side, the men of the labor unit open the wooden doors. For their dreadful work, they – themselves Jews – were promised liberty and a certain permille amount of all the valuables found. Pressed together, the dead are standing upright like pillars of basalt in the chambers. There would not be any space to fall over or lean forward. Even in death one recognizes the families. They still hold hands, clenched in death, so that it is laborious to separate them in order to free the chambers for the next batch. The bodies are thrown outside, wet with sweat and urine, soiled with excrement and with menstrual blood on the legs. The corpses of children fly through the air. There is no time; the Ukrainians' horsewhips swish down on the labor unit. Two dozen dentists open the mouths with hooks, searching for gold. Gold to the left, without gold to the right. Other dentists break the gold teeth and crowns out of the jaws with pincers and hammers. {14|15}

Among them all, Captain Wirth leaps around. He is in his element.– Some workers check genitals and anuses for gold, diamonds and valuables. Wirth calls me beside him: Just lift this tin can with the gold teeth, this is only from yesterday and the day before! He says to me in an incredible, coarse and shoddy tone of voice: You wouldn't believe the quantities of gold and diamonds [*Brillianten*] we find every day – he pronounced the word with two L's – and dollars. But see for yourself. – And he took me to a jeweler who had to administrate all these treasures, and he let me see everything. Then, I was also shown a former manager of the "Kaufhaus des Westens" in Berlin and a violinist: This is a Captain of the old imperial-royal army of Austria, Knight of the Iron Cross 1st Class, who is now the camp eldest of the Jewish labor unit!– The naked corpses were hauled on wooden stretchers only a few meters to pits of 100 x 20 x 12 meters. After several days, the corpses started to swell, then collapsed shortly afterwards, so that it was possible to throw a new layer on top of them. Then 10 cm of

[12] Translation of the word "*richtig*." Probable meaning: confirmed, as planned.

sand was spread on top, so that there only some isolated heads and arms protruded. At one of these places, I saw Jews {15|16} scrambling around and working on the corpses in the graves. I was told that, by mistake, those dead on arrival of one transport dead had not been undressed. Of course, this would have to be rectified because of the textiles and valuables, which they would otherwise carry into grave.– Neither at Belzec nor at Treblinka was the least trouble taken to record or count those who were killed. The numbers were only estimates according to the contents of the cars.– Apart from the Jews from all European countries, above all Czechs and Poles No. III were killed in the gas chambers. Commissions of SS men – some of them not even with a full primary school education – drove from village to village in fine limousines and with medical equipment, in white coats, making the population file past them, pretending to examine them, and designating those who were said to be without biological value and therefore to be killed, mainly the elderly, the consumptives and the sick.– Yes, an SS-Sturmbannführer told me, without these measures, overpopulated Poland would be utterly worthless for us. We are making up for what nature does herself in the animal and plant kingdoms, and unfortunately neglected to do with mankind.– Captain Wirth begged me not to propose to Berlin to change the facilities {16|17} and to leave everything just as it was, and as it has sorted itself out and proven itself excellently.– I had the prussic acid buried under my supervision, because it had allegedly started to decompose.– The other day – 19 August 1942 – we drove in Captain Wirth's car to Treblinka, 120 km to the north-northeast of Warsaw. The installation was roughly the same, but quite a bit larger than at Belzec.– Eight gas chambers and veritable mountains of suitcases, textiles and underwear. In the community hall, a banquet was given in our honor in the typical Himmlerian old-German style. The meal was simple, but everything was available in large quantities. Himmler himself had ordered that the men of these units should have as much meat, butter and other things, notably alcohol, as they wished. Professor Pfannenstiel gave a speech in which he explained to the men the usefulness of their task and the importance of their great mission. Talking to me, he spoke of the "veritably humane methods and of the beauty of the work." I guarantee that he really said this incredible thing to me!– He said in particular to the units: Only when seeing these Jewish bodies, one truly understands how worthy of recognition your task is.

{17|18} When we took leave, we were offered several kilos of butter and lots of liquor to take along. I had difficulty in making them believe that I had sufficient of all that from my – so-called – estate, whereupon Pfan-

nenstiel, entirely happy, grabbed my share as well. We then left by car for Warsaw. It was there, while I was trying in vain to obtain a bunk in the sleeping car, that I met the secretary of the Swedish embassy in Berlin, Baron von Otter. Still under the very fresh impression of the terrible experiences, I told him everything, while begging him to make this known immediately to his government and to the Allies, for every day of delay must cost the lives of further thousands and tens of thousands. He asked me for a reference, and as such I named Herr Superintendent-General Dr. Otto Dibelius, Berlin, Brüderweg 2, Lichterfelde West, close friend of Pastor Martin Niemöller and a member of the clerical resistance against Nazism. I met Herr von Otter twice more in the Swedish embassy. He had in the meantime reported to Stockholm and stated to me that this report had had a considerable influence on German-Swedish relations. I tried to report about the same matter to the pontifical nuncio. There, I was asked whether I was a soldier. Thereupon, all further conversation with me was refused, {18|19} and I was asked to leave the embassy of His Holiness. On leaving the embassy of the Holy See, I was pursued by a policeman on a bicycle who passed quickly in front of me, dismounted, but then totally incomprehensibly let me go. I then recounted all this to hundreds of personalities, among others to the syndic of the Catholic bishop of Berlin, Herr Dr. Winter, with the expressive request to transmit my information to the Apostolic See.– I must moreover add that SS-Sturmbannführer Günther of the Reich Security Main Office – I believe he is the son of "Rasse"-Günther[13] – in early 1944 ordered very large quantities of prussic acid from me again for a very obscure purpose. He showed me in the Kurfürstenstrasse, in Berlin, a shed in which he was thinking of stocking the prussic acid. I then declared to him that it was out of the question that I could take responsibility for this. It was a matter of several freight cars, enough to put to death millions of human beings. He told me that he himself did not know yet whether the poison would be used, nor when, for whom, by what method, etc. But it was to be held available at all times. Afterwards I often had to think about Goebbels's words. {19|20} I suppose they wanted to kill a large part of the German people, surely including the clergy or unpopular officers. This was supposed to happen in places like lecture halls or clubs, that is what I deduced from the questions of technical implementation that Günther asked me. It is also possible that he would have had to kill foreign workers or prisoners of war – I do not know. In any case, I made arrangements so that

[13] Gerstein presumably meant Hans F. K. Günther, whose main work *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes*, on the ethnic origins and composition of the German peoples, was published in 1929.

the prussic acid disappeared for some disinfection purposes right after its arrival in the camps of Oranienburg and Auschwitz. This was somewhat dangerous for me, but I simply could have said that the poison was already in a dangerous state of decomposition. I am sure that Günther wanted to obtain the poison in order to put to death millions of human beings on occasion. There was enough of it for some 8 million persons, 8,500 kg. I have submitted the invoices for 2,175 kg. I always had the invoices issued in my name, presumably for reasons of discretion, but actually in order to be freer in my disposition and to be able to let the poison disappear. Above all, I avoided bringing the matter constantly to mind by presenting the invoices, but rather left the invoices totally unpaid, while putting off the company.

{20|21} The manager of Degesch, Dr. Peters, Frankfurt on Main and Friedberg, who made this delivery, told me that he delivered prussic acid in vials intended to kill human beings.– Another time, Günther asked me whether it was possible to kill in the open air, in the moats of the fortress of Maria-Theresienstadt, the Jews who had permission to go for a walk there. To thwart this terrible plan, I declared this to be impossible. I then learned later that the SD unit Theresienstadt had procured prussic acid some other way and had killed the Jews.– The most-horrible concentration camps moreover were not Oranienburg or Belsen or Dachau, but Auschwitz, where millions of people have been killed, partly in gas chambers, partly in so-called death cars, and Mauthausen-Gusen near Linz. At Auschwitz, it was customary to kill children by holding wads with prussic acid under the nose.– Furthermore, I have myself seen at the Ravensbrück Camp, near Fürstenburg in Mecklenburg, the concentration camp for women, experiments made on the living. These were carried out on the initiative of SS-Gruppenführer Dr. Gebhardt Hohenlychen, by SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Gundlach. At Buchenwald as well, such experiments on living human beings were made, for example, with up to 100 Pervitin tablets, {21|22} on occasion until death occurred. Himmler himself reserved the right of approval for these experiments. In particular, a vaccine against typhus, lymph and other serums were tested there. The experiments were made each time on 100 to 200 persons, namely people condemned to death by the camp management or by the SD.– I was perplexed at Oranienburg that in just within a few days all the homosexuals – many hundreds – disappeared, namely in the furnaces.– I otherwise avoided making too frequent appearances in the concentration camps, because sometimes it was customary to hang people or to carry out executions in honor of visitors. SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Fritz Krantz, who has seen great numbers of such things, often

told me about it with profound indignation. For example, at Gusen-Mauthausen, every day numerous Jews who had to work in a large quarry were pushed over the steep cliff, and were then registered down below as fatal accidents. At Auschwitz, such shameful actions were also perpetrated in much greater numbers than at Belsen.– I had the luck to meet some radical anti-Nazis at my department, such as an SS-Hauptsturmführer and Stabsscharführer Heinrich Hollander, a good Catholic, and {22|23} the aforementioned Dr. Fritz Krantz. Hollander kept me informed of all interesting things. One day, on the occasion of a meal, his wife made fierce reproaches about the killing of the Jews to the surgeon general of SS and police, SS-Obergruppenführer Dr. Grawitz, Berlin, moreover president of the German Red Cross. She subsequently was severely reprimanded and forbidden to mention that subject ever again.

All my statements are literally true. I am fully aware, before God and all humanity, of the extraordinary import of these my recordings, and I affirm under oath that nothing at all of what I have recorded is imagined or invented, but rather that everything happened exactly like that.

{23|24} [page 24 with "references" omitted]

Supplements (*Ergänzungen*)

At Belzec, I had the impression that all were really dead, although Captain Wirth told me that they had seen the most peculiar things, for example, that they had found a child fully alive, in the morning, in a chamber which had been left full all night without emptying it. Notably, Wirth said, they had seen the oddest things and the most diverse sensibilities among the mentally ill. The experimentation with different killing methods will not have been extended to a great number. But quite a few were tried. For example – undoubtedly on a fairly large number of people – death by compressed air in old boilers, into which air was pressed by compressors of the type ordinarily used to break up asphalt. At Treblinka, I had the impression that some were still alive. Nearly all had their eyes open, and therefore looked frightful. However, I saw no more movement, even though I paid great attention. – The medical doctor Villing, of Dortmund, told me with very profound emotion about a truly heroic death. It concerned thousands of Polish clergymen, who had to dig the ditches themselves, in front of which they were subsequently shot, naked. {1|2}

When they were asked with mocking contempt whether they still believed in Christ and Mary, they replied by firmly confessing their faith in Christ and invoked the Virgin of Czestochowa. This death had been grip-

ping and convincing, Doctor Villing told me. Other intellectuals in Poland also – notably teachers, men and women – died in the hundreds of thousands with similar exemplary dignity.

One kind of death which was assured to me consisted of making people climb the stairway up to a blast furnace, to finish them off there with a coup de grâce, and to let them then disappear in the blast furnace. Many people must also have been killed and burned in brick kilns. But my source is not sufficiently reliable.

A high-ranking police officer of Bromberg, SS-Obersturmführer Haller, recounted to me and the physicians of the SS course that, before his arrival at Bromberg, it was common practice to kill Jewish children in apartments right away by bashing their heads against the wall. He put a stop to this nonsense and organized firearm executions. {2|3}

He has the particularly tragic memory of two little girls who knelt down before them to say their prayers – they were 5 and 8 years of age – and how they "had" to be shot after all. Hall[er] moreover stated: at the mass executions of the Poles, they were forced to dig long ditches and to lie in them face down. Then they were executed from above with a machine gun. The next [victims] then had to lie down on the corpses which were still warm, to be executed similarly. Many were not dead yet, and when they tried to get out from under 5 or 6 layers [of bodies], they had to be shot at the edge of the ditch.

An important member of the German government of Krakau told me, while carving a turkey, of an especially fortunate capture they had made. According to him, they had arrested a leading member of the Polish resistance movement, a Jew. This one, during his interrogation, wrapped himself in silence. Thereupon, his wrists were broken. Even then, he continued to be silent. Then he was seated on the red-hot plate of a stove: You should just have seen how the fellow became talkative! {3|4}

During a visit to the local construction office of the Waffen-SS in Lublin on 18 August 1942, two heads of special construction told me of an inspection made in the morning at the morgue of the prisoners-of-war camp of the SS near Lublin. The corpses there had been piled up by the thousands. While they were taking measurements for an alteration, two persons had suddenly moved. The SS-Rottenführer who was accompanying them had then asked: Where? Then he took an iron rod from nearby and smashed in the skulls of both. – It was not the fact that surprised them, the heads of construction stated – but the casualness with which it happened.

– The day of my inspection at Belzec, it happened that a Jewess inflicted several cuts to the neck of some Jews of the labor unit with a razor that she had kept hidden. Wirth deeply regretted that the woman was already dead, she should have had to suffer some exemplary punishment. – He had the injured labor Jews carefully cared for and treated by doctors, {4|5} as he said, in order to keep them believing that they would be resettled, remunerated, and kept alive. He – Wirth – found an inexhaustible source of astonishment and amusement in the fact that they believed it… And the fellows believe that, the fellows believe that!!! – he exclaimed to himself!!

– At Belcec, the men and young boys, after the opening of the cars and the undressing, were invited by loudspeaker to bring the clothes scattered everywhere straight away to the cars, with which they disappeared into a big warehouse. "Whoever work the best can stay in the labor unit!!– Then began a race of life and death among these naked people during tidying up, under the sarcastic laughter of the [SS] men. Of course they all disappeared afterwards into the gas chambers.– Only a few very old and very weak persons were set apart, and then shot.– I think of some impressions profoundly moving for me: of a little Jewish boy of 3 or 4 years who was given a bundle of strings for tying up the shoes by pairs; how he pensively handed out the strings to the people. Or of a little coral chain which a little girl {5|6} lost one meter in front of the gas chamber: how a little boy of perhaps three bent down to pick it up, what pleasure it gave him – and then was thrust into the chamber, no, in that instance he is gently pushed!–

SS-Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer told me: I encountered in a village here in the area a Jew and his wife, natives of my hometown of Pirmasens. The bloke was a police officer[14] during the World War, and he is a very fine fellow. When I was a child, he saved me from death by getting run over. I am going to take them with me now, and I shall enroll them in the labor unit. – To my question what would happen to those two, Obermeyer stated: Afterwards, it will be as for the others, we must have no illusions, there is only one thing! But, at least, I shall have them shot! – I have also met a fairly large number of people within the SS who condemned these methods most severely and who, because of this, came to a rejection of or even a passionate hatred of National Socialism. I cite here some names, again with my ultimate responsibility:

SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. med. Focht of Hagen in Westphalia, head of {6|7} the internal medicine of the SS hospital Berlin–.

SS-Hauptsturmführer, Dr. med. Nissen, Itzehoe.

[14] The German word used here is "Wachtmeister," which used to be the term denoting low-ranking police officers (patrolman).

SS-Obersturmführer, Dr. med. Sorge of Jena,

SS-Hauptscharführer, Staff Sergeant with the surgeon general (*Reichsarzt*) of SS, Heinrich Hollander, anti-Nazi activist and animated by a burning hatred of Nazism.

Hauptsturmführer Dr. Fritz Krantz, at the surgeon general SS, department.

SS-Gruppenführer, Dr. pharm., Blumenreuther, Sanitary quartermaster with the surgeon general SS and Police,

Dr. Rudolphi, SS-Sturmbannführer, same address

Dr. Behmenburg, same address. Rudolphi kicked a Hitler portrait with his feet in October 1944.

In general, it is a mistake to look on the SS, even in the slightest, as a monolithic bunch. I know how difficult it is concerning this to distinguish between assessment and treatment. I understand that one might wish to find fault with some formation in particular, and I am without doubt the one who best knows the atrocities committed by the SS. Nevertheless, we must not lose sight of the fact that, for example, at least two-thirds of the Dutch SS were forcibly pressed into the SS with lies and deception and so-called sports courses. It was just the same with many {7|8} Germans, notably those who came from the Hitler Youth and who were surprised and duped without suspecting a thing. Moreover the many from the air force or the navy who, at the instigation of Himmler, were simply forced into the SS. That has to be taken into account for the love of truth and justice!

Text T IV

It is handwritten in French, dated 6 May 1945. The original, given to LKA by Elfriede Gerstein on 10 August 1972, is kept there as Document No. 33. It consists of nine half-pages. Together with Exhibit 33, Kurt Gerstein's widow gave LKA another nine original half-pages headlined "Supplements." It is Exhibit 34 that LKA presents as supplements to Exhibit 33.

[The below translation begins after the curriculum vitae on half-page 4, second paragraph.]

* * *

Hearing of the massacres of imbeciles and the insane at Grafeneck, Hadamar etc., shocked and wounded inside, I had only one desire: to see, to see into all this machinery and then to shout out to all the people! I had no

great scruples about this undertaking, having myself twice been the victim of agents of the SD (*Sicherheitsdienstes¸* Security Service) who had crept into the most secretive council of the Brothers of the Confessional Resistance Church (Niemoeller) and even into the "prior's association." In addition, a sister-in-law – Ms. Bertha Ebeling – was murdered in Hadamar. Supplied with two references by Gestapo employees {4|5} who handled my case, it was not difficult to enter the SS army. The employees were of the opinion that my idealism, which they admired, should be made to benefit Nazism. –On 10 March 1941, I joined the SS. Basic training took place with 40 physicians in Hamburg-Langenhoorn, Arnhem/Holland and Oranienburg. In Holland, I immediately made contact with the Dutch National Resistance (graduate engineer Ubbink from Doesburg). – Due to my double studies, I soon succeeded in the medico-technical service of SS Fuehrungshauptamt – Group D – sanitary service of the SS army, hygiene sector. In this department, it was up to me to choose my duties for myself with great freedom. I built trucks and disinfection devices, and drinking-water filters for the troops, prison camps and concentration camps. {5|6}

Due to an exact knowledge of this industry, I soon succeeded at it, my predecessors had not succeeded. Thus, it was possible to reduce the number of dead prisoners considerably. Unfairly soon, I had great success and was taken for a great technical genius. So I was often consulted by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of the East. At the very least, I succeeded in lowering somewhat the great wave of purpura fever of 1941 in prisoner camps etc. For my success, I soon became a lieutenant. In December 1941, the court that had ordered my expulsion from the NSDAP heard of my entry into the SS army. Great efforts were made to hunt me and persecute me. But because of my great successes and my honorable character, I was kept and protected by my boss. In January 1942, I was appointed head of the technical-sanitary department, which also included the use of severely toxic gases for disinfection. {6|7}

On 8 June 1942, the SS Sturmbannfuehrer Guenther of the Reich Security Main Office, in civilian clothes and unknown to me, entered my office. He ordered me to immediately procure 260 kg of prussic acid for an extremely discreet purpose, and to take the poison by car to a location known only to the driver. – A few weeks later, we left for Collin near Prague. I could somewhat imagine the kind of assignment this was. But I accepted it, because [this way] by chance, I managed to look into all that machinery. Moreover, as an expert in prussic acid, I was authorized and competent enough to make the poison disappear as it dissolved, and thus prevent it

from being misused to kill people. – We were accompanied – by chance – by SS Obersturmbannfuehrer Professor {7|8} Dr. med. Pfannenstiel, tenured professor of hygiene at Marburg/Lahn University. – At Collin, I had made it understood that the acid was intended to kill people. For this reason, in the afternoon, the car was carefully observed.

In Lublin, we were received by SS Gruppenführer Globocnek, who told us: This whole affair is one of the most secretive things there is. Anyone who talks about it will be shot. Yesterday, two talkers died. Then he explained: Just now – 17 August 1942 – there are 3 installations:

1) Belcec, at the Lublin-Lemberg highway in the area of the Russian demarcation line. Maximum per day 15,000 persons

2) Sobibor, in Poland; I don't know exactly, or 20,000 per day, not seen!

3) Treblinca, 120 km NNE of Warsaw. 25,000 per day, seen!

4) Maidanek (near Lublin) seen in preparation. {8|9}

I visited Belcec, Tréblinca and Maidanek in detail with the head of these institutions, police captain Wirth. – Globocnek said: You will need to disinfect very large quantities of textiles, underwear and clothing, ten or twenty times the amount collected by the Spinnstoff Sammlung [Textile collection; H.R.]. The whole collection is designed to conceal the provenance of Jewish, Polish, Czech and other clothing. In truth, the result of our installations is 10-20 times that of all these collections!

Supplements

In Belcec, I had the impression that they were all dead. But Hauptmann Wirth, who – without any knowledge of chemistry or physiology, and moreover without any intellectual culture – had a predilection for experiments involving the killing of people, told me the most curious things he had seen: for example, a very lively child in a chamber that had remained full overnight. Preferably, they had done the most different experiments with the insane. I don't think we're talking about large numbers, with whom experiments have been carried out. But there were some unusual experiments. For example, people were killed by means of compressed air in boilers, using the same compressors as for road asphalt. – In Treblinca, I had the impression that some of them were still alive. Almost all of them had opened their eyes, a terrible sight. But I didn't see any movements, despite all attention. {1|2}

Touched and gripped in his heart, SS Hauptsturmfuhrer Dr. Villing from Dortmund told me about the most heroic way of dying. It concerned

several thousand Polish pastors and priests, who were forced to dig ditches themselves, and who were shot totally naked in front of these ditches.

Asked ironically whether they still believed in Jesus Christ and Mary, they replied with a strong confession to Jesus Christ and an appeal to the Blessed Virgin of Czestochowa. This way of dying – Dr. Villing told me – was moving and touching.

Many other intellectual Poles, especially male and female teachers, died in an extraordinarily honest and moving way. {2|3}

One way of killing people was to take them up the stairs to a blast furnace, shoot them there, and then make them disappear into the furnace. It is said that many people died in the ring furnaces of the brickyards. But I can't vouch for the truth of this report. –

One of Bromberg's police chiefs, SS Obersturmbannführer Haller, told the 40 physicians in my class and me that, before he arrived in Bromberg, it was customary to slam Jewish children headlong into the wall. He himself would have ended this abuse and had the children shot. He tragically recalled {3|4} two little girls, aged 5 and 8, who had dropped to his knees to say their prayers – and then had to be shot. – Haller told us. At the massacres of the Poles, they were forced to dig large ditches and lie in them on their stomachs. Then they were machine-gunned. The next ones were ordered to lie down on the still-warm corpses, to be shot immediately. Many were not dead and were shot while attempting to crawl out of the 5-6 layers of people.

One of the heads of the German government in Krakow told me, while carving a turkey, of an extraordinarily lucky catch, that they had seized one of the leaders of the Polish resistance, a Jew. During the interrogation, he remained silent. Then they {4|5} broke his wrists.

But still he remained silent. Then they put him with his buttocks on the hot plate of a stove. Then he was ready to speak!

On 18 August 1942, on the occasion of a visit to the SS Army's construction office, these two architect officers told us about a visit to the morgue of a prisoner camp near Lublin. The corpses were piled up by the thousands. Busy with their work, they suddenly saw some of them moving. The SS Rottenführer on duty {5|6} only asked: Where? …Then he took a piece of round iron already at his disposal to break their skulls. – It wasn't the fact – the architects told me – that surprised them, but that the whole thing [happened like it] was self-explanatory.

During my visit to Belcec, a Jewess wounded some of the men in the work commando with a razor. Wirth regretted that she was already dead,

so that he could not punish her severely. He had the wounded Jews treated by doctors with great care, to make them believe that they would be spared and rewarded. In a loud voice, he amused himself that they believed they would live, that they would receive their acres, their promises [percentages]. The fools, the fools, he cried! {6|7}

In Belcec and Tréblinca, after undressing, the men and boys were invited to carry at great speed the clothes scattered everywhere to the cars: The best workers will be members of the labor commando! – There was a life-and-death competition of naked men picking up the clothes, with the SS men laughing at them. Naturally, afterwards, they all disappeared into the gas chambers. Only a few very old and weak people were shot. – I remember a few vivid images: Of the little Jewish boy, who had been ordered to give everyone a little string to tie their shoes together, and who pensively handed out the strings. That all – involuntary – were integrated in the machinery of their own killing. Or I remember a naked five-year-old girl who, a meter in front of the chamber of death, loses a little sting of corals, and the three-year-old boy, who lifts it up, who is delighted by it – and then was thrown into the chamber.

SS Hauptsturmführer {7|8} Obermeyer told me: In a village in this region, I met a Jew and his bride from my native Pirmasens. In 1914-1918, he was a sergeant, an honorable man. As a child, he saved me from death by being run over. I'll take these men and make them members of the labor commando. – Asked what their future fate would be, he said: Afterwards? The same as with the others, in such things there are no differences. But I'll have them shot! – Even within the SS, I've met a number of men who condemned these methods in the strongest terms, full of burning hatred for Nazism. Here are a few names of such men:

2/3 of the Dutch SS were only forced into this formation by the most fraudulent and violent methods. Likewise, many {8|9} Germans, preferably Hitler Youth, were forced into the SS by lies and deception. The same fate befell members of the Luftwaffe and Navy, forced into the SS by Himmler. For the sake of justice, we must not forget this!

Text T V

It is typed, written in French, and dated 6 May 1945. There is no signature. It is headlined "Report by Dr. Gerstein of Tübingen." It is a copy of an in-

terrogation by the French War Crimes Investigation Branch ORCG (*Organe de recherche des criminels de guerre*). A copy of this version is kept at the Directorate of Military Justice in Paris in administrative file No. 61 1/Crimes de guerres, concerning Kurt Gerstein.

As we have not been authorized to make photocopies of this interrogation, which we refer to as T Va, we will append a photocopy of a very similar document from the National Archives in Washington, bearing the classification number 01.0813. It is clearly a replica of the document kept in Paris, with a few differences that we have rectified in the transcription. We refer to the latter document as T Vb.

There is also an English translation of T Vb, which we call T Vc. This English-language document is also held by the National Archives in Washington, and bears the same classification number as T Vb: 01.0813. We do have a photocopy from the Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation in Paris (*Centre de documentation juive contemporaine*), but it is of such poor quality that some passages are illegible. We have therefore decided not to append version T Vc to our thesis.

[The below translation follows version T Va; on the pages of T Vb reproduced in the appendix, the translated text starts on page 2 at the fourth paragraph. T Vb has minor variations in the text plus a few phrases and sentences omitted, probably by accident. The formatting below, including indicated page breaks for orientation, follows T Vb.]

* * *

When I learned of the mass murder of the insane at Hadamar, Grafeneck and elsewhere, I had only one desire: to get to the bottom of this witch's cauldron, and to communicate to the people what I saw there, even if it meant risking my life. I had no scruples, having twice been the victim of S.D. agents who had infiltrated the innermost circles of the Protestant Church and prayed side by side with me.

I thought: "What you can do, I can do better than you," and volunteered to join the SS. My decision was made all the easier by the fact that my own sister-in-law, Bertha EBELING, had been murdered at Hadamar.

With the help of two recommendations from Gestapo agents who had been assigned to my case, it was easy for me to be accepted into the Waffen SS; one of these gentlemen had said to me: "With your dose of idealism, you should be up to your neck in the party." And so they themselves showed me the way. My basic training was given at Hamburg, Langenhoorn, in a course I attended with 40 physicians. Then to Arnhem in Holland, and Oranienburg. In Arnhem, I was immediately put in touch

with the Dutch resistance by my student friend, the manufacturer Ubbink, from DOESBURG.

My dual studies, as a physician and a technician, soon led me to the SS EM,[15] Section D, Hygiene. It has to be said that this section was remarkably broad-minded and perfectly conscious. The choice of my occupation was left entirely and freely to me. I set about constructing local and mobile disinfection facilities for prison camps, concentration camps and combat troops, in large quantities to meet a pressing need. Without having any personal merit, I achieved great success, and from then on, I was mistakenly considered a technical genius. I simply have good common sense and sound instincts. From then on, I was heavily involved in projects for the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of the East, and I had {2|3} to get the OKW's[16] highly inadequate disinfection system back on track. The system was already so badly botched that there wasn't much room for improvement. However, I did manage to stop the terrible wave of typhus in 1941, which caused tens of thousands of deaths every day in the prison and concentration camps. I soon became second lieutenant, then lieutenant.

In December 1941, I was once again in great danger, as the party court that had decided my execution had learned that I had infiltrated an SS EM. Thanks to my successes and the general esteem in which I was held, I was protected by my leaders and maintained.

In February 1942, I was appointed head of the technical sanitation section, which at the same time covered the entire drinking-water system and all technical disinfection, even using highly toxic gases.

On 8 June 1942, SS Sturmbannfuehrer GUENTHER from the R.S.H.A. on Kurfuerstenstrasse came to my office. He is in civilian clothes. I have never seen him before. With many mysterious allusions, he gives me the order to get 260 kgs of prussic acid for him, and to take this poison in an R.S.H.A. car to a place known only to the driver.

Sometime later, I took this car to Kellin [Kolin] near Prague. I could roughly imagine what kind of mission this was. I accepted, however, because to this day it seems to me that a coincidence strangely resembling destiny put me in a position to take a look at exactly where I wanted to see clearly with every fiber of my heart. Out of thousands of possible positions, I had been entrusted, out of hundreds of others, with just the one that brought me closest to this sort of thing and tasked me, one of many, with working on it. Come to think of it, this seems unbelievable to me, and all the more so in view of my past, which has landed me several times in Ge-

[15] E.M. – *État-Major* – headquarters, staff.

[16] O.K.W. = *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* – Germany's Armed Forces High Command.

stapo and SD prisons for anti-national activities and, not so long ago, in a concentration camp, this being widely known to my bosses, as a result of the Party's denunciation. Truly, the S.D. and its boss the R.S.H.A. have slept magnificently in this case, and made a gardener of the goat in an exemplary fashion.[17]

However, in execution of an order I received, I am keeping this mission absolutely secret, even in the office, and I am not telling anyone about it. There can be no doubt that if, in my situation, I indulge in any indiscretion, I will be killed after appalling torture, and my family will be executed along with me.

I don't have the slightest scruple about accepting this mission, because anyone else would have carried it out in the mind of the S.D., whereas I, considered an authority in the field of prussic acid and highly toxic gases, can very easily make the whole load disappear under the pretext that the material is damaged or decomposed. Only in this way can the use of prussic acid for the execution of human beings be prevented. In any case, from now on, I'll make sure I always have some poison on me, for my own personal use, as well as a well-charged pistol that I can carry day and night.

With one seat still free in the car in question, I was accompanied by SS Obersturmbannfuehrer Professor Dr. PFANNENSTIEL, who holds the chair of hygiene at the University of Marburg Lahn. {3|4}

At Kollin, in the prussic-acid factory, I had deliberately made the staff understand, through awkward technical questions, that prussic acid was intended to kill human beings. I practiced this every time, as it was the best way to start rumors among the people. The vehicle was watched very closely at Kollin.

In Lublin, we are received by SS Gruppenfuehrer GLOBOCNEC, general of the Waffen SS. He says: "This state secret is currently one of the most important, one might even say the most important, and every man who speaks of it will be shot immediately; just yesterday, we silenced two chatterboxes." At present (it's 17 August 1942) we have 3 installations:

1. Belcec, located on the Lublin-Lemberg road, in the northern corner just where the Russian demarcation line crosses the road.

Daily output: around 15,000 executions.

Average use: up to per [*sic*] since April 42: 11,000 per day.

2. Sobibor, near Lublin in Poland, I don't know exactly where, 20,000 executions a day since around June 42.

[17] Literal translation of "*den Bock zum Gärtner machen*, " from a folk tale: "The billy goat who became the gardener and ate the garden." Similar to the English expression "to put the fox in charge of the henhouse."

3. Treblinca, Poland, 120 km north-north-east of Warsaw. 25,000 executions a day, since May 42.

4. Maidanneck, near Lublin, still in preparation.

Accompanied by the head of all these death factories, police captain WIRTH, I visited all these places in depth, with the exception of Maidanneck. Wirth is the same man charged by Hitler and Himmler with the mission of killing the insane at Hadamar, Grafeneck and elsewhere.

Turning to me, GLOBOCNEC says: "Your duty is to disinfect the immense quantities of woolens, underwear, clothes and shoes produced by our factories. If every year we collect clothes from the Danish people, this is only done to camouflage, vis-à-vis the people and foreign workers, the origin of these immense quantities of second-hand clothes. Another, much more important aspect of your mission is to change the way our institutes [*sic*] of death operate. At present, this is done using gas exhaust from an old Russian diesel engine. This has to change and go much faster. I am thinking especially of prussic acid. The day before yesterday (15 August 42), the Fuehrer and HIMMLER were here. I have been instructed not to give permits to people who are obliged to visit these installations for essential service reasons, but to accompany them personally in order to preserve secrecy.

PFANNENSTIEL then asks, "What did the Fuehrer say about all this?" GLOBOCNEC's reply: "All action must be taken as quickly as possible." He was accompanied by the ministerial advisor, Dr. Herbert LINDEN, from the Ministry of the Interior, who was responsible as a doctor for the execution of the insane. He suggested burning the corpses rather than burying them. "It's possible that a generation will come after us that won't understand us too well." To this, GLOBOCNEC is reported to have replied: Gentlemen, if ever a generation were to succeed us that did not understand our great and much-needed duty, we must truly believe that all our National Socialism has been in vain. On the contrary, I am of the opinion that we should bury, along with the corpses, bronze tablets on which it would be inscribed that it was we who {4|5} had the courage to carry out this work, so important and so indispensable. Hitler replied: "Yes, Globocnec, that's my opinion too."

Some time later, however, Dr. LINDEN's opinion prevailed. Even corpses that had already been buried were burned on grates made from rails, using gasoline and heavy oils.

The offices of these factories were located in Lublin, in the so-called "JULIUSSCHRECK barracks."[18]

I am introduced to the gentlemen there the next day. Captain WIRTH's car takes us to Belcec, where a small special station is set up just off the road, near a yellow sand hill. To the south of the road are a number of buildings with the inscription "Special Kommando of the Waffen SS of Belcec."

GLOBOCNEC puts me in touch with WIRTH's replacement, SS Hauptsturmfuehrer OBERMEYER from Pirmasens.

With remarkable discretion, he showed me around.

Behind thick rows of barbed wire, just beyond the station, stands a large barracks marked "Cloak Room." Inside, there's a large counter marked "Deposit of Gold and Valuables." Next comes a room with around 100 stools, the "Hairdressing Salon." Next, a tree-lined pathway about 150 m long, bordered on the right and left by double barbed wire with a sign reading "To the Inhalation and Bathing Rooms." We then find ourselves in front of a bathhouse-like building with a small wrought-iron staircase. On the building is a large sign reading "HECKENHOLT Foundation." I didn't see any more this afternoon, only the gas chambers to the right of the corridor in the "bathhouse." To the right and left, three garage-like rooms 5 m by 5 m and 1.90 m high. I didn't see any deaths this afternoon, but everywhere, even on the road, there was an unbreathable, pestilential, indescribable, corpse-like stench. Millions of flies were buzzing through the air.

The next day, a few minutes before 7 a.m., I was warned: "Immediately, the first transport is due to arrive." Indeed, at 7 a.m., a train with 45 cars arrives from Lemberg; behind the barbed-wire openings, we see appallingly pale children, as well as a few men and women with features distorted by fear.

200 Ukrainians rip off the doors, and with their leather whips whip people out of the cars. 6,700 people, 1,450 of whom are already dead on arrival. A loudspeaker gives instructions: "Undress completely, get rid of your glasses and prostheses too (a guard tells a young girl: quietly put down your glasses, you'll get others inside), leave {5|6} valuables at the counter without a voucher or receipt. A three-year-old Jewish boy is given an armful of strings, which he pensively distributes to the others; it's intended for tying shoes, as no one would ever be able to find matching pairs in the 35- to 40-meter-high pile. Next, the women and girls go to the "hair-

[18] Julius Schreck formed the *Schutzstaffel* as Hitler's bodyguard in April 1925.

dresser" – with 2 or 3 strokes of the scissors, the hair is cut and disappears into large potato sacks.

A duty Unterscharfuehrer told me, "It's intended for special use in submarine insulation." Even now, I am predicting to everyone that these submarines will soon cease to prowl the seas, for the most efficient army must lose its bite if it has been stained with rivers of innocent blood.

In fact, events soon proved me right.

The train of death sets off, headed by a beautiful young girl. It moves down the aisle. All naked, men, women, children; among them, supported on the right and left, men who have been forced to remove their prostheses.

I stand with Captain WIRTH at the top of the ramp between the death chambers. Two mothers with infants on their breasts, naked grandchildren, adults, children, women, all jumbled together, naked, they climb slowly. Then they enter the death chambers, pushed by those behind them who are spurred on by SS whips.

In one corner of the alley stands a fat SS man with a bull-dog face, surrounded by these unfortunates. In a pastoral voice, he tells them: "Nothing will happen to you. All you have to do is breathe deeply inside the chambers; inhalation is essential because of the epidemics and diseases, and it will do your lungs good." On the question "What will happen to us?" he replies, "Ja, naturally the men have to work, build houses, roads, but the women don't have to work, only if they want to, they can help in the factories and in the kitchen."

For some of these unfortunates, this glimmer of hope is enough to make them take a few steps into the rooms without resistance, but the majority know what awaits them. The smell told them their fate. So they climb the small staircase and see the whole installation. Without saying a word, the majority reacted like sheep being led to the slaughterhouse. A Jewish woman of around 40, her eyes blazing, calls down on the heads of the murderers all the blood innocently spilled here by the most cowardly assassination ever seen. It is Captain WIRTH himself who hits her 5 or 6 times in the face with his whip. She in turn disappears into the room. A few turn to me: "O, Sir, help us, help us." Many pray. I can't help them yet. I pray with them, sink into a corner and cry out to their God and my God aloud. {6|7} I can afford it; there's enough noise around me. With what joy would I not have gone to them in that room, with what joy would I not have died their death. Finding an SS officer in uniform in their room, the assassins would never have assumed that this could be a protest on my part. They would have considered it an accident, and my epitaph would have read:

"Died for his beloved Fuehrer, in fulfillment of his important duty for the Fuehrer."

No, that won't do; I am not yet allowed to give in to the temptation of dying with these people. I know enough about it. WIRTH told me: "There aren't ten people who have seen what I have seen, and who will see it; the foreign auxiliary personnel will be executed in the end." I am one of 5 men who have seen all these installations. There's certainly not one, apart from me, who sees this as an adversary, as an enemy of this band of murderers; so I have to live on and cry out about what I've seen here. In truth, it must be much more difficult, I must live and point it out.

The chambers are filling up: "Load up well," Captain WIRTH has ordered. They step on each other's feet. From 700 to 800 human beings on 25 m^2, in 45 m^3. To recap, more than half of them are children, average weight no more than 30 kgs, specific weight 1, so 25,250 kgs of human beings per room. WIRTH is right; with the help of the SS, 750 people can be crammed into 45 m^3, and the SS men help with their whips and cram in as much as is physically possible. The doors close. Meanwhile, the others wait outside naked. In the meantime, the 2nd transport has arrived. I'm told, "Naturally, they wait outside naked, even in bad weather, even in winter." I haven't asked anything so far, I seem interested, but a word stupidly escapes me. "They'll catch their death." "That's what they're here for," an SS man tells me in his dialect. In a flash, I also understand why this whole facility is called the "HOCKELCHOC Foundation." HOCKELCHOC is the Diesel's operator. A small technician who, according to WIRTH, is a tireless worker, he has already earned imperishable merits during the execution of the insane through his ardor and fertility of ideas. He's also the builder of the whole installation: with the fumes of his Diesel, all these human beings must die. But the Diesel machine does not work. I'm told that this is quite rare.

WIRTH arrives. You can tell that it is painful for him that this is happening just today, when I'm here. Yes, I see and hear everything; my watch has recorded everything, 50 minutes, 70 minutes, the Diesel won't start; humanity waits in vain in these chambers. You can hear them crying and sobbing, "just like in the Synagogue," remarks Professor PFANNENSTIEL, whose ear is pressed against the wooden door. Captain Wirth lashes out at the Ukrainian who is to help HOCKELCHOC start up the Diesel.

After 2 hours 49 minutes – my stopwatch has recorded this – the Diesel starts up. Until then, these human beings live in the already full chambers: 4 times 750 beings in 4 times 45 meters 3 [m^3].

Another 25 minutes pass. It's true that many are already dead; you can see this through the small window that illuminates the room for a moment with electric light. WIRTH interjects to ask me whether I think it's better to let these people die in a dark or lit room. He asks this in the same tone as one would ask: "Do you prefer to sleep with or without a pillow?," "do you like coffee with or without milk?"

28 minutes later, very few of them are still alive. Finally, {7|8} after 32 minutes, all are dead; I am told that this is the normal time for killing.

On the other side, men from the work commando opened the wooden doors. They, also Jews, have been promised freedom and a certain percentage of any valuables found. Three accountants keep a book with scrupulous accuracy and calculate this percentage.

Like marble statues, the dead stand pressed together. There is no room in the chamber to fall or even to bend over. Even in death, you can recognize the families; they hold hands stiffened by death, and it is hard to pull them away from each other to clear the rooms for the next load.

Naked corpses, moist with perspiration and urine, menstrual blood on their legs, smeared with excrement, are being thrown out, children's bodies fly through the air; there's no time to lose. Ukrainian whips fall on the backs of the Kommando. 2 dozen dentists open mouths with hooks and look for gold. Gold to the right, no gold to the left. Other dentists with pliers and hammers pull gold teeth from jaws. Captain WIRTH prances about among all this, he is in his element. A few workers check genitals and anuses for gold, diamonds or valuables. WIRTH beckons me, "Lift up, look at that tin can with the gold teeth, it's only from yesterday and the day before." With extraordinary vulgarity, he tells me: "You can't imagine what one finds every day in terms of gold and diamonds, but take a look," and he leads me to a jeweler in charge of administering all these treasures, and shows me everything. 2 large 20-dollar pieces seem to particularly please WIRTH, who makes them disappear in his pocket.

I am also shown a former head of a major Berlin department store. A small violinist is shown playing his instrument. He is a former captain in the Austrian army, owner of the Iron Cross 1st Class. Both are leaders of the Jewish labor commando.

The naked corpses were dumped a few meters away, in ditches measuring 100 x 12 x 20 meters. A few days later, these corpses swelled and then collapsed sharply, enabling them to be covered with a new layer; around 10 cm of sand was thrown on top; only a few arms and heads stick out. On the

day of my visit, only 2 transports with around 12,500 people arrived in Belcec.

This "factory" has been operating since 1942, "manufacturing" around 11,000 deaths a day. When I or my circle of friends listened to the London radio station or the Voice of America, we were often surprised by the innocent angels who spoke of hundreds of thousands of dead, when in reality there were already more than TEN MILLION.

In 1943, the Dutch Resistance had UBBINK tell me that I was requested not to provide any invented atrocities, but merely to reproduce the strict truth; despite my indications of these things, in August 1942, at the Swedish embassy in Berlin, they refused to believe these figures. I swear on oath that these figures unfortunately are correct.

Based on certain documents, I estimate the number of defenseless human beings murdered by Adolf HITLER and Heinrich HIMMLER {8|9} at around 20 million. Of course, it is not just the 5 or 6 million European Jews who were murdered in this way, but the entire Czech intelligentsia and the elite of other peoples, such as the Serbs, who followed in their footsteps. Then there were the Poles, the most numerous, and a small number of Czechs No. 3; these were the so-called "useless biologicals" who, in the opinion of the SS, no longer had the right to exist, since they could no longer work.

Commissions of so-called doctors, equipped with magnificent cars and medical wizardry, travelled from village to village, town to town, examining the entire population in white coats, stethoscopes in hand. Anyone who didn't seem to be up to the job, at a glance, was put on the list of the useless, and was sought out some time later and put away.

It was HIMMLER's dear young men who judged, who very often were still wet behind the ears, hadn't yet undergone elementary school training, and who congratulated themselves with "dear colleagues" and "Mr. Professor."

"Without these measures," a Sturmbannfuehrer told me in Lublin, "the whole of Poland would be worthless to us, because it's too overpopulated and too sick. We are only doing what nature does everywhere else, and what it unfortunately forgets among other human beings."

Even a gamekeeper confirms to me that the elimination of the weak,* as part of the proper maintenance of a hunt, is, in Polish circumstances, absolutely right and indispensable. It's amazing how much this kind of racial materialism can take hold in the brains of many German intellectuals; even those who refuse to accept the massacre of the Jews were completely in

favor of executing the weak and insane,* and justify this measure with great conviction. For many, this became so natural and indisputable that it became difficult to argue with much of the elite.

WIRTH asked me not to propose to Berlin any changes to the methods of death in the gas chambers used up to now, as they had proven themselves (sic). What is strange is that I wasn't asked any questions in Berlin.

The brought-along prussic acid I had buried.

The next day, 19 August 1942, Captain WIRTH's car takes us to Treblinca, 120 km north-north-east of Warsaw. The facility is much the same, but much larger than Belcec: 8 gas chambers and several mountains of suitcases, textiles and underwear.

In our honor, a truly Himmlerian feast, in the purest Old-German style, is given in the common hall. The meal was simple, but everything was available to everyone in unlimited quantities. HIMMLER himself has given orders to give the men of this commando as much meat, butter and above all alcohol as they want. Prof. PFANNENSTIEL gives a speech, stressing the importance and usefulness of these men's duty. Turning to me, he speaks of "very humane" methods and "the beauty of work." It sounds implausible, but I can assure you that PFANNENSTIEL, himself a father of 5 children, was not speaking in jest or irony, but treated this thing as a doctor with absolute seriousness. More than half of those murdered were children; the normal time for killing after transport and the very painful wait was 32 minutes. PFANNENSTIEL said to the men of the Kommando: "When you see these bodies of Jews, these pitiful figures, you understand even better how much gratitude our duty will evoke." {9|10}

On departure, we were offered several kilos of butter and numerous bottles of liquor to take with us. I find it hard to reject these things, arguing that I supposedly had plenty to spare. PFANNENSTIEL happily pockets my portions again. We drive back to Warsaw. As we leave, we see another group of Jews at work in one of the mass graves over a pile of corpses. "We had forgotten to undress those of the arrivals who were already dead; naturally, we have to make up for this, because of the valuables and clothes," Captain WIRTH explains to me. In Warsaw, waiting in vain for a sleeping car, I meet the Secretary of Legation of the Swedish Embassy in Berlin, Baron von OTTER on the train; still under the fresh impression of my appalling adventures, I tell him everything, with the express request that he immediately communicate all this to his government and the Allies, because every day of delay costs the lives of tens of thousands more. I said

* The text of this paragraph from asterisk to asterisk were omitted in T Vb by accident.

to him: "If the Allies would send, instead of many bombs, millions of intelligent and well-made leaflets and brochures informing the German people of all that is happening, it is likely that in a few weeks or months the German people would be finished with Adolf HITLER."

Baron von Otter asked me for references, as this was a very delicate conversation for him as a diplomat. I pointed him in the direction of Dr. DIBELIUS in BERLIN, Bruederweg 2, a prominent member of the Protestant resistance and a close friend of my friend Pastor NIEMOELLER, who was in Dachau at the time.

I saw Baron von OTTER twice at the Swedish Legation. In the meantime, he has reported personally to STOCKHOLM and tells me that his report has had a considerable influence on Swedish-German relations. A few days later, to ease my conscience, and having done everything in my power, I tried to report to the papal nuncio in BERLIN; at my first words, I was asked whether I was a soldier; on this, all conversation with me was refused, and I was asked to leave His Holiness's legation immediately.

I say this only to show how difficult it was, even for a German, a ruthless enemy of Nazism, to find a way to discredit a criminal government.

In this situation, where every day tens and tens of thousands waited to be murdered, where waiting a few hours seemed criminal to me, if, in this situation, I say, a qualified representative of Jesus on earth refuses any conversation with me, what can one ask of an average citizen against Nazism? What is he to do, he who knows little about these errors,[19] generally speaking, other than hearsay? He who, like millions of foreigners (such as the Dutch Resistance) holds these things to be terribly exaggerated, who does not have my skill, who perhaps has no opportunity like me to listen to foreign radio, what is he to do against Nazism? If even the Pope's representative in Germany refuses to listen to information of this extraordinary importance about this unique violation against the basis of Jesus' law: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." {10|11}

Terribly disappointed and despondent, I left the legation, where I had been unable to find any advice or help. As soon as I left, I was followed by a policeman; a few minutes later, a bicycle officer also followed me. I spent minutes of immense hope and disappointment; I removed the safety catch from my revolver in my pocket and had mentally prepared myself for suicide. The incomprehensible happened; the policeman brushed by me within 50 cm, stopped for a moment and… walked away. From that day on, risking my life every hour, I reported these atrocious deaths to hun-

[19] Probable mistake: should have been "horreurs" (horrors) rather than "erreurs" (errors).

dreds of influential people: to the NIEMOELLER family, to the press attaché of the Swiss legation in BERLIN, Dr. HOCHSTRASSER, to the trustee of the Catholic bishop of BERLIN, Dr. WINTER, requesting a transmission to the bishop and the pope, to Dr. DIBELIUS and to many others, so that thousands were informed by me. I should add that GUENTHER from the R.S.H.A. (I think he's the son of GUENTHER from race studies) asked me again, at the beginning of 1944, for large quantities of prussic acid. The poison was to be delivered to his office in BERLIN's Kurfuerstenstrasse, and stored in a shed he showed me. These were very large quantities, several carloads at a time, to be piled up little by little and kept at his disposal. This poison was enough to kill several million people, who would then disappear without much ado. GUENTHER told me that he didn't yet know where, when, how, for what purpose, on what milieu this poison was to be used. In any case, it had to be constantly available. I deduced from several of GUENTHER's technical questions that at least some of this poison was to be used to kill large numbers of people in clubs and reading rooms. From the meager indications, I assumed that these were officers or priests, in any case educated people, and the poison was to be used in BERLIN itself.

Having visited the site thoroughly, I told GUENTHER that I could not take responsibility for storing such quantities of poison in the capital, since there was enough to kill twice the number of all the inhabitants. With great difficulty, I get the poison stored in ORANIENBURG and AUSCHWITZ, in the concentration camps. I then arranged to have the poison removed on arrival, supposedly for disinfection purposes. At my request, the invoices from the German Society for Pest Control in FRANKFURT and FRIEDBERG were made out in my name, ostensibly to keep it secret, but in reality to make the poison disappear. For this reason, I avoid presenting the numerous current invoices for payment, so as not to constantly remind the S.D. and R.S.H.A. of the large quantities of poison that would be available. I keep the firm waiting, and leave the invoices unpaid. The manager of this firm, Dr. PETERS, told me in a conversation that he delivered prussic acid in vials for the execution of human beings. I never found out exactly what milieu GUENTHER still had to destroy on the orders of his boss EICKMANN [Eichmann]. According to the quantities, I first thought of the concentration camp occupants, which is why I answered Pastor NIEMOELLER's son Jochen's question in the negative: will he ever see his father alive again? HIMMLER's order to kill all concentration camp occupants if necessary was already foreseeable {11|12} at that point. It was also clear

that, at the very least, the Ukrainian death-camp teams would be sacrificed to eliminate inconvenient witnesses. I was also thinking about the possibility of killing prisoners of war as a means of blackmail.

When GOEBBELS later indicated that, if need be, National Socialism would slam the door shut behind itself in a way that would shake the world, I checked again to see if the poison supplies had indeed been destroyed.

Sometime later, GUENTHER called me back to the R.S.H.A. and asked me how it might be possible to poison the Jews interned at MARIA-THERESIENSTADT by throwing prussic acid from the top of the fortifications. To prevent this plan from being carried out, I declared it unfeasible.

I later learned that he had obtained prussic acid in a different way, and that he had still executed the Jews, who were supposedly leading such a good life at MARIA-THERESIENSTADT; these were Jews, fathers of sons who had been killed or who held high decorations and had rendered special service.

The most horrible concentration camps were by no means BELSEN or BUCHENWALD. AUSCHWITZ and NAATHAUSEN [sic] were far worse, and millions of men disappeared in gas {12|13} chambers and gas cars (mobile gas chambers) in Auschwitz alone, while millions of children were killed by a dab of prussic acid held under their noses.

In the RAVENSBRÜCK concentration camp, I was present at these tests on living human beings, performed by Hauptsturmfuehrer Dr. GUNDLACH on the orders of SS Gruppenfuehrer Professor Dr. GERHARDT Hohenlychen.

Tests on women were, in some ways, even more repugnant and odious than in the men's concentration camps. At least the men were told honestly: "Be careful, you're going to get an injection and die"; at the RAVENSBRUECK women's concentration camp, the procedure was different: "Here you are, Mrs. MEYER, we've just noticed that you have an abscess in your liver, we're going to give you a course of injections. and you'll see that your condition will improve." What was most horrifying was the cynicism and mean irony with which it was all done. It's a veritable contest, from the Star of Davis [sic[20]] on the mortuary chambers to these humorous diagnoses.

Every day, experiments were carried out at BUCHENWALD on hundreds of inmates, using from 1 to 100 tablets of pervitin and typhus injec-

[20] A "d" was manually added here to correct this to David in version T 5b; editor's remark.

tions. HIMMLER himself reserved the right to authorize such experiments on people sentenced to death by the S.D. The reports of these tests were all centralized in my office.

Stabsscharfuehrer HOELLANDER used to give them to me regularly.

Another day, in ORANIENBURG, I saw thousands of pederasts disappear without a trace into a furnace.

At MAUTHAUSEN, it was common practice to make Jews disappear in quarries, by dropping them from a height.

The curious thing is that these "accidents at work" were always foreseen a few minutes beforehand by the guards.

The SS Hauptsturmfuehrer, Dr. Fritz KRAATZ, mission head to the Reich SS medical service, reported these facts to me with sincere disgust and made them public. KRAATZ was a fanatical enemy of the Nazis.

At BELCEC, I had the impression on the day of my inspection that, after such a long wait in the chambers, everyone was really dead; on the other hand, Captain WIRTH, a being with no education and no notion of chemistry or physiology, told me the strangest things apparently. WIRTH was gifted with a particular love for various experiments to bring people from life to death. He told me about a small child they found one morning in a gas chamber that had not been emptied the day before, and who was perfectly alive and cheerful. {13|14} WIRTH would have carried out particularly interesting experiments on the feeble-minded, as it was on them that the various degrees of sensitivity could best be tested. Tests were also carried out using compressed air: people were put into old boilers filled with compressed air. At TREBLINKA, I had the impression that some people were still alive and only unconscious, although this did not rule out the possibility that during the night they might revive and suffer a new martyrdom until final death.

Nearly all of them had their eyes open, and looked terrible. Despite my diligent observation, I was unable to observe any movement. On the whole, not the slightest effort was made to carry out these executions in a humane manner, if one has the right to use that word in relation to these facts. All this was done less out of sadism than out of total indifference and convenience.

Hauptsturmfuehrer Dr. VILLING from DORTMUND told me about something that particularly impressed him: around 8,000 Polish clerics were forced to dig pits; they then had to undress, stand in front of these pits, and were shot naked. Asked ironically whether they still believed in Jesus Christ, Mary and their Polish people, they replied with a serene af-

firmation of faith that they believed more than ever in Christ, the Holy Mother of God and a resurrection of their people.

VILLING spoke to me about this with emotion.

Other Poles died in the same exemplary fashion, especially male and female schoolteachers. When I heard about all this, I remembered my own prison in the Buechsenstrasse in STUTTGART; a hand had engraved in the metal of my bed: "Pray, the Mother of God helps." This was a great consolation to me in painful days, and my cell felt like a little Church. I gratefully salute this unknown brother who sent me this sign and encouragement in my deepest sorrow. May God reward him.

Another way of killing people in Poland was to make people climb the ladders to the top of blast furnaces and throw them inside after killing them with a pistol shot. Many others are said to have disappeared in brick kilns, suffocated by gas and burned. In these cases, I have no absolutely guaranteed source.

One of Bromberg's police chiefs, SS Sturmbannfuehrer HALLER, told the doctor taking the course with me that, when he arrived in Bromberg, it was customary to take Jewish children by the feet and smash their heads against the wall of their apartments, to avoid the noise of shooting. He is said to have stopped this nonsense and got the children shot. He presumably found it particularly distressing to witness two little girls, aged 5 and 8, falling to their knees and praying. Naturally, HALLER concluded, I then had to have them shot as well. He also told us about the execution of Polish intellectuals; they were forced to make their own graves, lie on their stomachs in them, and were shot with the machine pistol; those who followed were forced to lie on the warm corpses and were shot in turn; some, not yet dead, {14|15} were shot as they tried to escape between the various layers.

One of the heads of the German government in KRAKAU told me, as he carved up a turkey, about a particularly good catch he'd made: a man from the Polish resistance, a Jew, had refused to talk, so his wrists had been broken; he continued to be silent; on this, he was made to sit on a white-hot iron plate. "You should have seen, he said, how talkative it made him."

During a visit to a Waffen SS construction office in LUBLIN, the two architects told me about a visit they had made the day before to the morgue of a prisoner-of-war camp with a view to enlarging it. Thousands of corpses, most of them from typhus, were piled up there; suddenly they realized that some were still moving. The Rottenfuehrer, who was carrying the key, simply asked calmly: "Where?" and then took a round iron hammer from

nearby, and bashed in the skulls of those indicated. It was not the act itself that astonished the architects, but the naturalness with which the action was executed.

During my visit to BELCEC, a Jewish woman had cut several of the labor Jews with a hidden razor. WIRTH deeply regretted that this woman was already dead, as she should have been exemplarily punished.

The wounded Jews were perfectly cared for by him, to make them believe they would be recompensed, "and they believe that, those idiots," exclaimed WIRTH, laughing.

What was particularly disgusting at BELCEC was the competition between the men and the boys of the transport to carry clothing to the wagons. The one who did the best job got to join the Kommando. Naturally, they all disappeared, without exception, into the gas chambers; only a few very old and very sick people, who even with the support of the others could not drag themselves to the chambers, were set aside and shot.

Some particularly striking images never leave my mind: the 3-year-old Jewish boy dreamily handing out pieces of string to bind pairs of shoes. Even this child was unquestionably put to work in HITLER's appalling death machine.

I'm also thinking of a little girl who, a meter from the chamber, lost her little coral necklace; this necklace is found by a 3-year-old boy; he picks it up, considers it lovingly, rejoices in it and, at the next moment, is pushed, I must say gently, by a guard preserving a remnant of empathy, into the chamber. {15|16}

SS Hauptsturmfuhrer OBERMEYER told me the following story: in a nearby village, he had met a Jew from PIRMASINZ, his hometown. During the war, this Jew had been a non-commissioned officer, a very nice guy. As children, they had played together, and he had even saved OBERMEYER's life once. – OBERMEYER declared that he would now take this man and his wife into his Kommando. I asked him what would happen later. He looked at me astonished: "What do you want to become of him? The same as the others, there's no other solution, well, maybe I'll have them shot."

In fairness, I must say that I met some SS men who formally condemned these methods and became staunch opponents of Nazism. I'm thinking in particular of Hauptscharfuehrer HOELLANDER, who always kept me in the loop on all the secrets, and made sure that anything that might have been compromising for me disappeared.

Another anti-Nazi was the head of the internal section of the SS hospital in BERLIN, SS Sturmbannfuehrer Dr. FOCHT, who since 1941 has frequently openly criticized these methods, knowingly risking his own head in the process. The same applies to SS Hauptsturmfuehrer Dr. NISSEN from ITZEHOE and Dr. SORGUE from JENA. The three Waffen SS chief pharmacists BLUMENREUTHER, BEHMENBURG and RUDOLPHI were part of the group of July-20 officers. Of the Dutch and Belgian SS, 2/3 were brought in by force and trickery under the pretext of a sports course. If they subsequently refused to obey, they were immediately shot.

Anyone who, even from the outside, carelessly touched a comrade's pants was immediately shot. This order emanated directly from HIMMLER, and cost the lives of many young SS men who had just left the Hitler Jugend and had been forcibly taken to the SS.

Many from the air force and navy were suddenly transferred to the SS. It would be unfair not to differentiate, despite the very understandable hatred unleashed by the SS.

It has to be said here that, frequently, the police were far worse than the SS. The President of the German Red Cross, SS Gruppenfuehrer Dr. GRAWITZ, was one of those most responsible for the situation in the concentration camps.

Text T VI

It is typewritten in German, dated 6 May 1945. There is no signature, although the last page reads: *Gez*: Kurt Gerstein (*Gez* = *gezeichnet* = signed). T VI is kept at the National Archives in Washington. It consists of thirteen pages.

[The below text was translated by Ronald V. Percival, with some corrections and edits for this edition. It starts with the last paragraph on page 1.]

* * *

When I heard of the massive slaughter of the mentally sick at Hadamar, Grafeneck and other places, I had only one wish: "You must go yourself and look into this witch's cauldron and make known to the people what is happening, even at the risk of your life." In this, I needed not have any scruples, since I had myself twice been the victim of the agents of the SD, who had wormed their way into the very heart of the fraternal council of the Confessing Church, and even participated in the most intimate fellow-

ships of prayer and got down on their knees. I said to myself: What you can do, I have long since been able to do, and I registered myself voluntarily to enter the SS. This all the more so as my sister-in-law Bertha Ebeling of Saarbrücken had been put to death at Hadamar. On the recommendation of two officials of the Gestapo who had studied my case, it was easy for me to be accepted in the Waffen-SS. These gentlemen were completely of the opinion that an idealism such as mine should at all costs be used for the NSDAP. In this way, they themselves showed me the path which I afterwards followed.

I received my basic training with 40 physicians at Hamburg-Langenhoorn, then at Arnheim-Holland and at Oranienburg. At Arnheim, via my student friend, the manufacturer Ubbink of Doesburg, graduated engineer, I made immediate contact with a Dutch resistance movement. Due to my double studies, technical and medical, I was called straightaway to the SS Leadership Office, Office Group D, Sanitation of the Waffen-SS, Hygiene Section. Admittedly, this service proved to be one of considerable liberality. Thus, it was left entirely up to me to choose an activity for myself. To meet an absolutely pressing need, I constructed disinfection devices, mobile and stationary, in great number, notably for the prisoner camps, the concentration camps and the combat troops. Without wishing to boast, I obtained in this field some extraordinary successes, and I was henceforth taken to be a very special technical genius. This is why I was also called on frequently for projects of this type by the Ministry of the Eastern Territories and the Ministry of Labor. Still, the fact remains that we actually succeeded in containing the terrible epidemic of endemic typhus of 1941, which at times caused several tens of thousands of deaths each day in the prisoner camps and the concentration camps. That is why I very soon became second lieutenant and then first lieutenant. In December, I found myself again in great danger, for the party tribunal which had decided my expulsion from the party had received knowledge of my accession to a responsible position within the SS. Due to my successes and the general good evaluation of me, I was, however, protected by my office and maintained in my position. In February 1942, I became head of the technical sanitary service, which comprised also questions of drinking water and all technical disinfection, including that with the aid of highly toxic gases.

On 8 June 1942, I received in my office of work the visit of Sturmbannführer SS Günther of the Reich Security Main Office at Kurfürstenstrasse. G. came in civilian clothes; I did not know him until then. With all sorts of mysterious allusions, he gave me the order to obtain a quantity of

hydrogen cyanide (260 kg) and to go with this poison, by means of an SD vehicle, to a place that only the driver knew. The affair appeared like one of the most secret affairs of the Reich of the moment. Sometime later, I went with the vehicle in question to Kollin near Prague. I could roughly imagine the kind of mission. I accepted it, however, because chance was leading me here to my goal: to cast an eye into all this machinery, as I had been wishing to do for a long time. Moreover, I did not have the slightest qualms. For if I had not accepted the mission, another would have executed it in the way wanted by the SD, whereas, thanks to my authority in the field of highly toxic gases, I could without difficulty get rid of the entire load, as decomposed, having turned dangerous or deteriorated. Thus, only I could prevent the misuse of the hydrogen cyanide to kill people.

As there was still a place in the car, I declared myself ready to take along the Prof. Dr. med. Pfannenstiel, tenured professor at the University of Marburg/Lahn. At Kollin, I had given to understand, by purposely maladroit technical questions to the Czech personnel of the factory, that the hydrogen cyanide was intended for killing human beings. I always acted the same afterwards, as the best way of spreading the thing around among the people. Promptly, the vehicle was carefully observed at Kollin. At Lublin, we were received by the SS Gruppenführer General Globocnec. He said to us: This secret affair of the Reich is actually one of the most secret, one can even say the most secret which exists. Anyone who babbles about it is immediately shot. Only yesterday, we silenced two babblers. At the moment – it was the 17 August – we have three facilities:

1) Belcec, on the highway from Lublin to Lemberg in the north corner, exactly at the spot where the road cuts the demarcation line with the Russians. Daily output about 15,000 executions. Average utilization until now since April 11,000 per day.

2) Sobibor, near Lublin in Poland; I do not know exactly where. 20,000 put to death per day.

3) Treblinka, 120 km to the NNE of Warsaw in Poland. 25,000 put to death per day. Average utilization about 13,500 per day since June 1942.

4) Maidaneck, near Lublin. Was then still in construction.

Accompanied by the head of all these death factories, Police Captain Wirth, I have inspected Belcec, Treblinka and Maidaneck in a thorough manner while in operation. Wirth is the same one who, on the order of Hitler and Himmler, killed the mentally sick at Hadamar, Grafeneck and other places.

Globocnec told us, that is to say he addressed himself solely to me: It is your task to disinfect large quantities of textiles, linen, clothing and shoes which remain in the facilities. These quantities represent 10 to 20 times the results of the collection of textiles. All these collections are essentially made only for the purpose of making the origin of the large quantities of old clothes plausible in some way to the foreign workers and the German people.– Your other task, which is of course much more important, is to change the actual operation itself of these death facilities. The thing works now with Diesel exhaust gases coming from an old Russian Diesel engine. This must be changed in some way to work more quickly, and I think above all of hydrogen cyanide. The day before yesterday, on 15 August 1942, the Führer and Himmler were here. I may not make out a permit to people who must visit the facilities, but in order to keep the secret, I have to lead them there personally. Pfannenstiel then asked: "What did the Führer say of all this?" and Globocnec replied: "The whole operation must be brought to completion the quickest way possible!" In his company, there was also ministerial counsellor Dr. Herbert Linden of the Reich Ministry. He is of the opinion that it would be better to burn the corpses instead of burying them. One day, a generation could come after us that would not understand all this. Whereupon I told Globocnec [sic]: "Gentlemen, if ever there should come after us a generation who will not understand our great task so worthy of recognition and so necessary, then our entire National Socialism would have been in vain. On the contrary, I am of the opinion that bronze plaques should be set in the ground on which it would be written that we, that it was we who had the courage to accomplish this work, so necessary and important. – Thereupon Hitler: Good, {3|4} Globocnec, that is truly also my point of view.– It was the other point of view, however, which prevailed. The corpses were then burned with the help of gasoline and diesel oil on gigantic grills improvised with railway rails.– I then had to visit the vast offices of these killing facilities at Lublin, at the "Julius Schreck Barracks." The next day, we drove to Belcec with Captain Wirth's car. A special railway station had been built right against a hill of yellow sand on the north side of the road. To the south of the road, there were some administration buildings with the inscription "Special Commando Belcec of the Waffen SS." Globocnec turned me over to Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer of Pirmasens, who showed me the facility with great reluctance. Behind thick brushwood hedges, right near the railway station, there was first of all a large hut with the inscription "c l o a k r o o m." There was a large service window, "Deposit of money and valuables." Then a

room with about a hundred stools followed, the hairdressing salon. Then a birch tree pathway of about 150 meters, enclosed to the right and left by double barbed wire, with signboards: "To the inhalation and bathrooms." Next, there was a building before us, somewhat like a bathhouse, with a little stairway, to the right and to the left of it a large concrete pot with geraniums. On the roof, in the guise of a weathervane, the Star of David in wrought iron. In front of the building, an inscription: "Heckenholt Foundation." I did not see anything more that afternoon. In particular, I did not see a single dead person. But throughout, and again above the road, a pestilential stench of corpses, and millions of flies buzzed about everywhere. Within the bathhouse itself, three rooms like garages, each 5 x 5 meters in size and 1.90 m in height, were arranged to the left and right of a corridor. The following morning, some minutes before 7 o'clock, I was told: the first transport is going to arrive! – In fact, at 7 o'clock exactly, a train of 45 cars arrived from Lemberg. Behind the little hatches, barred with barbed wire, one saw dreadfully pale children, and also some men and women with features contorted by anguish. The train disappeared behind the hedge. 200 Ukrainians abruptly open the doors, and with lashing leather whips drive out of the train some 6,700 persons, of whom 1,450 are already dead on arrival. A loudspeaker gives instructions: undress completely, take off even prostheses, spectacles etc. (To a young girl a guard says: take off your glasses; you will receive others inside). Deliver valuables to the service window, without voucher or receipt. Under the arm of a little Jewish boy, someone presses a handful of strings, which the child of three years pensively distributes to people: to tie the shoes together!– For, in the pile of 35 to 40 meters high, no one could afterwards have retrieved the matching shoes.– Then the women and the young girls to the hairdresser, who cuts their hair in 2 – 3 scissors cuts, and makes it disappear into large potato sacks. "That is intended for the submarines for certain special uses, for the gaskets or something like that!" tells me the Unterscharführer who is on duty there.– I foretold even then to many people that these submarines would soon navigate no longer because even the most ingenious weapon had to become blunted if it were stained with floods of innocent blood. God would arrange things in such a way that they would <u>not</u> w o r k anymore! – And in fact, a little time later, events proved me right! – Then the throng starts moving; in front a picture-perfect young girl; and so they walk along the alley, all naked, men, women and children, the men with prostheses, which they had to take off, supported on both sides by the others.

I myself am standing with Captain Wirth up above on the ramp, between the death chambers. Mothers with their sucklings at the breast, they walk up, hesitate, {4|5} then enter into the death chambers.– At the corner of the birch-tree pathway stands a robust elderly SS man, surrounded by these poor people. In a voice like a minister, he says to them: Not the least thing will happen to you! In the chambers, you must only breathe deeply, this dilates the lungs; this inhalation is necessary because of the sicknesses and the epidemics. To the question, what would happen to them later? he replies: Yes, of course, the men must work building houses and roads, but the women have no need to work. Only if they wish, they can help with the work or in the kitchen. For some of these poor people, a little glimmer of hope, which suffices for them to pass the few steps up to the chambers without hesitation. The majority know; the smell announces their fate! Thus, they climb up the little stairway, and then they see everything! The mothers with their babies at the breast, the little naked children, the adults, men and women, in confusion, all naked – they hesitate – but they enter into the death chambers, pushed forward by the others behind them or by the leather whips of the SS. The majority without saying a word. Like a lamb led to a slaughterhouse! A Jewess of about 40 years with flashing eyes cries out: May the blood which is spilt here during the basest of murders fall again on the murderers! She receives 5 or 6 blows of the whip in her face, personally from Captain Wirth, then also disappears into the chamber. – Some address themselves to me: Oh Mister, help us, but help us! – Many pray. But I cannot help them, I pray with them, I squeeze myself into a corner and cry in a loud voice to my God and to theirs. There is enough noise around me, I can allow myself to cry in a loud voice to my God: How I would have wished to enter the death chambers with them; how I would have wished to share their death. They then would have found an SS officer in uniform in their chambers; they would not have protested for that; they would have considered the thing an accident; one would have announced in reference to me: "Died in service for his beloved Führer, faithfully served in the execution of an important task for the Reichsführer…"[21] No, that won't do. I cannot yet yield to the temptation to die with these people. I know it well: There are not 10 persons who see what I see and what I have seen, I who have a view of the whole here, of all the installations and their organization. Certainly, not one apart from myself sees this as an adversary, as an enemy of this gang of murderers. So I must live and first of all make known what I see here. To be sure, this is the most

[21] Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police, Heinrich Himmler.

difficult service, very difficult. The chambers are filling. Pack well, that is what Captain Wirth has ordered. The people are stepping on each other's feet, 700 to 800 persons to 25 square meters, 45 cubic meters. I make an estimate: average weight at the most 35 kg, more than half are children, specific gravity 1, thus 25,250 kg of human beings per chamber. Wirth is right, if the SS men push a little, one can cram 750 persons into 45 cubic meters! – And they [SS] push them with their horsewhips and compel them to enter, as many as is physically possible.– The doors close. During this time, the others are waiting outside, naked. Meanwhile, the second transport has also arrived. Someone tells me, naked, of course also in winter and in cold weather. But they can catch their death! – say I, who is usually prudent, who asks absolutely no question, pretends to be disinterested, this word escapes from me. "Well, that is exactly what they're here for," an SS man replies to me in his dialect.–

Now at last I understand why the whole facility is called "Heckenholt Foundation." Heckenholt is the operator of the Diesel, a little technician and a tireless worker. Already during the liquidation of the mentally ill, he has gained unprecedented merit according to Wirth {5|6} due to his diligence and inventive mind. He is also the constructor of all the entire facility. It is with the exhaust gases of his Diesel that the people here are supposed to be killed. But the Diesel was not working. That happened relatively seldom, I was told. – Captain Wirth arrives. One can see that it is embarrassing to him that this happens just today, when I am here. But yes, I see everything! and I wait. My stopwatch has quietly recorded everything. 50 minutes, 70 minutes – the Diesel does not start! The people are waiting in their gas chambers. In vain. One hears them weeping, sobbing. "Like in the synagogue!" Professor Pfannenstiel remarks, his ear against the wooden door. Captain Wirth strikes the Ukrainian who is supposed to help Heckenholt, in the face with his horsewhip. – After 2 hours 49 minutes, the stopwatch has well recorded everything – the Diesel starts. Right up to this moment, the people are alive in the 4 chambers already filled, 4 x 750 persons in 4 x 45 cubic meters! – Again 25 minutes pass. Right, many are already dead now. One sees it through the little window, through which the electric light illuminates the chamber for an instant. Wirth had questioned me minutely to know whether I thought it better to make people die in a lit or in an unlit room. He asked me that in the tone in which one asks whether one sleeps better with or without a wedge pillow. At the end of 28 minutes, only a few were still alive. Finally, after 32 minutes, all are dead. At the other side, the men of the labor unit open the wooden doors. They have

been promised – themselves Jews! – freedom and some thousandths of all the valuables found for their terrible work. Three bookkeepers keep the accounts with great exactitude, and minutely calculate the thousandths. The dead are standing tightly one against the other like columns of basalt in the chambers. There would not have been space to fall or even to lean forward. Even in death, one recognizes the families. Convulsed by death, they clasp hands in such a way that it is difficult to separate one from the other in order to free the chambers for the next batch. The corpses are thrown outside, wet with sweat and urine, soiled with filth and menstrual blood on the legs. The corpses of children fly through the air. There is no time, the horsewhips of the Ukrainians whistle over the labor unit. Two dozen dentists open the mouths with hooks to look for gold – gold to the left, without gold to the right! – Other dentists extract with pincers and hammers the gold teeth and the crowns out of the jaws. – Captain Wirth is jumping around among them all over the place. He is in his element. Some of the workers check the genitals to look for gold, diamonds and valuables. Wirth calls to me: Feel the weight of this tin can full of gold teeth; it is only from yesterday and the day before! With an incredible and devious tone of voice, he says to me: You would not believe what one can find every day of gold and diamonds (he pronounced this [*Brillianten*] with 2 Ls and without y-sound) and also dollars.– But look for yourself! – And then he took me to a jeweler responsible for administering all these treasures, and he had me see everything. Then again, I was shown a former head of the Kaufhaus des Westens in Berlin W, and a little violinist was also made to play in my honor. He is a former captain of the imperial-royal army of Austria with the Iron Cross 1st Class, both bosses of the Jewish labor unit. The naked corpses, on wooden carts, were thrown into 100 x 12 x 20 meter pits a distance of only a few meters away. After some days, the decomposing corpses swelled, then they collapsed heavily a short time afterwards, so that a new layer could be thrown on top; then about 10 cm of sand was spread on top, with the result that only a few isolated heads and arms stuck out.– On the day of my visit, only two transports with a total of 12,500 persons arrived at Belcec. {6|7}

This facility has been operating since April 1942 and reaches on average 1,000 killings per day. When I and my circle of friends listened to the radio of London or the Voice of America, we were often astonished by those innocent angels who came up with figures of hundreds of thousands of dead, whereas there were already tens of millions of them. The Dutch resistance movement had asked me in 1943 through Graduate Engineer

Ubbink of Doesburg, not to supply them with atrocities, but with the strictest truthfulness. Although I transmitted these things in August 1942 to the Swedish embassy in Berlin, apparently no one wanted to believe these figures at all. Yet nevertheless they are unfortunately t r u e , I attest to it under oath. I estimate the number of those who, defenseless and unarmed, have been murdered at the instigation of Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler, drawn without any possibility of resistance into those murderous traps where they were put to death, as at least 20,000,000 human beings. Because most certainly it is not just a matter of only some 5 or 6 million European Jews who were thus put to death, but above all the Polish intelligentsia and a great part of the Czech, as well as the management classes of other peoples, for example the Serbs, but most especially the Poles and the Czechs No. III. It was these who were said to be biologically without value, and who, from the fact that they truly could not work any longer, no longer had any justification to exist, from the point of view of the Nazis. Commissions of so-called physicians went from village to village and from town to town, in beautiful limousines and with a complete medical hocus-pocus paraphernalia; dressed in white coats and supplied with stethoscopes, they examined the whole population. Whoever, according to all appearances, was no longer in a condition to work, was put on the list as a useless mouth, and sometime afterwards taken away and gassed. And those who decided this, often did not possess even a primary education, and awarded each other (the honorifics) "Dear Colleague!" and "Herr Medical Advisor!"– Yes, without these measures, an SS-Sturmbannführer at Lublin told me, all of Poland would be without value for us, since it is in every way overpopulated and sick. We are only making up for what everywhere else nature itself does, and which it has unfortunately forgotten to do with men! – At Treblinka, I saw a certain number of workers who, the following day, were turning over the corpses in the graves. "It was forgotten to undress the people who arrived already dead. Of course, that needs to be rectified because of the textiles and the valuables," Captain Wirth told me. – Wirth begged me not to propose to Berlin any kind of change in the gas chambers in use up until then, or in the killing methods, given the fact that they had stood their test as well as possible and were well run. Strangely, I was never asked about this in Berlin. As for the hydrogen cyanide which I brought, I had it buried.

The next day, 19 August 1942, we went with the car of Captain Wirth to Treblinka, 120 km to the NNE of Warsaw. The facility was almost the same, but noticeably bigger than at Belcec. Eight gas chambers and verita-

ble mountains of suitcases, of textiles and underwear. In our honor, a banquet was given in the common hall in the typical old-German style of Himmler. The food was simple, but everything was available in unlimited quantity. Himmler had himself ordered that the men of these units should receive as much meat, butter and other things, especially alcohol, as they wished. Professor Dr. med. Pfannenstiel made a speech, in which he explained to the men the usefulness of their task and the importance of their great mission. To me only, he spoke of the "very humane methods" and of the "beauty of the work." This has an air of being absolutely incredible, but I guarantee that he did describe the matter in this way as a physician not as a joke, but absolutely seriously! To the teams, he moreover said in particular: When one sees these bodies of Jews, {7|8} only then does one understand clearly to what extent your task merits recognition. On our farewell, we were moreover offered several kilos of butter and numerous bottles of liquors to take along. I had some difficulty refusing these things under the pretext that I had sufficient of all that from our supposed farm stead. Whereupon Pfannenstiel very happily pocketed my share as well. – Afterwards, we went by car to Warsaw. There, while waiting in vain for a bunk in the sleeping car, I met in the train the legation secretary of the Swedish embassy at Berlin, Baron von Otter. Still under the very recent impression of the terrible things that I had just seen, I recounted everything to him, while begging him to make it known at once to his government and to the Allies, since every delay must cost the lives of thousands, of tens of thousands of people. Von Otter asked me for a reference: I gave him Herr Superintendent-General Dr. Otto Dibelius, Berlin, Brüderweg 2, a leading member of the evangelical resistance movement, and at the same time a close friend of my friend Pastor Martin Niemöller. I then met Herr von Otter twice again in the Swedish embassy. Meanwhile, he had reported personally to Stockholm, and told me that this report had had a considerable influence on Swedish-German relations. I tried in the same affair to make a report to the papal nuncio at Berlin. There, I was asked whether I was a soldier. Upon which I was refused all further discussion. I was asked to leave the Embassy of His Holiness immediately. I say that here because that shows to what extent it was difficult for a German to find advice in his d i s t r e s s when he could not even find help and counsel in such a dreadful distress from the representative of His Holiness, the Vicar of Christ on Earth! On leaving the papal embassy, I was followed by a policeman on a bicycle. I had lifted the safety catch on my revolver in my pocket to shoot myself dead when, incomprehensibly, this policeman passed very close by

me, but then turned around. Risking my head daily, and at the risk of being tortured and hanged, I then reported all that to hundreds of important personalities, among others the secretary of the Catholic bishop of Berlin, Dr. Winter, in order that he transmit it to H. E. Monseigneur the B i s h o p and to the Holy See. I must add that Günther of the Reich Security Main Office (I believe he is the son of the "Rassen-Günther") at the beginning of 1944, asked once more for very large quantities of hydrogen cyanide for a very obscure purpose. The poison was to be delivered to his offices in the Kurfürstenstrasse, and stored there in a shed which he showed me. It concerned very large quantities, to the total of several freight cars, which was to be accumulated little by little, and held at his disposal. The poison was sufficient to kill many millions of persons. Günther said that he did not yet know, and that one could not yet foresee, if, when, to what purpose, for what group of persons the poison would or would not be utilized. In any case, it was to be there constantly available. From certain questions of a technical nature which Günther asked, I concluded that it was probably intended to kill a very great number of persons in a kind of club or lecture halls. After a detailed inspection of the premises, I explained to Günther that I could not in any way take the responsibility of storage of this poison in the shed in question in the very center of the capital of the Reich, considering that this poison was sufficient to kill at least twice the total population of Berlin, and that its decomposition and gasification, especially in summer, were probable. With great difficulty, I managed to convince him to stock this poison in the concentration camps of Oranienburg and Auschwitz. Afterwards, I arranged matters in a way that the poison {8|9} would immediately disappear after its arrival, in each case for the purpose of disinfection, which constantly required cars of hydrogen cyanide there. The invoices of the supplying company – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung [German Association for Pest Control], Frankfurt on Main and Friedburg – I made out in my name, supposedly on account of secrecy, in reality in order not to be hindered in my arrangements, and to be better able to get rid of the poison. For the same reason, I always avoided presenting for payment the numerous invoices which were accumulating, for in that way it would have been necessary continually to remind the SD of the existence of this stock, and an investigation of the situation would certainly have been made by the paying offices according to regulations. Furthermore, I preferred to put off the firm following its payment reminders and leave the invoices unpaid. The manager of Degesch told me moreover during a conversation that he had delivered hydrogen cyanide in

vials to kill people. What group of persons Günther was to kill on the instructions of his superior Eickmann [sic], should the need arise, I never learned. From the number, I thought of the occupants of the concentration camps and of the foreign workers, but also of the officers, of the German clergy and of prisoners of war. Especially when Goebbels said later that possibly National Socialism would slam the door violently behind it, I once more carefully verified that this reserve of death had really been destroyed. Himmler's order to kill all the occupants of the concentration camps, should things be in a bad way, was already then to be foreseen. – One other time, Günther asked me if it was possible at Maria Theresienstadt, in the moats of the fortress where the Jews who were interned there had the right to walk, to poison them by throwing cyanide cans from the top. To make this terrible plan ineffective, I stated that it was impossible. I learned later that the SD had nevertheless obtained the hydrogen cyanide in another way, and that they had killed all the same the Jews who were allegedly so comfortable at Theresienstadt. They were the fathers of sons who had fallen in battle, Jews of great merit, holders of high decorations. Moreover, the most frightful concentration camps were not at all those of Belsen or Buchenwald. Very much worse were Mauthausen-Gusen near Linz on the Danube and Auschwitz. There, millions of people disappeared into the gas chambers and the gas vehicles (mobile chambers). At Auschwitz alone, millions of children were killed by holding a wad of hydrogen cyanide under the nose. At the Ravensbrück concentration camp for women near Fürstenberg in Mecklenburg, I saw tests on living women performed by Hauptsturmführer Dr.med. Grundlach on the order of SS Gruppenführer Professor Dr. Gebhardt – Hohenlynchen. In addition, I was able to have knowledge in my work of numerous reports of this kind. These concerned, for example, the tests of Pervitin – right up to 100 tablets per day – on 100 to 200 detainees, and this right up until death finally followed. Other tests of this kind were made with serum and lymph – for example with the most varied vaccines against typhus. Himmler had reserved to himself the personal prerogative of approving such tests on persons condemned to death by the SD. In addition, one day at Oranienburg, I saw several hundreds and even several thousands of homosexuals disappear without a trace into the furnaces. At Mauthausen, it was common practice to make the Jews work at the quarry, and to throw them afterwards, as if by accident, from the top of a rocky cliff. They lay dead down below and were registered as accidents. SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Krantz – a fierce anti-Nazi – a native of Bonn on the Rhine, department head at the Surgeon General of the SS and

Police, frequently spoke to me and many other persons with indignation about the numerous actions of this sort that he had seen.

At Belcec, the day of my visit, I had the impression that, after such a long wait in the chambers, all were truly dead. But Captain Wirth, a man totally devoid of culture and without the least knowledge of chemistry and physiology, had reported the strangest things to me. {9|10}

Obviously, Wirth had an avowed predilection for tests on men when they were being killed. Thus, he spoke to me of a little child that they had taken utterly perky out of the gas chamber in the morning, after it had remained unemptied overnight. He said they had set up particularly interesting experiments with the mentally ill. That was where they had observed the most varied sensitivities of individuals. Tests had also been made with compressed air: people were put into cauldrons into which compressed air was introduced by means of ordinary compressors used for asphalting streets. – At Treblinca, I had the impression that at least a certain number were still alive and were only unconscious. Nearly all had their eyes open and presented a terrible appearance. In spite of my attentive observation, I was not, however, able to notice any movement. On the whole, almost no care was taken to carry out the killing in a somehow "humane" manner, insofar as one could use the term in such a context! – This undoubtedly less from sadism than from complete indifference and laziness in regard to these things.

SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. med. Villing of Dortmund told me of a particularly dignified death. It concerned several thousands – 8,000 I believe – priests and members of the Polish clergy. These were compelled to dig long and deep ditches themselves; then they had to undress completely, place themselves in front of the ditches, and then they were shot. To the mocking and sarcastic questions whether they still believed in Jesus Christ, in Mary, the Polish people, they replied by firmly confessing Christ, the Holy Mother of God, particularly that of Tschenstochau, and in affirming their faith in the resurrection of their people; Villing spoke of it with tears and with the deepest emotion and distress. Other Poles also died in a similarly dignified and exemplary manner, in particular male and female teachers. In hearing talk of all this, I remembered my own imprisonment in Büchsenstrasse in Stuttgart. With an almost childish hand, someone had scratched there in clumsy lettering on the edge of my iron bed: "Pray, Mother of God helps!" – In Poland, a confirmed method of killing people was to make them climb up the spiral staircase of the blast furnaces, then to execute them at the top with a pistol shot, and then to make them disappear

into the blast furnace. – Many people are said to have been asphyxiated by the fumes of brick furnaces and subsequently burned in the same process. Here, however, my source is not one hundred percent reliable. – One of the police chiefs at Bromberg, SS Sturmbannführer Haller, told the physicians in my course and myself that, on his arrival at Bromberg, it was common practice to smash the heads of Jewish children in apartments immediately against the wall to avoid the noise of shots. He claims to have put a stop to this excess and seen to it that the children were killed by shooting. – He still remembered clearly two little girls of 3 and 5 years who had fallen to their knees in front of him and had prayed. But of course, I had to have them shot too, said Haller. – Haller spoke to us of the execution of the Polish intelligentsia. These people, too, had to dig ditches, lie face down and were then killed with machine pistols. Those following then had to lie down on the corpses, which were still warm, and were similarly shot from above. Many are then said to have been shot when trying to crawl through the corpses and climb outside, for they were not yet completely dead.

One of the heads of the government at Cracow told me, while carving a turkey, of a particularly successful capture that they had made. A man of the Polish resistance – a {10|11} Jew, wrapped himself up in silence. On this, they broke his joints. As he continued to keep silent, he had been seated on a glowing stove plate. You should have seen how he became talkative!

On occasion of a visit to the construction office of the Waffen SS at Lublin, both architects informed us that this very morning, they had measured the mortuary of a prisoner camp with the purpose of enlarging it. Thousands of corpses – the majority typhus victims – were piled up there. All of a sudden, they had seen some of them move. The "Rottenführer" who kept the key had only asked: "Where?" then he had taken a round rod of iron which was there ready, and smashed the skull of these people. It was n o t the action itself, the architects said, which had astonished them, but the way in which it seemed to be a matter of course! On the occasion of my visit, a Jewess dealt some Jewish workers cuts in the neck with the blade of a razor she kept hidden. Wirth deeply regretted that the woman was already dead, she ought to have been punished in an exemplary manner! He scrupulously had medical care given to the wounded Jews so that they might believe that they really would be left alive, settled and recompensed! And the people believe it, the people believe it! These idiots!, Wirth cried out loud to himself! – At Belcec, the competition organized among the men and the young people of the transports was particularly

horrible: it consisted of hauling the clothes right up to the cars. Whoever does the most, will go to the labor unit! – This resulted, it seems, in a life-or-death competition among these naked men who hauled the clothes to the laughter of the SS. Of course, all disappeared afterwards into the chambers. Only a few, old and sick, who could no longer drag themselves up to the chambers, even supported by the others, were taken to one side and straightaway shot. – Some touching scenes still pass before my eyes: the dreamy little Jewish boy of three years who had to distribute the pieces of string to tie up the shoes. Even a child like him was harnessed unwittingly to Hitler's dreadful machine of death and murder in the system of pillage of Himmler and Wirth. – Or I think of a little girl who had lost, one meter from the chamber, a little coral chain that a little Jewish boy of three years found: how he picked up the little chain, looked at it with love, and seemed completely happy with it – and at the following instant was pushed – yes, I must say it: this time with gentleness into the interior of the chamber. SS Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer of Pirmasens told me: "in a village in the vicinity I met a Jew and his wife who come from my home town of Pirmasens. He had been a police officer during the Great War, a very good lad. As children, we played together; he even saved my life once when I had almost been killed by getting run over. Him and his wife, I am going to take them now into my labor unit." I asked Obermeyer what would happen later to this man. He looked at me with astonishment: "What will happen to him? Exactly the same thing as to all the others. There is nothing else. Perhaps I shall have them shot."

On the other hand, I have met in the SS a certain number of men who sincerely condemned these methods and had become thereby furious adversaries of Nazism. I think above all of the head of staff of the senior director of hygiene at the surgeon general of the SS and police, Hauptscharführer Heinrich Holländer. He kept me informed of all the affairs of any importance, and saw to it that anything that might in some way have incriminated me or made me suspect in my job was made to disappear. I would myself have long since ended up in the furnace, if this faithful friend, a Catholic and ardent anti-Nazi, had not held over me his protecting hand. A convinced anti-Nazi, he was also the director of internal medicine of the SS hospital in Berlin, SS Sturmbannführer Dr. med. Focht who since 1941 found numerous and courageous words to {11|12} condemn the methods of the Nazis and the SS, and thus constantly risked his head.– The same is true for the surgeons SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. med. Nissen of Itzehoe and Dr. med. Sorge of Jena. An effective and militant anti-Nazi

was moreover SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. of geology Fritz Krantz of Bonn, who made known among the people round him, at the constant risk of being hanged, the numerous horrors that he managed to see in the concentration camps. Among the group of officers of 20 July 1944 must be counted the chief pharmacists of the Waffen SS, SS Gruppenführer Dr. pharm. Blumenreuther, and his two assistants SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Behmenburg and Dr. Rudolphi. The latter, in October 1944, trampled with his feet the portrait of the Führer which was in his office.

Among the Belgian SS, Dutch and Luxembourgians, 2/3 of the recruits had been pressed by force with incredible maneuvers of lies and deceit about alleged sport courses and the like. Before people had time to know what was going on – and even before putting on the uniform – they were sworn in by the sole fact of their presence at an oath taking, and in case of refusal, they were treated as deserters or hanged for insubordination or at best shot. With what rigor such actions were treated, is shown by the fact that very young members of the Waffen SS were shot quite simply for the fact of having grabbed a comrade from the outside at his trousers in the region of the fly. This order to chastise even the least signs of pervert tendencies was brought to the notice of all the members of the SS, and signed by Himmler himself. – Thousands of boys of the Hitler Youth were pushed into the SS against their will like the foreigners mentioned above. It is the same with members of other branches of the Wehrmacht, in particular air force and navy, who were compelled to join the SS on the order of Hitler and Himmler. It would be absolutely false and unjust – highly unjust – to want to make each SS man co-responsible for the terrible crimes of the SS without examining these aforesaid circumstances. It is necessary to mention here also that the police were often considerably worse than the SS. For example, at the time of the apprehension and assembly of the Jews to form transports and their delivery to the Himmler's slaughterhouses, they supplied his worst stooge services, even though it would have been easy for the old, experienced officials to get rid of at least a good part of the Jews in the files. Besides, it is only fair to expect from these old officials, already mature and who had to know what is just and unjust, other behaviors than that of the immature Hitler Youth or young SS men. The fact that Himmler was not only Reichsführer of the SS but at the same time chief of the German police is very often not sufficiently taken into consideration. The blood guilt of the police in the smooth implementation of the massacre of the Jews is enormous, even if this was effected in great part at a desk without risks and in the security of an office. In this regard, for the

most part hardly a distinction needs to be made between Gestapo and police. That is not to deny the possibility that more than one gendarme or policeman can have earnestly endeavored to serve justice and to fulfill his duty according to his conscience and not according to the orders of the Nazis. But that would be his business to prove it. On principle, every police official should initially be considered in the same way as a member of the SS. – [List of names of alleged anti-Nazis omitted.]

Additions and Drafts

1. Drafts of T I

a. One handwritten page beginning with: "À la personne:" and ending with "administration géneral de la SS," dated 26 April 1945 (see p. 334). This is a draft (the original of which is at the LKA) of the beginning of T I. The handwriting is small and tight, so that, when Gerstein rewrote his draft with additions, he used two pages instead of one. We thus have the explanation for two pages of T I which are numbered "2"; this shift continues for the following pages; thus the last page, which is the tenth, is numbered "9." The text of this draft has a peculiarity worth noting: Gerstein says he sent out 3,500 anti-Nazi leaflets, whereas in other versions he writes "8,500" leaflets. It should also be noted that, on the final page 2 of T I, the 8 of 8,500 is overwritten.

b. One handwritten page beginning with: "Ayant passé volontaire et spontané" and ending with: "avec tous ménagements." This is an independent text, but it includes ideas expressed on the last page numbered 9 of T I. The original is preserved by LKA (see p. 335).

[The following translations were prepared by Ronald V. Percival, with a few edits for this edition.]

Translation of Text Referred to in 1.a.

Bergassessor a.D.[22]
Kurt Gerstein
Certified Engineer
(address details)

64a Rottweil, 26 April 1945

Personal data: Gerstein, Kurt, associate of the factory of De Limon Fluhme & Co., Düsseldorf, automatic greasing. Before the war, head of department of this firm. Born 11 August 1905 at Münster/Westphalia. – father Ludwig Emil Gerstein, President of the Regional Court, Hagen Westphalia. – mother Clara née Schmemann died 1931. – Married to Elfriede Gerstein née Bensch, Tübingen, Gartenstr. 24. Telephone 3340. Three children Arnulf, 5 years, Adelheid 3 ½ years, Olaf 2 years.

Life: 1905-1910 Münster, 1911-1919 Saarbrücken, 1919-1921 Halberstadt, 1921-1925 Neuruppin, 1925-1931 studies at Marburg, Aachen, Berlin. 1931 Examination for Certified Engineer. Since 1925 active member of the organized Protestant Youth (Christian Union of Young Men) particularly the Christian student youth, called *Bibelkreis* (Bible Circle).

Politics: supporter of Stresemann and Brüning, active for them. Since 1932: responsible position for the whole of Germany in the Protestant student youth. – Since June 1933, persecuted by the Gestapo for Christian activity against the State.

2 May 1933, entry into the NSDAP party. – 2 October 1936, expulsion from the NSDAP. – 30 January 35, public protest at the theater of the town of Hagen, against the anti-Christian drama Wittekind, beaten up and wounded by the Nazis. – 27 September 1936, chased out of the state service for having sent 3,500 anti-Nazi brochures to high employees of the state. Put in prison by the Gestapo at Saarbrücken right up to the end of October 36. Mining career finished! – December 1936, right up to the beginning of the war, medical studies at Tübingen, tropic medical institute. – Approx. the third of my income, about 1/3 of 18,000 Reichsmark/year, I have given since 1931 for my ideal religious aims. At my expense, I have

[22] The letters "a.D." after the title of Bergassessor mean "*ausser Dienst*," which translated to "out of service; not working; retired." The letters were commonly used by retired professional people, such as doctors, to indicate that they were no longer practicing. Gerstein had been finally dismissed from government service in February 1937; thus, presumably, his rationale for using these letters. However, it seems an odd quirk of character: to invite attention to the fact that he had been expelled from the mining service, or to give the impression that he was elderly and retired.

had printed approx. 230,000 religious and anti-Nazi brochures, to send them, at my expense, to those interested.

14 July to 28 August 1938: second imprisonment, then concentration camp of Welzheim until 23 August 1938.

Hearing of the massacres of the imbeciles, etc., totally shocked and wounded in my insides, having such a case in my family, I had only one wish: to see into this machinery, and then cry out to all the people. With the references of the two employees of the Gestapo who handled my case, it was not difficult to enter into the SS Army. 10 March to 2 June 1941, training as a simple soldier at Langenhoorn, Arnhem and Oranienburg with 40 physicians. For my double studies – technical and medicine – I received the order on 2 June 1941 to enter into the medico-technical service of the Leadership Main Office of the SS.

Translation of Text Referred to in 1.b.

Having passed voluntarily and of my own accord on 22 April 1945 the German-French lines between Metzingen and Reutlingen, I put myself immediately at the disposition of the military commandant of the town of Reutlingen. Responsible head of the Christian youth in Germany, beaten up and wounded by the Nazis, pursued, twice made prisoner for Christian anti-Nazi agitation, once in a concentration camp, excluded from the service of the state for the same reason, I was launched as an agent for the resistant church, as personal friend of the Rev. Niemöller, into the SS Army. There, I succeeded to an important double position of the SS Leadership Main Office and the Reichsarzt SS and Police at Berlin, sanitary service and of hygiene, of which I was the head of the medico-technical service from November 1941-April 1945. Having seen, as few others, the gas chambers and the massacres at Belzec, Treblinka and Maidanec/Poland in all details, I revealed all these things straightaway to the Swedish embassy, to the Swiss embassy, to the Dutch national resistance and to many persons of influence in Germany.

The military commandant of Reutlingen, having examined and verified my papers and circumstances, sent me to Rottweil in order to discuss my employment in the security service of the army, especially in the anti-Werewolf 2nd service.[23] He had given me a certificate with the following

[23] The Werewolf movement (German Werwolf), much publicized at the time, was supposed to have been a "last-stand" German underground resistance movement; although, as events later showed, it seems to have existed in little more than name. Is it probable that a French army officer who, by the hazards of war, finds himself the military governor of a small German town, would discuss sensitive intelligence matters

text: "The holder [of the certificate] is not a true SS man and must not be treated as such, but, on the contrary, with every consideration."

2. Additions to T II (PS-1553)

a. Handwritten note in French from Gerstein, bearing his signature; it concerns deliveries of prussic acid (see p. 336).

b. Two-page handwritten note in English, written and signed by Gerstein (see pp. 337f.).

c. Two Degesch invoices chosen as examples from a batch of twelve invoices for Zyklon B, six for delivery to Oranienburg and six for delivery to Auschwitz. The dates of these twelve invoices range from 14 February 1944 to 31 May 1944. The total amount invoiced was 2,370 kg, of which 1,185 kg were for Oranienburg and 1,185 kg for Auschwitz. Gerstein states in his "confessions" that he had the invoices drawn up in his name, which is correct, but the address given is that of the Hygiene Institute (Leipzigerstrasse 31/32 in Berlin) and not the Obersturmführer's personal address in Berlin (see pp. 339).

All these supplements come from the Israeli Police, Headquarters, 6th Office. The originals are kept at the National Archives in Washington.

The entire set of documents tagged PS-1553 ("confessions" proper and supplements) was handed over to the U.S. authorities in 1945 by two Allied officers, British Major Evans and U.S. official Haught, who interviewed Gerstein at the Hotel Mohren in Rottweil on 5 May 1945.

Translation of Document Referred to in 2.a.

According to added notas [= enclosed invoices], the prussic acid was ordered by the Reich Security Main Office, Berlin W 35 Kurfürstenstrasse, on order of SS Sturmbannführer Guenther: With the acid having arrived at Oranienburg and Auschwitz, I, who was responsible for this service, loyally did this service, by making the cans disappear in the disinfection chambers. In this way, it was possible to prevent misuse of the acid. To prevent the Reich Security Main Office from being reminded of the presence of this stock – or, better still, the lack of it – I never paid for these supplies, whose notas [= invoice] addressee was myself, for the same destiny

with an SS prisoner? It appears significant that Gerstein did not repeat these alleged remarks of the French officer in the final version of T I, and that they are not repeated elsewhere. In its final form, T I was of course intended for perusal by senior French authorities, who would have been startled, not to say indignantly surprised, at the future espionage career being planned for Gerstein by a junior combat officer of the French army.

[=motive]. In this way, the acid could be removed as soon as it arrived. If it had been noticed that it wasn't there, I would have replied: it is a mistake by the disinfection department, which did not know and wasn't supposed to know the true destiny [=purpose], or I would have said: the acid had become dissociated [=had decomposed] and it was not yet [no longer] possible to keep it any longer.

[signed] Gerstein

Transcript of Document Referred to in 2.b.

Permanent residence: Tübingen/Neckar, Gartenstr. 24. 26 April 1945. My report is interessant for Secret Service. The things I have seen, no more than 4-5 others have seen, and these others were nazies. Many of responsables of Belsen, Buchenwald, Maidanek, Oswice (Auschwitz), Mauthausen, Dachau, etc. were men of my service, daily I have seen them in my double position in: 1) SS Fuehrungs-Hauptamt, D, sanitary service, and 2) Reichsarzt SS and Polizei, Berlin.

I am in situation to say the names and crimes of in reality those responsables of this things, and I am ready to give the material for his accusation in World Tribunal.

My-self, cordial friend of Reverend Martin Niemöller and his family (now at Leoni/Starnberger See/Bavaria!) – I was after two prisons and concentration camp agent of the confessional-Church – like SS Obersturmführer and compartment-chef in SS-Führungshauptamt and of Reichsarzt SS and Polizei, a dangerous position!

The things I have seen nobody has seen. 1943, August, I have made my reports [here written over word "regards"] for the Svenska legation in Berlin. I am ready and in situation to say all my observations to your Secret Service.

The secretary of the Svenska legation Berlin, now at Stockholm, Baron von Otter is ready to be witness of my relations of 1942 of all these crueltys. I propose to demand me for this information:

Reference: Msr. Niemöller (reverend Martin Niemöller's woman, Leoni/Starnberger See, München Bavaria). (signed) Gerstein.

Notes: Your army has not find Mr. Niemöller, Mr. Stalin junior, Mr. Schuschnigg, at Dachau. They are deported, nobody now; who they are.[24] Please do not publish my report before exactement now: Niemöller is liberated or dead. Gerstein.

[24] Obviously an error: in German, "Wo" = "Where." To read, "…nobody knows where …"

Translation of Degesch Invoice of 14 February 1944

The invoice is overwritten/overstamped with various file and service references, which were added subsequently and do not form part of the original document. The invoice of 31 May 1944 is the same except that the dispatch was made on 26 May to Oranienburg; hence we abstain from translating it separately.

* * *

Degesch (logo)
German Association for Pest Control, Inc.
Frankfurt-on-Main (Address and Phone numbers, etc.)
Herr Obersturmführer
Kurt Gerstein
Berlin, Invoice
Leipziger Strasse 31/32 Frankfurt a.M., 14 February 1944

D.G.1. We have dispatched to you today by train from Dessau with a consignment note of the Armed Forces, issued by the local Army Administration at Dessau for the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Dept. Pest Control and Disinfection, Station: Auschwitz, an urgent merchandise, the following consignment:

Zyklon B Prussic acid non-lachrymatory.[25] 50066/78 = 13 cases, each containing 30 = 390 cans of 500 grammes = 195 kgs. 5. – 975. – Gross: 832 kgs. Tare: 276.25 kgs. Net: 555.75 kgs. The labels carry the wording: "With Care, without warning properties."

3. Separate Handwritten English Text

Text written in English, beginning with: "This relation is interessant" and ending with "Reichsarzt SS und Polizei." (See p. 341)

While obviously in Gerstein's handwriting, it is not dated or signed. The original is preserved by LKA (Bestand 5,2-Nr 64c). One finds again in this text certain ideas expressed in the note of two pages, also in English, shown as additions to T II in 2.b. above. The transcript is as follows:

* * *

This relation is interessant for Secret Service. The things I have seen no more than 4-5 men have seen, and the others were nazies. Many of responsables of Belsen, Buchenwald, Maidanek were men of my service: "SS Fuehrungs-Hauptamt D, Sanitary-services and Reichsarzt SS and

[25] Without tear-inducing effects.

Polizei." I am in situation to say the names of in reality responsables of this things and I am ready to give the material for this accusation in world-tribunal. My-self, I was, after 2 prisons and concentration-camp, friend of reverend Martin Niemöller, agent for confessional-church in SS-administration (SS Fuehrungshauptamt, D, sanitary-service and Reichsarzt und Polizei).

4. Typewritten Page in French, Headlined "Post scriptum – 16 –"

It begins with: "A Belcec, il était très terrible" and ends with: "furent assassinés" (see p. 342). One might think that there were fifteen pages before this sixteenth page. But LKA's archives only contain page 16. The ideas expressed in this text are similar to those found in certain supplements (*Ergänzungen*) to T III and T IV. It translates as follows (translated by Ronald V. Percival, slightly edited):

* * *

At Belzec, the competition made among the men and boys at the transport of clothes was very terrible. I still think of a little Jewish boy of 3, 4 years who had to hand out small strings to tie up the shoes: even such a child was misused without knowing of this terrible murder machine of Hitler and Wirth. – Or I think of a little girl of 5 years who forgot – totally naked – a little chain of coral that some minutes later – 1 meter before the gas chambers – was found by a boy of 3 years: rejoicing, contemplating and – at the next moment – was thrown into the chamber. – Obermeyer told me: at a village near here, I found a Jew from my hometown, from Pirmasens. In the war of 14-18, he was a sergeant, a very honorable man. As children, we played together. He even saved my life once, I having been in danger of getting run over. This man and his wife I will take with me for my labor unit! – Asked, what he would do afterwards with these people, he says to me, totally surprised: What will become of them? The same as all the others, in such things there is no other way – but perhaps I shall have them shot!

But I have also found some SS men who became, due to these methods, active adversaries of the regime: SS Hauptscharführer Heinrich Holländer of the Reichsarzt SS and Police, who let me know of everything extraordinary and interesting. – Myself, I'd have gone into the gas chambers, if Holländer had not often protected me from the dangerous things. – Anti-Nazi also: SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. med. Focht, head of the interior department of SS-Lazarett[26] Berlin-Lichterfelde; Dr.med. Nissen, SS-Hauptsturmfüh-

[26] *Lazarett*: military hospital.

rer, Itzehoe Holstein; Dr. med. surg. Sorge of Jena, –Officers, that one can keep as those of 20 July 1944: SS-Gruppenführer Dr. pharm. Blumenreuther, head of the pharmaceutical department of police and SS; SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. pharm. Behmenburg, of the same service; SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. pharm. Rudolphi, of the same service. The last ruined with his feet, October 1944, the Hitler picture.
2/3 of the Dutch SS, Belgian, etc., were forced into the service by fraudulent and violent methods. In the same way a large part of the young people of the Hitlerjugend are forced into this service, similarly the ones ordered of the air and of the navy. – Often, the agents of the police were very much worse than the SS. They were guilty of large numbers of imprisonments of Jews, who, some time later, were assassinated.

Letter from Gerstein to His Wife

Dated 26 May 1945, it is handwritten over five half-pages. The photocopy and typed transcription were sent to us, at our request, by Gerstein's widow (see pp. 343).

The most important sentence seems to us to be the following:

"Wenn Du irgendwelche Schwierigkeiten hast, geh mit dem Bericht, den ich anlege, zum Militärgouvemeur."

Which translates to:

"If you have difficulties of any sort, go with the report that I attach to the military governor."

In the following chapters, we'll try to determine which "confession" Gerstein is referring to in the "Bericht" enclosed with his letter. And now the complete translation (by Ronald V. Percival, slightly edited):

* * *

Dear Friedel,

After a stay of five weeks at Rottweil at the disposition of the military governor, I am being sent today by car to a higher authority in the region of Konstanz – where, I do not know! I had received here a hotel room as assigned residence, after I had been held under lock and key for one night and one afternoon, and had protested against this. I left my papers for you on the chest of drawers in the vestibule of 24 Gartenstrasse, for you certainly need them. I give you a piece of advice: defend yourself! Let nothing happen to you. It is self-evident that someone like me – like us – must be treated differently from other people. My activity as the SS F.H. etc. was from the beginning a pure activity as agent in the service of the confession-

al church. I could tell you only the minimum, because, if things turned out badly, they would have been able to blackmail you and to press you with questions. As for me, the SD would have plunged me in boiling water if it had known that, in my distress, I divulged everything to Sweden and to Switzerland.

If you have difficulties of any sort, go with the report that I attach to the military governor. Take good care of the arrest warrants, the documents relating to expulsion from the party, etc. Present those documents also, but do not part with them.

Perhaps Fräulein Dr. v. Huene, Zeppelinstrasse, can help you in some way. I advise you also to go and see the Mayor. – When I shall return, I do not yet know. Until now, I enjoy every freedom, and I hope it will be the same in the next jurisdiction. Also with the food and lodging, with the Miller family at Mohren in Rottweil, I had luck. But since everyone is very strongly interested in my case, and as I have to appear before the International Court of Justice as one of the main witnesses against the war criminals, I cannot yet say anything more definite.

To you, your father and the children, heartfelt greetings and wishes, Kurt. 26.V.45. 10[58].

Interrogations by French military justice

It seems appropriate to us to include two interrogations of the French military justice system in the set of texts left by Gerstein, especially as, for the latter, all guarantees of authenticity have been obtained. (Translations by Ronald V. Percival, slightly edited.)

1. Interrogation of 26 June 1945

ORCG interrogating officer: Commandant Beckhardt. It consists of two typewritten pages, front and back, numbered 1 to 4 (see pp. 347). The original is kept in the Gerstein file at the Directorate of Military Justice in Paris. Translation into English as follows:

* * *

Paris, the 26 June 1945.

INTERROGATION of Mr. Kurt GERSTEIN by Commandant Beckhardt, Interrogating officer of the O.R.C.G. 48 rue de Villejust – Paris.

I – *Interrogation of Identity* NAME: GERSTEIN. First names: Kurt –. Born: 11 August 1905 at Münster (Westphalia) – Son of: Ludwig E. GERSTEIN (President of the Court of Justice, retired) and of Clara SCHME-

MANN (deceased in 1931). Married on 31 August 1937 to Elfriede née Bensch. Domicile: 24 Gartenstrasse at Tübingen. 3 children: Arnulf born 25/9/39; Adelhaid born 25/10/41; Olaf born December 1942; Nationality: German. Religion: Confessional Protestantism – Lutheran.

II *– Professional Education*. In 1919, I go into the mines of Lintfors, near Aachen, as apprentice worker, until 1925, after previously having been a secondary-school student at Saarbücken from 1915 to 1919. In 1925, I finish my studies and pass my exam.

In 1931, after having followed various courses, I become a certified engineer for mining services.

III *– Political and Religious Activities.* From 1922 to 1933, I am a republican and active supporter of BRÜNING and STRESEMAN[N].

In 1933, 30 January 1935 and 27 September 1936, I am arrested and manhandled by the Gestapo for anti-National-Socialist propaganda and Christian activity. Following this, I was debarred from the State Mining Service.

On 14/7/38, I am arrested by the Gestapo and the S.D. of Stuttgart; I was interned in a prison, then at the Walzheim concentration camp.

I was prohibited to give speeches.

In 1940, through the Bishop of Stuttgart, I learned of the massive killings of the insane at Hadamar and Grafeneck. My sister-in-law, Bertha EBLENING [sic], was among the victims. It was then that I took the decision to enter the Waffen SS.

IV *– Activity in the National-Socialist Services*.

Q: Did you join the Waffen SS in order to spy and serve religious ideals?

A: Yes, to conduct an active struggle and to know better the National-Socialist objectives and their secrets.

Q: How were you able to join this organization, after having been yourself arrested several times by the Gestapo?

A: All I did was accept the offer made to me by the subalterns of the Gestapo when I was arrested for the second time.

Q: At what date were you tattooed with the distinctive sign of the Waffen SS?

A: In May 1941, I was tattooed with the mark AB corresponding to the 4th blood type.

Q: What training did your bosses in the SS give you?

A: I followed the special courses for physicians at Hamburg, Langenhoorn and at Oranienburg; on 9 November 1941, I was ranked first lieuten-

ant SS, hygiene service. One year later, having improved the sanitary installations of the prisoner camps and concentration camps, I was ranked second lieutenant SS.

Q: What have been your activities since February 1942 until 21 April 1945, on which date you surrendered as a prisoner to the French army?

A: On 8 June 1942, SS Sturmbannführer GÜNTHER of RSHA gives me the order to transport 260 kgs of potassium cyanide[27] to Kollin near Prague. SS Sturmbannführer Professor Doctor PFANNENSTIEL …

Q: Do you know the doctor's address in Germany?

A: Yes, Marburg (Lahn), Rottenberg 1.

… I knew about the plan to use cyanide and was determined

1) to try and do away with it, 2) to make known to the workers who manufactured it that this product was intended to kill human beings.

At Lublin, I was received by SS Gruppenführer GLOBOCNEK, Waffen SS General (taken prisoner by the Americans at Trieste). He briefed me as to the organization.

1: At Belcec, between Lublin and Lemberg, daily executions: 15,000.

2: Sobibor near Lublin in Poland (20,000 per day).

3: Treblinca in Poland (25,000 per day).

These three installations were functioning from the months of April, June and May 1942, respectively.

4: Maidanneck, near Lublin, still in preparation.

Q: To your knowledge, what were the nationalities and races of the victims?

A: For the majority, Jews, Poles and Czechs.

… the victims were asphyxiated by means of a Diesel engine with toxic exhausts (oxide and carbonic gas) in the four installations previously mentioned.

Q: How long did you stay in these camps, and did you visit others?

A: Only three days, then I was driven to Lublin, where SS Hauptsturmführer OBERMEYER (native of Pirmasens) had me inspect the installation. I am present at the arrival of a convoy: 45 wagons containing 6,700 persons, of which 1,450 dead in the course of the journey. The victims are completely stripped of their things. Their hair is cut and retrieved in burlap sacks. Two or three hours afterwards, they are all executed.

Q: Were you called on to take an indirect part in these massacres? Were the SS satisfied to make a simple spectator of you?

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27 Editor's remark: potassium cyanide (KCN) is a salt, in contrast to the liquid hydrogen cyanide (HCN, prussic acid, hydrocyanic acid; in German: *Blausäure*).

A: I have not one human life on my conscience; my work consisted exclusively in the sanitary installations with a view to avoiding epidemics against diseases [sic]. I was responsible also for making the water drinkable, and I was responsible for this to the SS and the police.

Q: Have you had contacts with German resistance organizations or others?

A: Yes, I was head of the protestant resistance, in liaison with the Dutch resistance, and with the embassies of Sweden and of Switzerland.

Q: Can you prove that, and with which persons were you in contact?

A: For the protestant resistance, I received instructions from Pastor NIEMÖLLER (detained at Dachau since 1937) through his family and some nuns.

With the Dutch resistance, through UBBINK, native of DOESBURG (Engineer – proprietor of a foundry). With the Swedish resistance, via the embassy of Sweden in Berlin, Baron von OTTER. With the Swiss resistance, via the Swiss embassy in Berlin, Doctor HOCHSTRASSER.

In 1942, I made the acquaintance of a French restaurant owner, at the crossroads Strasbourg–St. Denis, Restaurant "Louis XIV," to whom I expressed my disgust with the prisons and the killings.

Q: Do you know of other agents or officers of the Gestapo or the S.D. who may have had an important responsibility in the organization of the camps and the executions?

A: A certain GÜNTHER and his boss EICHMANN, both charged with the annihilation of the Jewish race. GÜNTHER is the son of the known racialist writer.

Doctor GUNDLACH, Hauptsturmführer, native of Berlin, devoted himself to medical studies on living beings.

SS Sturmbannführer HALLER of the Bromberg police, was at Degginglen towards the end of hostilities; he practically made a specialty of the shooting of Jewish children.

SS Sturmbannführer GROSS, living in Berlin, occupied himself with living beings, to the studies of cancer.

Dr. GRAWITZ, who worked in Berlin, born on the eastern side of the Elbe (Pomerania), Chief of the German Red Cross but at the same time SS, Obergruppenführer, responsible for the administration of prisons.

Q: What are the names of the heads of the camps whom you have known?

A: At Oranienburg, Sturmbannführer KEINDEL [Kaindl], a pure Nazi, responsible for numerous atrocities. He is Austrian or Bavarian.

Q: Do you know of yet other war criminals?

A: Yes, SS Gruppenführer Dr. Eng. KAMMLER, native of Berlin, head of supplies, responsible for the treatment of deportees employed underground. SS Sturmbannführer FICK, who has the responsibility for the attack on the religious institutions of Sennheim (Alsace). SS Sturmbannführer TONDORF, involved in the SS since their formation.

SS Untersturmführer, Dr. Wolfgang STICHEL, charged with the suppression of anti-Nazis; decapitated a professor at the university of Berlin – a native of Berlin.

Read over, confirmed and signed

(signed) Kurt Gerstein (signed) Beckhardt

2. Interrogation of 19 July 1945

Interrogating officer: Commandant of Military Justice Mathieu Mattéi, Military Examining Magistrate. The original is handwritten on very large sheets and in poor condition. We reproduce what was published by the magazine *Le Monde juif* (January-March 1980, pp. 27-34); we have, of course, verified it and found only one error: on page 34, 1st line, it should read: "à peine dix" (hardly ten) instead of "à peine deux" (hardly two; see pp. 351). Translation:

* * *

PERMANENT MILITARY TRIBUNAL
2nd PERMANENT MILITARY TRIBUNAL OF PARIS
Sitting at 53 Rue de la Faisanderie 53
XIVe. arr.

RECORD OF INTERROGATION OR OF CONFIRMATION

THE YEAR one thousand nine hundred and forty-five, the nineteenth July at ten hours. After having been brought from the military prison of Cherche-Midi,

Before us, Commandant of Military Justice Mathieu MATTÉI, Military examining Magistrate, assisted by COUDROY, sergeant, and by [*in the margin*: M. Malkov Boris, 45 years, Lieutenant, interpreter of the German language, who has sworn the oath prescribed by article 332 of the Code of criminal instruction] has been brought to our chambers, the named GERSTEIN, whose first appearance is established by the record of 13 July 1945.

Let the record show that Maître LEHMANN, duly called by our registered letter dispatched 16 July 1945, of which the postal receipt is attached,

and advised by the same letter of the file of proceedings being put at his disposal the day before the present day.

Counsel for the defense being present, we have interrogated the accused as follows.

Let the record show that we are giving to him a complete reading of his interrogation by the Organization for the Investigation of War Crimes, at Paris, on 26 June 1945.

S.I.R.[28] – I confirm my previous statements. I wish to correct three points, of which one seems to me of extreme importance, that is to say:

In regard to my joining [*in the margin:* Waffen SS] it is not so much the advice and suggestions of the noncommissioned officers that pushed me to join, as my personal wish to inform myself on what they were doing, these people, a thing impossible to anyone who did not wear their uniform.

– In regard to the indications given on page 2 of my interrogation, towards the end, on the subject of the "three installations were functioning… respectively"; this actually means three extermination camps.

– I rectify the last sentence of my interrogation. Doctor Wolfgang STICHEL denounced the tenured professor of zoology at Berlin, who as a consequence was beheaded following a sentence of a people's court.

Q: Please inform us in chronological order what your assignments, transfers, occupations were since France was at war with Germany.

A: At the declaration of war, I was a civilian, a mining engineer in the service of the limited company WINTERSHALL at MERKERS (Thuringia).

On 15 August 1940, I stopped my work in this company to join the factory belonging to my grandfather at DÜSSELDORF in the position of a partner contributing my technical knowledge.

I had moreover an interest in this company since 1930. This company manufactured oil pumps for locomotives, and had as its registered name DE LIMON, FLUHME and Co.

Until 5 March 1941, I thus stayed as a civilian in this company.

Previously, that is to say in December 1940, I had sent a written request to be admitted to serve as a Waffen SS man: this request having been accepted, I was admitted to this formation on 10 March 1941.

I was assigned to Berlin, *Sanitätsdienst* (sanitary service); General Direction of the Waffen SS. I was then a simple soldier – and had followed for three months the ordinary instruction of the private soldier in various places.

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[28] S.I.R. = *Sur interrogation rogatoire*, meaning in reply to a supplementary question.

At the end of this training, I was assigned to the Institute of Hygiene of the Berlin SS.

At the beginning, I did not have any specific job. But later, I requested to work more specifically on appliances for disinfection and the questions of drinking water.

In summary, I fulfilled these functions until the month of April 1945, with, in principle, residence in Berlin and fulfilling at one time and another some missions to the firms who manufactured the different devices used in the service.

In November 1941, I obtained the rank of first lieutenant SS, specialist (UNTERSTURMFÜHRER F.).

Q: Tell us exactly the nature of the missions that you fulfilled, notably those carried out in the different camps which you have yourself enumerated in the interrogation you have undergone.

A: I have been on missions:
twice to the camp at ORANIENBURG
twice to that of DROEGEN
once to that of RAVENSBRÜCK
once to a camp of Israelites near (illegible word)
once to the extermination camps of:
BELCEC (phonetic spelling), TREBLINKA and MAIDANECK
finally twice to the camp of HEINKELWERK near ORANIENBURG.

In the camps other than the three extermination camps, the purpose of the different missions accomplished by me was to examine and check the sanitary installations (disinfection, drinking water, etc.), my role was purely technical.

Later in June 1942, I was charged with transporting two hundred and sixty kilograms of potassium cyanide to the camp of BELCEC. When I was charged with this transport, I was clearly told that it concerned a state secret.

I had received orders to take delivery at KOLLIN near Prague of this poison, and to transport it to the above-mentioned camp.

I fulfilled my mission in the month of August 1942, that is to say that I duly transported the cyanide, but the cyanide did not arrive at the destination. On leaving, the cyanide was put in forty-five steel bottles.

On the way, one of them was emptied by me with all the necessary precautions, because it was dangerous.

The forty-four bottles which remained were not taken to the camp of BELCEC, but were concealed by the driver and myself at about twelve hundred meters from the camp.

Q: Since you were stationed in Berlin, why were you, if one believes you, personally chosen to carry out the transport of the cyanide from one point to another on Polish territory?

A: This is, in my opinion, due to the chance designation of some chief or other. My name was put forward by one of the officers of the chemical service, that is to say GÜNTHER, of whom the authority had first inquired.

Q: Why did the authority approve the need to send from Berlin to KOLLIN (Czechoslovakia) an officer simply to take delivery there of cyanide and to transport this to BELCEC in Poland, since it must have seemed simpler to him to detach for this transportation work an officer already stationed in Czechoslovakia, or Poland?

A: Because I was considered a specialist in the utilization of cyanide for disinfection.

Q: Did you receive an order for this assignment, written or verbal, and what were the terms of it?

A: I received a verbal order, confirmed forty-eight hours afterwards in writing. This written order said approximately this: I give you the order to obtain two hundred and sixty kilograms of potassium cyanide, and to transport them to a place which will be specified to you by the driver of the vehicle no. X… attached to the mission.

It is myself who chose KOLLIN, because I knew that cyanide was manufactured there, as it was similarly made at DESSAU.

S.I.R. The cyanide was delivered to me by the factory at KOLLIN in view of my attached service orders and of a requisition voucher issued by the Reich Security Main Office at Berlin (Reichssicherheitshauptampt). The service orders carried a stamp with the words "State secret."

Q: To whom did you report the execution of your mission?

A: On my return to Berlin from a trip which lasted about two weeks, I did not report to anyone on the execution of my mission. No one asked me anything at all.

S.I.R. Before the journey, I did not know the driver who was to drive me. This driver belonged to the Reich Security Main Office; I lost touch with him afterwards.

Q: How, since you did not know the driver previously, could you have confidence in him to carry out very exactly the mission with which you had been entrusted and about which he indisputably was informed? And this,

when above all the driver belonged to the security service. Were you not frightened of a denunciation, which would have entailed for you consequences of a certain gravity?

A: The driver was frightened during the course of the journey, and since we had loaded the poison. He asked nothing better than to see me rid the car of what for him was a danger. I was not afraid of a denunciation by the driver, because I was in a position to justify myself to the Berlin authorities. On the other hand, the authorities of BELCEC did not agree at all with receiving the cyanide, having already another method of extermination, that is to say, a Diesel engine with toxic exhaust.

In view of the late hour, we adjourn the present interrogation, which will be reopened at 15 hours today.

Read over, the accused continues and signs with us, the court clerk and interpreter, witnessing the erasure of seventeen words crossed through as invalid, and eight lines crossed through as invalid.

Signatures: M. Mattéi, B. Malkov, Kurt Gerstein, A. Coudroy.

The year one thousand nine hundred and forty-five, the nineteenth of July at 15 hours, assisted as before, the same court clerk and interpreter, we have continued the interrogation adjourned above by reason of the late hour. Let the record show that Maître Lehmann has excused himself, which we have passed over and have proceeded with the interrogation as follows:

Q: On your departure from Berlin, to fulfill the mission of which we spoke this morning, were you given instructions other than those concerning the so-called proper transport of the cyanide?

A: Of course. SS Officer GÜNTHER had charged me to make all serviceable arrangements, once arrived at the camp of BELCEC, to replace the Diesel engine, [working] with toxic exhaust, with cyanide as a means of extermination. It was left to me to examine the technical possibilities of this changeover.

Q: Who had decided the quantity of cyanide to take?

A: I myself decided it by taking into account the load capacity of the vehicle.

Q: You knew then on your departure from Berlin that the cyanide was intended for the extermination of human beings?

A: I knew it. I assumed that it related to Jews and probably Poles.

Q: It is probably also for that reason that you took such a large quantity of poison?

A: I took such a large quantity only to utilize to the maximum the load capacity of the vehicle.

Q: How was the cyanide to have been used technically for extermination?

A: GÜNTER in Berlin did not have the slightest idea about it. He supposed that I must have some idea. But in reality, I did not because I never used cyanide except for disinfection.

Q: Would you like to tell us how you employed cyanide for disinfection?

A: Two methods: The first consisted in making airtight the place to disinfect (hut, barracks, etc.) and in introducing in these places receptacles containing the poison, and with the help of an apparatus, opening said receptacles from the outside in such a way that the liquid became volatile. The second method was employed for the disinfection of clothes.

Q: In what proportions did you use cyanide for disinfection?

A: Approximately 5 kg [sic!] for 540 m³ (five hundred and forty cubic meters).

S.I.R. I do not know exactly what quantity of cyanide is necessary to kill a man, this is a theoretical question, but I think it needs about one gram.

S.I.R. I persist in affirming that I did not make any experiment nor any utilization of cyanide.

Q: How did you explain your arrival at the BELCEC camp, since you were sent there, according to what you yourself say, to replace by cyanide the method of extermination which was used there, and yet you arrived without the least quantity of cyanide?

A: I arrived with the cyanide at the camp, and I told the commandant of the camp what had happened to me on the way concerning the bottle that had not been securely closed. I pointed out to the commandant of the camp the danger involved in the use of cyanide by informing him that I could not assume the responsibility for making use of the cyanide which I had brought. This commandant was satisfied with my explanations, saying besides that he was satisfied with the extermination system in use.

Q: This morning, you stated to us that forty-four bottles of cyanide – your entire consignment, one of the bottles having been emptied – did not arrive at the camp of BELCEC, because they had been hidden by the driver and yourself at about twelve hundred meters from the camp; just now, you have been telling us you arrived at the camp with your consignment. When are you speaking the truth?

A: I arrived at the camp without the cyanide, but the commandant of the camp knew that I had brought it in the vehicle which was left at twelve hundred meters from the camp.

Q: Why was the vehicle left so far from the camp where the cyanide was to be brought and employed according to the instructions which you received?

A: Because of the danger which the cyanide presented.

Q: Since the camp commandant knew of the purpose of your mission and the fact that you had brought the cyanide, how were you able to hide this, for this morning you declared to us that you had hidden it?

A: The camp commandant had a great fear of cyanide, and he was not agreeable at all that it should be used. On the other hand, I myself had every latitude as to the utilization or non-utilization of the poison.

Q: You were charged with a mission. You tell us of not having fulfilled it at all. Likewise, you tell us that the commandant of the camp where you had to complete this mission did not want you to complete it at all. You stated this morning that, on your return to Berlin, you did not report to anyone on the result of your mission. We have every reason to think that such things were not exactly customary in the German armed forces. Explain yourself on this subject.

A: The morning after my arrival at the camp of BELCEC, the real camp commandant returned – Polizei Hauptmann WIRTH, who had great influence in Berlin, and who liquidated this question without my having to intervene.

Q: With what other authorities did you have to deal in the course of your mission to BELCEC?

A: While on the way, I had received instruction via the driver to report to LUBLIN to major-general SS Gruppenführer GLOBOCNEC, who commanded the four extermination camps. In conformity with these instructions, I was received in audience by this general officer. In the course of the audience, he mentioned to me of having had some days previously a visit from HITLER and HIMMLER, and both the one and the other wishing to see the extermination of the Jews pushed at a faster rate.

This general did not give me any instruction of a technical nature, except the order to report to BELCEC, telling me that he would go there himself, in person, because no one could be received at the camp without being introduced by the general in person.

Q: Did you, in the course of this mission, visit camps other than this one of BELCEC?

A: Yes, those of MAIDANECK – TREBLINCA. In those two camps, I was taken by Hauptmann WIRTH and Professor Doctor PFANNENSTIEL, so that I might examine on the spot the possibility of replacing the extermination system employed (Diesel engine with toxic emission) by cyanide.

S.I.R. I do not think that, in these two camps and at BELCEC, cyanide was used as an extermination method, but I know nothing about it, because I never returned there.

Q: You did then, by your own admission, receive in Berlin an important mission, and this in your capacity as a technician; this mission was so important that you had to accomplish it as a state secret; you visited three camps, you were received in audience by a general who, granted the purpose of your mission, believed himself bound to recount to you even the intentions of the two great Nazi chiefs.

How can you persist in making us believe:

1) that you did not even accomplish the purpose of your mission;

2) that you reported to no one on this;

3) that no one moreover questioned you at all on this subject?

A: Hauptmann WIRTH had such a personal position in relation to HITLER and HIMMLER that he was able to tell me not to concern myself further with this matter, and in the circumstances I obeyed him. That is what I have to reply.

S.I.R. No one interested himself in what became of the cyanide (sic!).

Q: When did you come to France during the war? What did you do here?

A: First trip in October 1940, I was still a civilian and on a business trip, which lasted a week. Second trip – at Christmas 1940 – business trip to Paris of a length of four days. During 1941, I came two or three times to Paris, always on business. In the course of one of these trips, I was in contact with de WENDEL.

In 1942, when I was already an SS man, I returned to Paris three times, on duty, for the purchase of geographic and scientific material as well as (steam-tight) material.

In 1943 and 1944, I made other trips for the same purpose.

(Minute: Here the accused expresses himself in French:)

S.I.R. The installations were the most primitive and the cruelest. There were little stations of about three hundred meters in which the trains entered with fifty cars. Then the Ukrainians chased, with the help of horsewhips, the persons transported who were not dead on their arrival. Twenty per cent were dead. Loudspeakers gave the orders to have to undress com-

pletely, including spectacles and prostheses (artificial legs, etc.). The persons who disembarked had to tie together their shoes in pairs, hand in all valuables, money and objects. The victims themselves had to run and bring their things into the wagons. The women's hair was cut close, the hair was gathered in potato sacks. The victims were brought all naked. without distinction of sex, into a barbed-wire passage which led into a special bath building.

[The accused resumes in German.]

This covered building carried on the roof and in derision the Hebrew star. It consisted of six rooms at BELCEC, and eight at TREBLINCA. With the help of blows from horsewhips, the arrivals were crowded into these rooms, and they were so crushed there that they were obliged to hold themselves up one foot on the other. Babies at the breast were in their mother's arms. The cramming was such that, even when the gases had done their work, the corpses all stayed standing, one supporting the other.

Once everyone was crowded into each room, the doors were closed, and the gas engines started, not without the victims having submitted to this cramming for hours. Once I myself counted that the victims stayed crushed like that for exactly two hours forty-nine minutes before the gases reached the chamber.

The gas arrived in said chambers by pipes to its destination. The victims were subjected to the effect of the gases for a period of about thirty-two minutes.

The Jewish prisoners were charged with emptying the gas chambers of the victims that they contained, and who were covered with their own excrement.

Prisoners who were also Jews, dentists by profession, were charged with examining the corpses, and to take out from them any gold which they might have in the jaw. The anuses and the sexual parts of the women were also searched to see whether they contained precious items. The corpses were then piled into immense common ditches, and covered with hardly two (corrected: ten) centimeters of sand.

The Nazis were especially proud of the enormous quantity of objects and of clothes retrieved in this way. It brought in a yield, they said, five times bigger than all the collections of clothing organized in Germany. In the same way, the bodies of those who had died during the railway journey were searched.

S.I.R. In principle, the trains were to arrive at the camps daily.

S.I.R. Without being very exact, I can indicate that the system of extermination must have begun in the month of April 1942.

S.I.R. I think that the extermination lasted all the war, since I never heard it said that it stopped.

Q: What was the precise name of the service, if one can call it that, which was responsible for this extermination that was premeditated and executed over such a long period?

A: It was called EINSATZ REINHARDTZ. This service itself was part of the R.H.S.A. (Reich Security Main Office). Read over, the accused continues and signs with us, the court clerk and interpreter witnessing the erasure of nine words crossed through as invalid, and one line crossed through, invalid.

Signatures: M. Mattéi, B. Malkov, Kurt Gerstein, A. Coudroy.

Article published in *France-Soir*, 4 July 1945

This article is particularly interesting for the facsimile of a "confession" extract, reproduced on the front page of the newspaper (see pp. 358f.). This is a short excerpt in German from Gerstein's biography, which contains information common to all the texts. However, close examination of this extract shows that, neither in terms of wording nor typographical layout, it is identical to the comparable passage in the two known German-language texts. On the other hand, the German text corresponds exactly to the French text of T Va; it therefore seems that T Va is the French translation of this German text, whose existence we can only assume thanks to the facsimile published in *France-Soir*. The translation by Ronald V. Percival reads as follows:

* * *

"I exterminated up to 11,000 people daily."

(From War Correspondent Geo KELBER)
STUTTGART, … June…
Before God and before mankind, I take the responsibility for my words, because I have been one of the rare eyewitnesses of the biggest Hitlerian killings. I have omitted nothing of the things I have seen; and I have added nothing. This is the truth. May heaven help me …

Thus spoke Kurt Gerstein, SS engineer, teacher accredited at Marburg, Aachen and Berlin, to the investigating officer of the French First Army.

And he began his deposition, which he wrote out carefully afterwards and signed. It is the account of abominations, of monstrosities of which

Gerstein accused himself, at the camp of Belcic, in his capacity as chief of scientific executions.

One day the Sturmbannführer Guntier sent me urgently to Lublin for "a matter of state, which I would be the eleventh person to know, by special favor of the Führer." At Lublin, I was received by SS General Globocnec and his assistant, SS Colonel Wirth, who informed me that the day before Hitler and Himmler had visited the three experimental stations for asphyxia at Belcic, Sobidor and Treblinca. Hitler had been very displeased. "The process of asphyxia by the exhaust gases of Diesel engines is too slow," he said. "It is necessary to eliminate more speedily the human material which is biologically without interest." And it is I who had been chosen to preside over this speed-up. I was driven the next day to Belcic. A building composed of five airtight rooms, each of five meters by five. Two inscriptions on the front: "Meckenholt Foundation; Inhalation and Hydrotherapy."

At seven o'clock, there was an "arrival": a freight train of 43 cars, from which the SS and their Ukrainian helpers made 6,700 people descend with blows from their horsewhips; men, women and children. A loudspeaker shouted:

"Deposit your clothes, and personal effects."

A dance tune was broadcast: "From whom do you get your pretty brown eyes?" Then the women were taken to the hairdresser installed in a little hut carrying the sign "Cloak Room." And the procession entered into the Meckenholt Foundation.

"Crowd them in well!" Colonel Wirth ordered.

700 to 800 persons were pushed into the five rooms. Wirth explained the "maneuver" to me.

"The average weight of each man being 65 kgs., each of our chambers can receive 25,250 kgs. of human beings. With a little goodwill, we obtain a fair average of 750 persons per 'operation.'"

The doors were closed. The Diesel engines were started up. We looked through the dormer windows into the interior of the chambers, which were brightly lit. The engines were working badly. Wirth apologized for the faulty running of the operation. Twenty, thirty, forty minutes passed. The operator of the Diesel engines, an SS man named Meckenholt, was getting impatient. Finally, the engines started.

In the interior of the huts, the men were still alive! I timed the length of the agony: Fifty, sixty minutes! The first dead fell. Ten minutes passed again. Finally, it was over! …

Ukrainian teams bring out the corpses, all streaming with sweat and excrement. They pull out the gold teeth. They sort the women's hair, intended to be used for the manufacture of fabric and in certain precision instruments for submarines! When the clearing away was finished, other Ukrainians pushed a new batch of the condemned into the asphyxiation chambers.

"I was at peace with my conscience"

… I understood my mission, adds Gerstein. I was being asked to find a means of putting to death more rapid and more efficient than this primitive type of extermination. I proposed the use of gases of higher toxicity, and notably those given off by prussic acid.

And the wretch concludes:

"I was at peace with my conscience, for I shortened the sufferings of human beings, 'biologically useless and doomed for destruction,' as Hitler said. Classified under the name of Category 3, this human material comprised Jews, Poles, Russians, Czechs, Lithuanians and Hungarians.

"Up to eleven thousand executions were thus effected some days. Many children were numbered among the victims. From time to time, a professor gave a speech to the "labor commando" – the men responsible for the executions – explaining to them their great mission. Hitler himself, while visiting Belcic, had said, "We shall emplace plaques of bronze here, so that our descendants know our work of biological decontamination of our planet."

In his defense, Gerstein explains that in 1944 he tried to get in contact with the "resistance" pastor Niemöller, and that he even presented himself in Berlin to the papal nuncio who, however, showed him out. He pretends to have always been anti-Nazi, and to have accepted the terrible duties of executioner only to have the opportunity of testifying against Nazism on the day of Germany's defeat.

The strangest thing is that this SS Gerstein pours out his declarations as proof of his "humanitarian" revolt, and that he is still at liberty, as though he had no responsibility at all in the death work at the Belcic camp.

Lawyer's Request Dated 15 July 1945

This document is kept in the French military justice file. It consists of one page written on both sides in capital letters (see pp. 360). Note that Gerstein asked for a Christian lawyer, well versed in religious matters. Mr. Pierre Lehmann was appointed to defend him; he was present for the morning interrogation on 19 July 1945, but absent for the afternoon interrogation.

In a letter dated 25 July 1945, and addressed to the examining magistrate, Monsieur Lehmann made it known that he would be unable to attend the interrogation of the accused Gerstein scheduled for 26 July, an accused who, "moreover, does not appear to be guilty" (see p. 361).

Gerstein was found dead in his cell at around 2 p.m. on 25 July 1945. Mr. Lehmann did not die until 1980. Inexplicably, Gerstein's Parisian lawyer was not interviewed by Pierre Joffroy, who in the years 1966-1968 scoured the whole of Europe for anyone who had even remotely come close to the former SS officer. Mr. Lehmann was easily accessible; he lived in the 16th arrondissement of Paris, at an address listed in the phone book.

Ronald V. Percival's translation of Gerstein's letter reads as follows:

* * *

Gerstein, Kurt

requests the commandant of the military tribunal of Cherche Midi

to permit him the choice of a lawyer. Before yesterday, I did not know the name of such a lawyer. But I appeal to you to permit me either the confidential lawyer of the legation of the Holy Father at Paris or the confidential lawyer of His Highness the Bishop of Paris or that of the Congregation of the Society of Jesus of Paris. In my case are treated the affairs of the Christian Churches, for which I beg you such a lawyer with interests and knowledge specifically Christian.

Myself having on me only about 1000 marks of German money, I am sure that [they] will declare themselves responsible for the salary:

1. The Bekenntniskirche of South Westphalia, church of the anti-Nazi resistance, of which I was Presbyterian, represented by Pastor Rehling and Pastor Keupper at Hagen, Westphalia.

2. The Bekenntniskirche of Saarbrücken, represented by Pastor Otto Wehr at Saarbrücken.

3. The manufacturer and certified engineer Ubbink of Doesburg, Holland, member of the Dutch anti-Nazi resistance. The aforementioned persons know my case. – I beg his Dignity the prison chaplain to obtain such a lawyer for me.

15 July 1945 Kurt Gerstein (signed)

Letter from Maître Pierre Lehmann

This letter translates as follows (by Ronald V. Percival):

* * *

Pierre Lehmann 25 July 1945
Lawyer of the Appeal Court
2 rue Edmond About
Paris 16
(Phone) Passy 44-44

GERSTEIN

My Commandant,

To my deep regret, it will not be possible for me to assist the accused GERSTEIN Thursday 26. I am most disappointed, not only in deference to justice and to yourself, but also because this affair seems to be extremely interesting.

My worries are lessened by the thought that an impartiality that I learned to appreciate from the first session of the examination will fully safeguard the rights of the accused who, moreover, does not seem at all guilty.

Please be good enough, Commandant, to have the kindness to excuse me and to accept the assurance of my deep respect.

(Signed) Pierre Lehmann

To Monsieur Commandant MATTÉI
Examining Magistrate
Second Military Tribunal of Paris
53 rue de la Faisanderie 53
Paris 16

Fragments of documents found after his death

In the police report drawn up on 25 July 1945 by the superintendent of the police district of Notre-Dame-des-Champs in Paris (appendix starting on p. 362), we read in particular: "Gerstein left several letters in which he made known his intention to commit suicide. They were produced to us. They must be forwarded to Commandant Mattéi, examining magistrate."

Major Mattéi actually received these documents; there are fourteen of them. The examining magistrate draws up a list of these documents, numbered from 1 to 14, and sends them to the director of the Criminal Identification Department; he asks for four copies of each document to be photographed.

Professor Ch. Sannié, Director of the Identité Judiciaire, wrote his report on 9 October 1945; he declared that he had fulfilled the mission en-

trusted to him, except for Document Nr. 12, which did not reach him (see pp. 367f.).

On 10 October 1945, Major Mattéi writes a file memo stating that he appends two sealed envelopes to the file, one containing the originals, the other the photographs (see p. 371).

By order of the War Ministry, the entire file was sent to London on 10 November 1945, to the attention of Professor Gros, to be forwarded to Poland's delegate to the United Nations War Crimes Commission.

For almost twenty-six years, this Gerstein file was sought in vain. It was found on 3 August 1971, when old archives were classified at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since then, it was returned to the Directorate of Military Justice in Paris. But it is incomplete: the two sealed envelopes with the documents and their photographic copies have disappeared.

Of these texts written by Gerstein in prison, we can only present the list as it appears in Professor Sannié's report.

For most of the fourteen documents, we read, at best, the first and last words of each one. It's impossible to imagine what each text contained. However, in the case of Document No. 12 (the one that disappeared during its transfer from the Military Tribunal to the Forensic Identification Department), we can make a hypothesis: the first words are: "Uatre [autres] témoins" and the last: "prison"; as there is no mention of a verso, we can assume that the document fit on a single page. If we recall a passage from a "confession" of 6 May 1945 (T V) and a note in English written by Gerstein, we can assume that the Obersturmführer wrote in this Document No. 12 that, while other witnesses experienced the gassings as he did, he alone was anti-Nazi and that, paradoxically, it is he who finds himself in "prison."

What follows are the translations (by Ronald V. Percival) of the police report of 25 July 1945, Prof. Sannié's report of 9 October 1945, and Mattéi's file memo of the returned documents dated 10 October 1945.

Police Report

Commissariat of Police of the Quartier Notre-Dame-des-Champs. The year one thousand nine hundred and forty-five and the 25 July.

Dispatch to the Medico-Legal Institute: We, C. LeGall, continuing the information, sent the body of the named Gerstein to the Medico-Legal Institute for an autopsy. Commissar of Police (signature)

Declaration of Decease: Please note that the declaration of decease has been made by my orders to the Town Hall of the VI. Arrondissement. Commissar of Police (signature)

Transmission: We are sending the present report to the public prosecutor with the receipt of the Medico-Legal Institute. Commissar of Police (signature and stamp; date and other details repeated).

Suicide by hanging – Gerstein Affair: We, C. LeGall, Commissar of Police of the City of Paris, more specially responsible for the District of NOTRE-DAME-DES-CHAMPS, Officer of the Judicial Police, and auxiliary to Monsieur the Prosecutor of the Republic, are informed by the Commandant of the Military Prison, 36 rue du Cherche Midi, that today a prisoner named Gerstein (Kurt) has been found hanged in his cell. We proceed to the place – of the inquiry made by the commandant of the prison as by

1. M. Gascard (Marcel), 45 years, Warrant Officer, military supervisor,
2. M. Andreucci (Noel), military supervisor,
3. M. Entz (Léon), 41 years, Sergeant-Major, military supervisor.

It appears that the named Gerstein, of German nationality, was detained in this prison since the 5th instant, being charged with war crimes, murders and complicity, Commandant MATTÉI, Military Examining Magistrate at the 2nd Military Tribunal of Paris, being charged with the examination.

Gerstein occupied Cell No. 23, on the 2nd floor of the detention building, on the (boulevard) Raspail side. He was alone.

Today at 14 hours, the supervisor Entz opened the cell to bring out Gerstein. He found the latter hanged. He immediately called his colleagues Gascard and Andreucci. The three took Gerstein down.

The fire brigade (first aid) were also immediately called, but the doctor was only able to confirm death.

Gerstein left several letters in which he made known his intention to commit suicide. They were produced to us. They must be forwarded to Commandant Mattéi, examining magistrate.

We went to Cell 23. This cell is narrow. It has only a fan light for light and ventilation. In the interior of the fan light, there is a grilled shutter. This shutter is pulled down. There is at the edge, in the center, a ring. It is through this ring that Gerstein passed a small string made from the selvage of his bed cover, which he tore up. The witnesses say that he was hanging with his face to the wall, his knees nearly touching the floor of the cell.

Gerstein's body was laid on a straw mattress. He was dressed in a shirt and trousers. On the forepart of the neck, a deep violet-colored furrow is

visible which corresponds with the small cord. His face seems calm. One notices on the body no other traces of violence. One notices no traces of a struggle in the cell. (Erasures.) The body is still supple. The extremities are becoming cold.

At the prison registry, we note as follows the civilian status of the deceased – GERSTEIN (Kurt) born the 11 August 1905 at Münster (Westphalia) of Ludwig and of Clara Sch[m]emann, domiciled at Hagen (Westphalia), nationality German. (Signature and stamp)

Report of Professor Ch. Sannié, Paris, 9 October 1945

Affair (concerning)/ GERNSTEIN [sic] Kurt
accused of murder.

(To) Monsieur the Commandant of Military Justice
MATTÉI Mathieu
Military Examining Magistrate of Paris

File ref: C.R. No. 14.178 Paris, the 9 October 1945

We, the undersigned, Docter Charles SANNIÉ, Professor at the Faculty of Medicine, Director of the Service of Judicial Identity of the Prefecture of Police, acting by virtue of an Instruction from Monsieur the Commandant of Justice, Military Examining Magistrate MATTÉI Mathieu, worded as follows:

We, MATTÉI Mathieu, Military Examining Magistrate of Paris,

We, Commandant of Military Justice, MATTÉI Mathieu, Military Examining Magistrate of Paris, in view of the proceedings begun against the named GERNSTEIN [sic] Kurt, charged with murders, considering that it is necessary to investigate and to avoid costs, in view of Article 52 of the Military Code of Justice and Articles 83 and 85 of the Code of Criminal Instruction,

We request and require in this need Monsieur Director of Judicial Identity, to whom we address this present rogatory commission, to be summoned to appear before him, for the purpose of photographing and then to address to me in four copies the attached documents:

No. 1 beginning with these words: "For Monsieur the Colonel" and finishing with "the morning";

No. 2 beginning with the words "never, never," and ending with "Christian";

No. 2 bis beginning on the face with the words: "Messieurs you may have" and ending with "the hair" and, on the reverse, beginning with

"Monsieur the Cure" and ending with "Jesus Christus" followed by a signature;

No. 3 beginning with "GERNSTEIN [sic] Kurt" on the face and ending on the reverse with "will of Gunther."

No. 4 beginning with "To the second Bureau" and ending with "Bukhardt" [sic];

No. 5 document in the German language written on one sheet with indelible pencil.

No. 6 document in the German language written on one sheet with indelible pencil.

No. 7 Letter-card written in pencil, in French, showing on the reverse the address of the Commandant of the Military Prison and the postmark of Froissy 24-7-45 Cise;

No. 8 beginning on the front with "I only" and ending on the reverse with "our first (sight?)";

No. 9 beginning on the front with "informed like all" and ending on the reverse with "I have it";

No. 10 beginning on the front with "one word more" and ending on the reverse with "this quantity";

No. 11 beginning on the front with "against one visit" and ending on the reverse with "again nothing";

No. 12 beginning with "Four witnesses" and ending with "prison";

No. 13 writings in pencil on the back of the cover of a pamphlet "Wermaacht Shrachführer" [sic];

No. 14 writings in pencil, in the German language, on four sheets of a religious book in German.

We request, moreover, to return to us the present rogatory commission with the information reports raised in consequence, together with all the documents which it may be necessary to draw up for its execution, in conformity with the law.

At Paris, the six August 1945, the Military Examining Magistrate. Signed: M. MATTEI

Oath previously sworn, we have fulfilled as follows the mission assigned to us.

On 9 August 1945, at the same time as the instruction entrusted to us, Monsieur the Government Commissioner at the Permanent Military Tribunal of Paris sent us several documents to photograph, numbered 1 to 14, relating to one named GERNSTEIN [sic], Kurt, accused of murder.

These documents have been copied photographically front and reverse in their true dimensions, in four copies, and are attached to the present report.

We certify that these copies conform exactly with the original documents.

Document No. 12, not being attached to the instruction, it has not been possible to copy it.

On the other hand, we advise that Documents No. 14, relating to the religious book, appear not only on the four sheets, but also on twenty sheets, at the inside of the book. Accordingly, we have judged it useful to copy them all.

(Signature)

File Memo by Mathieu Mattéi, 10 October 1945

[Document Concerning Attachment of Photocopies to Reports]

The year one thousand nine hundred and forty-five, the 10 October. We, Mathieu Mattéi, Commandant of Military Justice, Military Examining Magistrate of the 2nd Permanent Military Tribunal of Paris

In view of the examination proceedings against GERSTEIN, Kurt, as principle in murders and complicity; in view of our rogatory commission dated 6 April 1945[29] requiring the Director of Judicial Identity to photograph the documents enumerated within. In view of the two reports of the Director of Judicial Identity dated 9 October 1945, the documents returned, and their photographs.

We join the file of information, in two envelopes carrying the stamp of the Military Examining Magistrate, 1. The original documents, 2. their photographs, concerning all of which we draw up the present report which we sign with our Court Clerk.

The Military Examining Magistrate (stamp and signature)

The Clerk of the Court (stamp and signature)

[29] An error: the date was 6 August 1945.

Comparative Tables: Main Differences of Versions

We have taken what we consider to be significant selections from each of the six "confessions" and placed them side-by-side in eight fields, one for each of the following texts: T I, T II, T III, T IV, T VI; and three columns for T V, since this text is in three versions (T Va, T Vb and T Vc). A ninth field is reserved for comments, including the following:

– reflections inspired by the quoted sentences;
– errors and distortions of texts published by certain authors;
– certain answers given by Gerstein during his interrogations in Paris, which sometimes shed light on, and sometimes contradict, statements made in his "confessions."

We have not systematically identified all the differences, as we felt it essential to take the following factors into account:

1. These texts have no stylistic quality; they are written in an often clumsy French that Gerstein may have tried to improve from one "confession" to the next.
2. Two texts (T III and T VI) have been translated from German; significant differences between one or other of these two texts and the other versions have naturally been noted; on the other hand, any minor differences, often due to the translator's interpretation, have been overlooked.
3. One of the texts (T V) was written in French, but not by Gerstein; it is a copy of an interrogation conducted by ORCG officers. Moreover, it is easy enough to locate any differences by reading the corresponding passages of the six "confessions," thanks to the breakdown we made earlier.

1. Motivation to Join Waffen SS			
T I	T II	T III	T IV
…I had only one desire: to see, to see into all this machinery and then to shout out to all the people!	(Identical to T 1)	…I decided in any event to glance into these furnaces and chambers in order to know what is going on.	(Identical to T I and T II)
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
… I had only one desire: to get to the bottom of this witch's cauldron, and to communicate to the people what I saw there, even if it meant risking my life.	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va&b)	I had only one wish: "You must go yourself and look into this witch's cauldron and make known to the people what is happening, even at the risk of

			your life."

Comments

The words "*in diese Öfen und Kammern*," ("into these furnaces and chambers," T III) was translated by Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf by "in these places" (*IIIe R. et J.*, p. 109).
With this expression, Gerstein seems to know, in advance, what he will see: furnaces and chambers. It is surprising that a German Protestant should write in the same tone of the cremation furnaces, widely used in Germany at that period, and the poison gas chambers. Such an attitude would surprise less coming from a Catholic, hostile to corpse cremation – at least at that time.

2. Gestapo References

T I	T II	T III	T IV
Armed with two references from the two Gestapo employees who had dealt with my case, it was not difficult to join the SS Army.	(Identical to T I)	(Almost the same as T I and T II. One additional sentence:) These gentlemen were of the opinion that my idealism, which they probably admired, would not fail to serve the Nazi cause.	(Almost the same as T III)
T Va	**T Vb**	**T Vc**	**T VI**
(Almost the same as T III and T IV. One additional sentence:) And so they themselves showed me the way.	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va&b)	(Almost the same as T Va-c)

Comments

Gerstein is making allusion to the two arrests of which he was the object, the one in 1936 in Saarbrücken, and the other in 1938 in Stuttgart, this latter having been followed by a stay of a few weeks in a concentration camp. During the interrogation of 26 June 1945 by Commandant Beckhardt of O.R.C.G.: "Q: How were you able to join this organization, after having been yourself arrested several times by the Gestapo? A: I did nothing but accept the suggestion that the subalterns of the Gestapo had made me at the time of my second arrest."

3. Gerstein Becomes an SS Officer

T I	T II	T III	T IV
For my success, I soon became a lieutenant.	(Identical to T I)	Due to my successes, I soon became second lieutenant and first lieutenant. (The German text reads: "…wurde ich bald Leutnant und Oberleutnant.")	(Identical to T I and T II)
T Va	**T Vb**	**T Vc**	**T VI**
I soon became second lieutenant, then lieutenant.	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va and T Vb)	(Almost the same as T Va-c)

Comments

Gerstein is alluding to his contribution to the work of his disinfection service in stemming, in 1941, a typhus epidemic in the camps. The ranks "Leutnant" and "Oberleutnant" existed in the Wehrmacht, but not in the SS. In reality, Gerstein became soon (*bald*) or very soon (*sehr bald*) Untersturmführer (promoted 1st November 1941); on the other hand, it was necessary for him to wait until 20th April 1943, that is eight months after his visit to the camps of Belzec and Treblinka, in order to be promoted to Obersturmführer. In the texts composed in French, Gerstein gives the equivalent French rank. It is difficult to understand why the incorrect ranks should be given in the texts composed in German.

4. Expulsion? Yes – Execution? No

T I	T II	T III	T IV
…the NSDAP judge who had pronounced my exclusion, made great efforts to hunt and perse-	…the court that had ordered my expulsion from the NSDAP … Great efforts were made to hunt	…the tribunal which had ordered my expulsion from the party … There followed a strong smear	…the court that had ordered my expulsion from the NSDAP… Great efforts were made to hunt

cute me.	and persecute me.	campaign against me.	me and persecute me.
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
…the party court that had decided my execution…	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	(Almost the same as T III)
Comments			
In T V: execution instead of exclusion/expulsion. This is an example of the poor quality of this text, which was not composed by Gerstein. The writers of this report of the interrogation have misread the writing or misunderstood the answers of the accused, who did not, moreover, put his signature to the various pages of the interrogation. In conformity with its original, that is T Vb, the English translation T Vc reads "my execution – E.M. of the S.S." although the initials EM. are meaningless in English.			

5. 100 or 260 kgs of Prussic Acid?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
He [Günther] ordered me to take 100 kgs of prussic acid…	(Identical to T I)	He gave me the order to acquire immediately, for an extremely secret Reich assignment, 100 kg of prussic acid…	He ordered me to immediately procure 260 kg of prussic acid for an extremely discreet purpose…
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
With many mysterious allusions, he gives me the order to get 260 kgs of prussic acid…	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	(Almost the same is T III)
Comments			
100 kgs or 260 kgs? The difference is unexplained. To Commandant Mattéi, examining magistrate at the Military Tribunal of Paris, who interrogated him on 19 July 1945, Gerstein replied that he had himself fixed the quantity according to the load capacity of the vehicle with which he travelled. This contradicts all "confessions," where Gerstein speaks of having received an order for a specific quantity.			

6. The Rumor of Kolin

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(Nothing)	(Nothing)	At the factory at Collin, I had purposely given hints that the acid was intended to kill human beings.	At Collin, I had made it understood that the acid was intended to kill people.
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
At Kollin, in the prussic-acid factory, I had deliberately made the staff understand, through awkward technical questions, that prussic acid was intended to kill human beings. I practiced this every time, as it was the best way to start rumors among the people.	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	At Kollin, I had given to understand, by purposely maladroit technical questions to the Czech personnel of the factory, that the hydrogen cyanide was intended for killing human beings. (Continues as in T Va)
Comments			
If Gerstein really acted as he says he did, one might think that the Czech workers took him for a provocateur. Is he not frightened of possible informers? In other passages, he professes himself to be very prudent because of the risks of reprisals against him and his family.			

7. SS General Globocnik Is Too Trusting

T I	T II	T III	T IV
As there was still room in the car, I had taken the SS Obersturmbannführer Professor Dr. Pfannenstiel with me. Globocnek	(Very close to T I) …one of the most secret things there	With us – rather by chance – drove also Professor Dr. med. Pfannen-	(Almost the same as T III)

told us: "This is one of the most secret things there is. Anyone who talks about it will be shot immediately. Yesterday, two talkers died.	is, and even the most secret.	stiel… (Follows very closely T II)	
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
With one seat still free in the car in question, I was accompanied by SS Obersturmbannfuehrer Professor Dr. PFANNENSTIEL… (Follows T III very closely)	(Identical to TVa)	(Identical to TVa+b)	(Almost the same as T V)
Comments			
Presumably charged with an ultra-secret mission, Gerstein takes in his car a passenger whom he does not know [and who has no business being there; ed.]. General Globocnik, who evidently has never met either Gerstein or Pfannenstiel before, does not hesitate, right from the start, to speak openly to them of the biggest state secret. A disarming candor from all concerned, if there really were ultra-secret matters.			

8. Did Gerstein Visit Maidanek? Did He Visit Sobibor?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
1) Belzec… (seen!) 2) Sobibor… not seen!) 3) Treblinca… seen 4) Maidanneck… (seen) in preparation	(Almost identical to T I)	I personally inspected thoroughly Belcec, Treblinka and Maidanek.	1) Belcec… 2) Sobibor… Not seen! 3) Treblinca… seen! 4) Maidanek… seen in preparation.
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
Accompanied by the head of all these death factories, police captain WIRTH, I visited all these places in depth, with the exception of Maidanneck.	(Identical to T Va)	(Almost the same as T Va+b. In the English text, we read: "Except the last, I visited…")	Accompanied by the head of all these death factories, Police Captain Wirth, I have inspected Belcec, Treblinka and Maidaneck in a thorough manner while in operation.
Comments			
Maidanek (seen according to 5 out of 6 versions), Sobibor (seen according to only one version): the contradiction is unexplained. It has escaped Léon Poliakov who writes (*Le Monde Juif*, 1964, page 7), in juxtaposing extracts from two versions: "1 Belcec… (seen!); 2 Sobibor… not seen; 3 Treblinka… seen; 4 Maidaneck… seen in preparation. With the exception of this last, I have inspected in detail all the camps…" Saul Friedländer has recopied Léon Poliakov (*K.G.*, page 99).			

9. What Have the Danish People Got to Do Here?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
…ten or twenty times the result of the *Spinnstoff-Sammlung*, which was done only to conceal the origin of Jewish clothing.	…ten or twenty times the result of the "Spinnstoffsammlung" (collection of clothing and textiles), which is only done to conceal the origin of Jewish, Polish, Czech etc. clothing.	The collection of textiles has in fact been done only in order to explain the origin of the clothes for the workers in the East etc., and to present them as the result of the sacrifice by the German people.	The whole collection is designed to conceal the provenance of Jewish, Polish, Czech and other clothing. In truth, the result of our installations is 10-20 times that of all these collections!
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
If every year we collect clothes from the Danish people, this is only done to camouflage…	(Identical to T Va)	(Almost the same as T Va+b. In this accurate English translation, we read: "…clothes among the Danes…")	All these collections are essentially made only for the purpose of making the origin of the large quantities of old clothes plausible in some way to the foreign workers and the

			German people.

Comments

Danish people instead of German people: this is another example of the poor quality of T V. Perhaps a careless transcriber read in a handwritten German text "dänisch" (Danish) instead of "deutsch" (German)?

10. Details of Clothes Disinfestation

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(nothing)	(nothing)	I afterwards discussed with the most productive firms the possibility of disinfecting in the existing laundries and disinfection facilities such quantities of textiles – this was about an accumulated stockpile of about 40 million kilograms, 60 freight trains full. But it was completely impossible to place such large orders. I used all these negotiations to make known or cleverly hint at the fact of the murder of the Jews. Globocnek was then satisfied that all this stuff was sprayed with some detenoline, so that it at least smelled disinfected. Which was then done.	(nothing)

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
(nothing)	(nothing)	(nothing)	(nothing)

Comments

This passage only exists in T III. It is in the form of a handwritten half page carrying, at the top on the left, the pagination "zu 7." This half page is inserted between half pages numbered 7 and 8. This insertion in T III of a rather technical handwritten text which has no equivalent in the other "confessions" gives rise to the reflections which we shall develop in our chapter "Authenticity of the Texts."

11. Lindner or Linden?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
Then Ministerialdirektor Dr. Lindner from the Innenministerium …	Then Ministry Director Dr. Herbert Lindner, Ministry of the Interior	His companion, ministerial counsellor Dr. Herbert Lindner, then asked…	(nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
He [Hitler] was accompanied by the ministerial advisor, Dr. Herbert LINDEN…	(Identical to T Va)	In his [Hitler's] company, there was also ministerial counsellor Dr. Herbert Linden of the Reich Ministry.

Comments

The ministerial counsellor was named Linden and not Lindner. In all versions, it is written that Dr. Linden accompanied Hitler on his visit of 15 August 1942 (two days before Gerstein's arrival at Belcec on 17 August. For a reason unknown to us, Léon Poliakov writes: "Dr. Herbert Lindner who was with us yesterday" [hence 16 August, the day after the claimed Hitler visit] (*Bréviaire de la haine*, 1951, 221; 1960, 221; 1974, 292; 1979, 221; *Monde Juif*, 1954, 7.) Hans Rothfels has historically established that Hitler did not leave his headquarters at the Eastern Front on 15 August 1942.

12. Dimensions of the Garages

T I	T II	T III	T IV
After climbing a small staircase, to the right and left, three and three rooms like garages, 4 x 5 m, 1.90 high.	(almost identical to T 1)	…a small stairway, and afterwards at the right and left each 3 rooms 5 x 5 meters, 1.90 m high, with wooden doors like garages.	(nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
…only the gas chambers to the right of the corridor in the "bathhouse." To the right and left, three garage-like rooms 5 m by 5 m and 1.90 m high.	(Identical to T Va)	Within the bathhouse itself, three rooms like garages, each 5 x 5 meters in size and 1.90 m in height, were arranged to the left and right of a corridor.

Comments
In the version after T I, Gerstein speaks of a gas chamber of 25 m². Thus, the dimensions of 5 m × 5 m are more plausible than those of 4 m × 5 m. The height is 1.90 m, which gives a volume of 47.5 m³. Further on, the engineer speaks of 45 m³. Please note that Gerstein does not qualify his various dimensions with the adverb "about." Léon Poliakov omits this passage without notifying his readers (*op. cit.*)

13. Copper or Wrought Iron?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
On the roof, a copper Star of David.	(Identical to T I)	On the roof, as a "small thoughtful joke," the Star of David!!!	(nothing)
T Va	**T Vb**	**T Vc**	**T VI**
(nothing)	(nothing)	(nothing)	On the roof, in the guise of a weathervane, the Star of David in wrought iron.

Comments
It is a minor detail of the "confessions." But we shall never know whether the Star of David was made of copper or wrought iron. In T V, there is no star of David, but access to the building through a "small wrought-iron staircase."

14. German U-Boats Will Stop Prowling the Seas

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(Nothing)	(Nothing)	(Nothing)	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
Even now, I am predicting to everyone that these submarines will soon cease to prowl the seas, for the most efficient army must lose its bite if it has been stained with rivers of innocent blood. In fact, events soon proved me right.	(Identical to T Va)	I foretold even then to many people that these submarines would soon navigate no longer because even the most ingenious weapon had to become blunted if it were stained with floods of innocent blood. God would arrange things in such a way that they would not w o r k anymore! – And in fact, a little time later, events proved me right!

Comments
These verbal imprudences of "God's spy," thusly labeled by Pierre Joffroy, remind us of the rumor of Kolin, which we have previously mentioned. How can we fail to notice the messianic tone of these passages?

15. Gerstein Joins the Victims Praying

T I	T II	T III	T IV
Many say their prayers.	(Identical to T I)	Many pray. I pray with them. I squeeze myself into a corner and I cry in a loud voice to my God and theirs. How I would have loved to go into the chambers with them, how I would have loved to die their death. They then would have found an SS officer in uniform in their chambers – the affair would have interpreted and treated as an accident, and it would have been quietly shelved. But I still do not have the right to do it, I must first reveal what I see here!	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
A few turn to me: "O, Sir, help us, help us." Many pray. I can't help them yet. I pray with them, sink into a corner and cry out to their God and my God aloud. I can afford it; there's enough noise around me. With what joy would I not have gone to them in that room, with what	(Identical to T Va)	Some address themselves to me: Oh Mister, help us, but help us! – Many pray. But I cannot help them, I pray with them, I squeeze myself into a corner and cry in a loud voice to my God and to theirs. There is enough noise around me, I can allow myself to cry in

joy would I not have died their death. Finding an SS officer in uniform in their room, the assassins would never have assumed that this could be a protest on my part. They would have considered it an accident, and my epitaph would have read: "Died for his beloved Fuehrer, in fulfillment of his important duty for the Fuehrer." No, that won't do; I am not yet allowed to give in to the temptation of dying with these people. I know enough about it. WIRTH told me: "There aren't ten people who have seen what I have seen, and who will see it; the foreign auxiliary personnel will be executed in the end." I am one of 5 men who have seen all these installations. There's certainly not one, apart from me, who sees this as an adversary, as an enemy of this band of murderers; so I have to live on and cry out about what I've seen here. In truth, it must be much more difficult, I must live and point it out.		a loud voice to my God: How I would have wished to enter the death chambers with them; how I would have wished to share their death. They then would have found an SS officer in uniform in their chambers; they would not have protested for that; they would have considered the thing an accident; one would have announced in reference to me: "Died in service for his beloved Führer, faithfully served in the execution of an important task for the Reichsführer …." No, that won't do. I cannot yet yield to the temptation to die with these people. I know it well: There are not 10 persons who see what I see and what I have seen, I who have a view of the whole here, of all the installations and their organization. Certainly, not one apart from myself sees this as an adversary, as an enemy of this gang of murderers. So I must live and first of all make known what I see here. To be sure, this is the most difficult service, very difficult.

Comments

The brevity of the texts of 26 April contrasts with the lyricism of the texts of 6 May. Text T III of 4 May presents a "reasonable" digest of the rather delirious passages of 6 May. – In a handwritten note in English given by Gerstein to the Allied investigators on 5 May 1945, we read notably: "The things I have seen no more than 4-5 men have seen, and the others were nazies." In a document found after Gerstein's death, numbered 12 by the military Examining Magistrate and "mislaid" between the Military Justice department and the Judicial Identity Service, where it should have been photographed, the first words have been preserved: "Four witnesses" and the last word: "prison." Gerstein was going to express, in this document, the same idea as in the note in English. – Léon Poliakov has quoted a passage of T V in the periodical *Le Monde Juif* (1964, January/March, page 8) which he reproduces very approximately. In fact, he omitted the following phrases, without informing his readers: 1. "I can permit myself this; there is enough noise around me." 2. "…the murderers never would have supposed that this could be a protest on my part." 3. "…and my epitaph would have been: 'Dead for his beloved Führer, while carrying out his important duty for the Führer.'" In addition, instead of "I am one of the five men who have seen…," Léon Poliakov writes "I am one of the rare men who have seen…"

16. Deportees per Freight Car

T I	T II	T III	T IV
In fact, after just a few minutes, the first train arrived from Lemberg. 45 railway cars, containing 6,700 people, 1,450 already dead on arrival.… 200 Ukrainians… rip open the doors and, using leather horsewhips, chase the people out of the railway cars.	(Identical to T I)	(Almost the same as T I and T II)	(Nothing)
T Va	**T Vb**	**T Vc**	**T VI**
(Almost the same as the preceding texts)	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	(Almost the same as T V)

Comments

1. 6,700 persons in 45 freight cars is claimed in five texts out of six. Léon Poliakov writes: "45 cars, containing more than 6,000 persons" (*Le bréviaire de la haine*, 1951, 222; 1960, 222; 1974, 293; 1979, 222. *Le Monde Juif*, 1964, 8). 2. Ukrainians chasing the people: – German texts: "Leute"; – English text: "people." Poliakov writes: "…they chased the Jews…" (*op. cit.*) 3. Léon Poliakov has omitted the phrase: "1,450 already dead on arrival." (*Le bréviaire de la haine*, *op. cit.*)

17. Little Boy Handing out Strings			
T I	T II	T III	T IV
With a small string, given by a 3-4-year-old Jewish boy, tie the shoes together.	(Almost the same as T I)	Carefully tie the shoes together (in view of the collection of textiles), otherwise, in the pile which rose easily to 25 meters in height, no one would have been able to retrieve the shoes which went together. (No little boy; but in supplemental text:) …a little Jewish boy of 3 or 4 years who was given a bundle of strings for tying up the shoes by pairs…	(Nothing in main text, but in supplemental text:) … the little Jewish boy, who had been ordered to give everyone a little string to tie their shoes together, and who pensively handed out the strings.

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
A three-year-old Jewish boy is given an armful of strings, which he pensively distributes to the others; it's intended for tying shoes, as no one would ever be able to find matching pairs in the 35- to 40-meter-high pile… the 3-year-old Jewish boy dreamily handing out pieces of string to bind pairs of shoes.	(Identical to T Va)	Identical to T Va+b, except the last phrase, which in the English text reads: "in a heap of boots of several meters."	Under the arm of a little Jewish boy, someone presses a handful of strings, which the child of three years pensively distributes to people: to tie the shoes together! For, in the pile of 35 to 40 meters high, no one could afterwards have retrieved the matching shoes.

Comments
The little boy of 3 years hands out strings "pensively" (T IV-VI). Is he alone in this distribution to 5,250 living deportees who just descended from the train? Gerstein speaks only of him. In August 1942, Gerstein was himself the father of a little boy of 2½ years. The pile of shoes was either 35 to 40 m high (T V+VI) or 25 m (T III)? In both cases, it is difficult to imagine that one could place a pair of shoes on top of a pile as high as a 7 or 12 story-high house. Léon Poliakov has omitted the sentence concerning the little boy (*op. cit*., 1951, 1960, 1979, page 222; 1974, page 293).

18. Thirty Persons Standing on 1 m²			
T I	T II	T III	T IV
The naked people are standing on each other's feet, 700-800 to 25 m², 45 m³!– The doors close… the people in the already filled 4 chambers live, live, 4 times 750 people in 4 times 45 m³!	(Identical to T I)	The people are stepping on each other's feet, 700-800 on 25 square meters, in 45 cubic meters. The SS men press them physically one against the other as much as they can. The doors close… the people remain alive in these 4 chambers, 4 times 750 persons in 4 times 45 cubic meters.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
They are stepping on one another's feet. From 700 to 800 human beings on 25 m², on 45 m³. To recap, more than half of them are children, average weight no more than 30 kgs, specific weight 1, so 25,250 kgs of human beings per room. WIRTH is right; with the help of the SS, 750 people can be crammed into 45 m³, and the SS men help with their whips and cram in as much as is physically possible. The doors close. [Note the average unit weight of 30 kgs and the claimed total weight of 25,250 kgs. However, 25,250 is not divisible by 30].	(Identical to TVa)	The people are stepping on each other's feet, 700 to 800 persons to 25 square meters, 45 cubic meters. I make an estimate: average weight at the most 35 kg, more than half are children, specific gravity 1, thus 25,250 kg of human beings per chamber. Wirth is right, if the SS men push a little, one can cram 750 persons into 45 cubic meters! – And they [SS] push them with their horsewhips and compel them to enter, as many as is physically possible.- The doors close. [Note the average unit weight of 35 kg (not 30) and the precise total weight of 25,250 kg, which isn't divisible by 35 either.]

Comments
700 to 800 persons standing on 25 m², in 45 m³, is a constant feature of the "confessions." There are many non-revisionist authors who have changed either the surface area, or the number of persons, and omitted the cubic volume. The following list is not exhaustive: Léon Poliakov replaced the 25 m² by 93 m², and eliminated on two occasions the 45 m³ (*op. cit.* 1951, 1960, 1979, p. 223; 1974, p. 294; *Le Monde Juif*, 1964, p. 9); he does not say they are standing. Saul Friedländer (*op. cit*., p. 106) and Francois Delpech (*Hist. et Geo*. 1979, p. 630) have copied Léon Poliakov. Gideon Hausner realistically rounds off at 100 m² the surface area given by Léon Poliakov (*Just. Jerus.*, French translation, p. 228). Lucy S. Dawidowicz writes that each Jew had "one square foot," which would give 67.5 m² for 750 persons (*War against the Jews*, p. 148). The French translation of the book suggests 30 cm² (!) per person (*op. cit.*, p. 240). Robert Neumann respects the m² and the m³; but he brings down the number of victims from 700/800 to 170/180, repeating the discrepancy some lines further on by writing "the people are living… four times 175 persons in four times 45 m³" (*Hitler: Aufst. u. Unterg*., p. 192).

19. Gerstein Carefully Records Execution Timeline

T I	T II	T III	T IV
…Heckenholt goes to some trouble to get the Diesel going. But it doesn't work! Hauptmann Wirth arrives. You can see he is frightened, because me, I see the disaster. Yes, I see and I wait. My "stop" watch has timed everything – 50 minutes, 70 minutes – the Diesel doesn't work! The people wait in their chamber… After two hours 49 minutes – the "stop" watch has recorded everything – the Diesel starts… Again, 25 minutes pass: many, it's true, are dead. We see through the small window in which the electric lamp allows us to see, for a moment, the inside of the room. After 28 minutes, only a few survive; after 32, finally, all are dead!	(Almost the same as T I)	Heckenholt is the operator of the Diesel engine… But the Diesel does not work! Captain Wirth arrives. One sees that it is embarrassing to him that this has to happen today of all days when I am here. Yes, I see everything! and I wait. My stopwatch has dutifully recorded everything. 50 minutes, 70 minutes, the Diesel does not start. The people wait in their gas chambers… After 2 hours 49 minutes – the stopwatch has recorded everything – the Diesel starts… Once more, 25 minutes pass. Correct, many are now dead. One sees it through the small window in which the electric light illuminates the chamber for an instant. At the end of 28 minutes, only some still live. At long last, after 32 minutes, everyone is dead!	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
HOCKELCHOC is the Diesel's operator… But the Diesel machine does not work. I am told that this is quite rare. WIRTH arrives. You can tell that it is painful for him that this is happening just today, when I'm here. Yes, I see and hear everything; my watch has recorded everything, 50 minutes, 70 minutes, the Diesel won't start; humanity waits in vain in these chambers. You can hear them crying and sobbing, "just like in the Synagogue," remarks Professor PFANNENSTIEL, whose ear is pressed against the wooden door. Captain Wirth lashes out at the Ukrainian who is to help HOCKELCHOC start up the Diesel. After 2 hours 49 minutes – my stopwatch has recorded this – the Diesel starts up… Another 25	(Identical to T Va with one small exception: It has 26 minutes instead of 28; this may be a typing error).	(Identical to T Vb, including the 26 minutes.)	Heckenholt is the operator of the Diesel… But the Diesel was not working. That happened relatively seldom, I was told. – Captain Wirth arrives. One can see that it is embarrassing to him that this happens just today, when I am here. But yes, I see everything! and I wait. My stopwatch has quietly recorded everything. 50 minutes, 70 minutes – the Diesel does not start! The people are waiting in their gas chambers… After 2 hours 49 minutes, the stopwatch has well recorded everything – the Diesel starts… Again 25 minutes pass. Right, many are

minutes pass. It's true that many are already dead; you can see this through the small window that illuminates the room for a moment with electric light. WIRTH interjects to ask me whether I think it's better to let these people die in a dark or lit room. He asks this in the same tone as one would ask: "Do you prefer to sleep with or without a pillow?," "do you like coffee with or without milk?" 28 minutes later, very few of them are still alive. Finally, after 32 minutes, all are dead; I am told that this is the normal time for killing.			already dead now. One sees it through the little window, through which the electric light illuminates the chamber for an instant. Wirth had questioned me minutely to know whether I thought it better to make people die in a lit or in an unlit room. He asked me that in the tone in which one asks whether one sleeps better with or without a wedge pillow. At the end of 28 minutes, only a few were still alive. Finally, after 32 minutes, all are dead.

Comments

Gerstein was charged by an SS general to proceed with disinfecting large quantities of textiles; he stays only one day at Belzec. But he seems to have had the time to stay inactive for 3 hours 21 minutes (2 hours 49 minutes + 32 minutes), his eye fixed either on his stopwatch, or on the spy-window, where he follows the progress of death in the gas chambers. He is impassive, when just a little while before he was praying with the victims and was wishing to experience the same death as them. His precise timing with the stopwatch is hardly reconcilable with the supposed "errors" in the surface area and volume of the gas chamber, which presumably were due to a very profound emotion. Léon Poliakov has omitted one of the data of the timekeeping, namely, the following phrase: "After 28 minutes, only a few survive." (*Brev. de la H.*, 1951, 1960, 1979, p. 223; 1974, p. 294.) Joe Heydecker and Johannes Leeb have replaced the 2 hours 40 minutes length of the Diesel breakdown, by "nach etwa 49 Minuten" ("after about 49 minutes"); the form of words is surprising enough, for 49 minutes denote a precise length of time; the adverb "about" eliminates any possibility of a typographical error (*Nürnb. Proz.*, p. 460). Heckenholt's butchered name in T Va (Hockelchoc on three occasions) is another example of this version's poor quality, a text drawn up by the O.R.C.G. This version moreover contains astonishing reflections by Gerstein on pillows and coffee regarding a hardly credible question from Wirth about whether Gerstein prefers the execution well-lit or in the dark.

20. Is this the Work of a Dentist?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
Two dozen workers are busy checking the mouths, which they open with iron hooks.	(Identical to T I)	Two dozen dentists open the mouths with hooks…	(Nothing)
T Va	**T Vb**	**T Vc**	**T VI**
2 dozen dentists open mouths with hooks…	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	(Identical to T Va-c)

Comments

Professor Hans Rothfels (*V.f.Z.*, p. 191, note 47) has expressed doubts on the qualifications as dentists of these members of the working parties. Reproducing T III, which was composed in German, he writes: "Workers, that seems more credible, in the French text" How to explain that Gerstein uses a less suitable word in his mother tongue than in the French language, with which he was not very familiar?

21. Favorable Conditions for the Development of an Epidemic.

T I	T II	T III	T IV
The naked corpses were then thrown into large ditches measuring 100 x 20 x 12 meters, located next to the death chambers. After a few days, the bodies would swell	(Identical to T I)	The naked corpses were hauled on wooden stretchers only a few meters to pits of 100 x 20 x 12 meters. After several days, the corpses started to	(Nothing)

and rise 2-3 meters by means of the gas formed in the corpses. After some days, the swelling was over, the bodies fell together. Another day, the ditches were filled again and covered with 10 cm of sand. [In supplement:] Sometime later – I heard – grills were made of railway rails, and the corpses were burned by means of Diesel oil and gasoline, to make the corpses disappear.		swell, then collapsed shortly afterwards, so that it was possible to throw a new layer on top of them. Then 10 cm of sand was spread on top, so that there only some isolated heads and arms protruded… later, the other opinion prevailed. The corpses were burned on large grills improvised with railway rails, with the help of gasoline and diesel oil.	
T Va	T Vb+c	T VI	
Even corpses that had already been buried were burned on grates made from rails, using gasoline and heavy oils… The naked corpses were dumped a few meters away, in ditches measuring 100 x 12 x 20 meters. A few days later, these corpses swelled and then collapsed sharply, enabling them to be covered with a new layer; around 10 cm of sand was thrown on top; only a few arms and heads stick out.	(Identical to T Va)	The corpses were then burned with the help of gasoline and diesel oil on gigantic grills improvised with railway rails… The naked corpses, on wooden carts, were thrown into 100 x 12 x 20 meter pits a distance of only a few meters away. After some days, the decomposing corpses swelled, then they collapsed heavily a short time afterwards, so that a new layer could be thrown on top; then about 10 cm of sand was spread on top, with the result that only a few isolated heads and arms stuck out.	

Comments

At the beginning of his "confessions," Gerstein claimed that he was promoted to SS-officer in November 1941, as a reward for his successes in the struggle against epidemics in the camps. Ten months later, he describes for us a situation in the Belzec Camp which would have favored the development of contagious diseases, from which the SS guards and their auxiliaries would not have been safe. – Léon Poliakov deleted the following phrase: "Next day, the ditches were filled again and covered with 10 cm of sand" (*op. cit.* 1951, 1960, 1979, p. 224; 1974, p. 295/*op. cit.* 1964, p. 9.) Joe Heydecker and Johannes Leeb made an addition of their own invention placed between brackets. We read: "Die Leichen sind dann (bei Annäherung der Russen) wieder ausgegraben und auf großen Rosten…" which means, "The corpses were then (as the Russians drew near) disinterred again and on large grills…" (*op. cit.*, p. 459). – During the war, Germany reserved its motor fuel for military vehicles. Burning corpses by the hundreds of thousands would have necessitated very large quantities of gasoline and heavy oils. Historian André Brissaud writes, in connection with the incineration of the bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun in the garden of the Chancellery in May 1945: "180 liters of petrol could not accomplish the incineration of the bones" (*Hitler et l'ordre noir*, p. 393). Were any mountains of bones found at the Belzec Camp after the war? [Ed. remark: the phrase in T VI "on wooden carts" stands in contrast to T III "on wooden stretchers," probably due to a typing error: German "Holztragen" (wooden stretchers) instead of "Holzwagen" (wooden carts).]

22. The Number of Victims at Belzec and Treblinka

T I	T II	T III	T IV
At Belcec and Treblinca, they didn't bother counting the number of people killed in any accurate way. If we had found passports, etc…, it would only be a very small part of the total number of dead. Most died anonymously.	At Belcek and at Treblinca, no one bothered counting the number of men killed in any accurate way. The numbers, known to the British Broadcasting Co – wireless radio, are not accurate, in truth it will be some 25,000000 men altogether!	Neither at Belzec nor at Treblinka was the least trouble taken to record or count those who were killed. The numbers were only estimates according to the contents of the cars.	(Nothing)
T Va	T Vb+c	T VI	
This "factory" has been operating since 1942, "manufacturing" around 11,000 deaths a day. When I or my circle of friends	(Identical to T Va)	This facility has been operating since April 1942 and reaches on average 1,000 killings per day. When I and my circle of friends listened to the	

listened to the London radio station or the Voice of America, we were often surprised by the innocent angels who spoke of hundreds of thousands of dead, when in reality there were already more than TEN MILLION. In 1943, the Dutch Resistance had UBBINK tell me that I was requested not to provide any invented atrocities, but merely to reproduce the strict truth; despite my indications of these things, in August 1942, at the Swedish embassy in Berlin, they refused to believe these figures. I swear on oath that these figures unfortunately are correct. Based on certain documents, I estimate the number of defenseless human beings murdered by Adolf HITLER and Heinrich HIMMLER at around 20 million.		radio of London or the Voice of America, we were often astonished by those innocent angels who came up with figures of hundreds of thousands of dead, whereas there were already tens of millions of them. The Dutch resistance movement had asked me in 1943 through Graduate Engineer Ubbink of Doesburg, not to supply them with atrocities, but with the strictest truthfulness. Although I transmitted these things in August 1942 to the Swedish embassy in Berlin, apparently no one wanted to believe these figures at all. Yet nevertheless they are unfortunately t r u e , I attest to it under oath. I estimate the number of those who, defenseless and unarmed, have been murdered at the instigation of Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler, drawn without any possibility of resistance into those murderous traps where they were put to death, as at least 20,000,000 human beings.

Comments

No estimates in T I, III and IV. Number of victims at Belzec and Treblinka: 25 million in T II; 20 million in T V and T VI. These figures are unrealistic. Gerstein tells us himself that no one believed him in 1942, neither the Anglo-Saxon allies, nor the Dutch resistance, nor the Swedish diplomats. It seems that no one believed him after the war either, on this point at least, for the authors are rare who have reproduced all or part of this passage of the "confessions." The preference has been given to the corresponding passage of T III, which is conspicuous for its restraint. Gerstein does not hesitate to testify under oath to figures which no one can believe to be correct, which, moreover, he hardly had any possibility of estimating. – In T VI: 1,000 killings per day rather than 11,000 in T V. Perhaps this is a typing error in T I. "tens of millions": the German text has "*zig Millionen*," which can range between 20 and 90 million.

23. Captain Wirth Does not Want any Change

T I	T II	T III	T IV
Hauptmann Wirth asked me not to suggest any other method to Berlin, and to leave everything as it was.	(Almost the same as T I)	Captain Wirth begged me not to propose to Berlin to change the facilities and to leave everything just as it was, and as it has sorted itself out and proven itself excellently.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
WIRTH asked me not to propose to Berlin any changes to the methods of death in the gas chambers used up to now, as they had proven themselves.	(Identical to T Va)	(Almost the same as T V)

Comments

Let us recall what Gerstein told us about his "ultra-secret mission": – on 8 June 1942, Günther gave him the order to transport a substantial quantity (either 100 kgs or 260 kgs, according to the texts) to Lublin, in Poland; – on 17 August 1942, General Globocnik told Gerstein that his second task was to change the existing facilities "to something more toxic"; – on 18 August 1942, that is to say the next day, Wirth, commandant of the Belzec Camp but subordinate to General Globocnik, told Gerstein to change nothing, because the installations were working so well. Gerstein finds it "strange" (in T V and T VI) that no one asked a single question on his return to Berlin. We do, too. Gerstein, twice arrested for anti-state activities before the war, threatened in December 1941 with expulsion from the SS, is charged six months later with an ultra-secret mission requested by Hitler and Himmler themselves. He does not fulfill his mission, and no one asks for a report. Commandant Mattéi, Military Examining Magistrate in Paris, could not accept Gerstein's explanation either, whom he took for a National Socialist anxious to hide the truth.

24. What Happened to the Prussic Acid?			
T I	T II	T III	T IV
I lied – that's what I had done anyway – that the prussic acid had already been destroyed during transport and was very dangerous, and to being forced to bury the acid, which was done immediately.	(Almost the same as T I)	I had the prussic acid buried under my supervision, because it had allegedly started to decompose.	(Nothing)
T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
The brought-along prussic acid I had buried.	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	(Very close to TV)
Comments			
To Commandant Mattéi, who interrogated Gerstein in Paris on 19 July 1945, Gerstein replied: "… I duly transported the cyanide, but the cyanide did not arrive at the destination. On leaving, the cyanide was put in forty-five steel bottles. On the way, one of them was emptied by me with all the necessary precautions, because it was dangerous. The forty-four bottles which remained were not taken to the camp of BELCEC, but were concealed by the driver and myself at about twelve hundred meters from the camp." After having thusly depicted the driver as his accomplice, Gerstein stated: "Before the journey, I did not know the driver who was to drive me. This driver belonged to the Reich Security Main Office; I lost touch with him afterwards." Let us note that Gerstein says to Commandant Mattéi that he himself "concealed" (sic) the forty-four bottles of hydrogen cyanide with the help of the driver, whereas we read in his "confessions" that he had the acid buried, under his supervision. It is a difficult task to get rid of 44 steel bottles full of hydrogen cyanide. Continuing the subject of prussic acid or hydrogen cyanide – marketed under the brand name Zyklon B [and not available as a liquid filled in steel bottles, but absorbed on wood-fiber disks or gypsum pellets, filled in tin cans, and as such manufactured by the Dessauer Werke and Kaliwerke Kolin; ed.] and utilized as a disinfestant by the Germans since 1917 [Zyklon B was invented in 1922; ed.], Mattéi asked Gerstein the following question: "How was the cyanide to have been used technically for extermination?" This triggered Gerstein's astonishing reply: "GÜNTER in Berlin did not have the slightest idea about it. He supposed that I must have some idea. But in reality, I did not because I never used cyanide except for disinfection." [*recte*: disinfestation: combatting vermin/pest infestation, such as by rodents and insects; disinfection: combatting infections by germs/bacteria; cyanide has no effect on bacteria, hence *cannot* disinfect; ed.]			

25. Treblinka: a Simple Replica of Belzec?			
T I	T II	T III	T IV
The setup of this place of death was almost the same as at Belzec, but even bigger – 8 gas chambers and real mountains of clothes and underwear 35-40 meters high.	(Identical to T I)	The installation was roughly the same, but quite a bit larger than at Belzec.– Eight gas chambers and veritable mountains of suitcases, textiles and underwear.	(Nothing)
T Va	T Vb+c		T VI
(Almost the same as T III)	(Identical to T Va)		(Very close to T III)
Comments			
Diesel-exhaust gas chambers at Treblinka? This was not the opinion of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg; according to that, the Jews were not gassed at Treblinka, but were steamed to death (Document PS-3311, *IMT*, Vol. 32, pp. 154-158).			

26. Baron von Otter			
T I	T II	T III	T IV
After a few weeks, I saw Mr. Councilor of Legation von Otter again. He told me that he had made his report to the government of Sweden, a report which, in	After a few weeks, I saw Baron von Otter twice more. He	I then met Herr von Otter twice more in the Swedish embassy [*Gesandtschaft*]. He had in the meantime reported to Stockholm	(Nothing)

his words, had great influence on the relations between Sweden and Germany.	told me that he had made his report… [as T I]	and stated to me that this report had had a considerable influence on German-Swedish relations.	

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
I saw Baron von OTTER twice at the Swedish Legation. In the meantime, he has reported personally to STOCKHOLM and tells me that his report has had a considerable influence on Swedish-German relations.	(Identical to T Va)	(Identical to T Va+b)	(Very close to T III)

Comments

Did Gerstein see the Swedish diplomat again once (T I) or twice (T II, T III, T V, T VI)? In testifying on 29 May 1981 before the Tribunal of Paris, von Otter said that he remembered only one occasion, and that his report to Stockholm had not had any influence on Swedish-German relations (*C.R. Sténogr*. 1981, pp. 11f.). – Another very important question: Did von Otter send a written report to Stockholm, or did he only make a verbal report? For Pierre Joffroy (*op. cit.*, p. 17) and Saul Friedländer (*op. cit.*, p. 115), the diplomat *wrote* a report. But nothing has ever been made public. As for Walter Laqueur (*Ter. Sec.*, pp. 48-50), he did not find a report in the archives of Foreign Affairs at Stockholm in February 1980. On 24 March 1983, during a televised program that Alain Decaux broadcast on Gerstein, Baron von Otter, to whom the question was put, replied that, on the advice of his ambassador, he did not make a written report. Shall we one day know the truth on this point? In Saul Friedländer's book (*op. cit.*, p. 153), we read some particularly significant phrases of von Otter: "He [Gerstein] sobbed and hid his face in his hands. I thought that he would not support these torments a very long time…" Several months later, the diplomat finds himself facing Gerstein *near* the Swedish embassy (and not *inside* the embassy), and he comments: "…he seemed completely desperate and was hardly able to formulate a sentence. He was totally at the end of his nerves…" These impressions of von Otter should be set beside the other impressions reported by Saul Friedländer (*op. cit.*, pp. 152f., 177), giving an account of the "mental lapses" ("*Ausfallserscheinungen*"), of the "deranged manner," of the "strange reactions of Gerstein in 1942 and 1943."

27. Gerstein Immediately Evicted from the Nunciature in Berlin

T I	T II	T III	T IV
My attempt to refer all this to the head of the Holy Father's legation met with little success. I was asked whether I was a soldier. Then they refused to talk to me. Then I had all this told to him by Mgr. Doctor Winter, secretary of the Catholic episcopate of Berlin.	(Almost the same as T I except the last sentence:) So I made a detailed report to the secretary of the Berlin episcopate, Mr. Dr. Winter, to refer all this to his bishop in Berlin and thus to the Holy Father's legation.	I tried to report about the same matter to the pontifical nuncio. There, I was asked whether I was a soldier. Thereupon, all further conversation with me was refused, and I was asked to leave the embassy of His Holiness… I then recounted all this to hundreds of personalities, among others to the syndic of the Catholic bishop of Berlin, Herr Dr. Winter, with the expressive request to transmit my information to the Apostolic See.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
A few days later, to ease my conscience, and having done everything in my power, I tried to report to the papal nuncio in BERLIN; at my first words, I was asked whether I was a soldier; on this, all conversation with me was refused, and I was asked to leave His Holiness's legation immediately. I say this only to show how difficult it was, even for a German, a ruthless enemy of Nazism, to find a way to discredit a criminal government. In this situation, where every day tens and tens of thousands waited to be murdered, where waiting a few hours seemed criminal to me, if, in this situation, I say, a qualified representative of Jesus on earth refuses any conversation with me, what can one ask of an average citizen against Nazism? What is he to do, he who knows little about these errors, generally speaking, other than hearsay? He who, like millions of foreigners (such as the	(Identical to T Va)	I tried in the same affair to make a report to the papal nuncio at Berlin. There, I was asked whether I was a soldier. Upon which I was refused all further discussion. I was asked to leave the Embassy of His Holiness immediately. I say that here because that shows to what extent it was difficult for

Dutch Resistance) holds these things to be terribly exaggerated, who does not have my skill, who perhaps has no opportunity like me to listen to foreign radio, what is he to do against Nazism? If even the Pope's representative in Germany refuses to listen to information of this extraordinary importance about this unique violation against the basis of Jesus' law: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." Terribly disappointed and despondent, I left the legation, where I had been unable to find any advice or help. As soon as I left, I was followed by a policeman; a few minutes later, a bicycle officer also followed me. I spent minutes of immense hope and disappointment; I removed the safety catch from my revolver in my pocket and had mentally prepared myself for suicide. The incomprehensible happened; the policeman brushed by me within 50 cm, stopped for a moment and… walked away. From that day on, risking my life every hour, I reported these atrocious deaths to hundreds of influential people: to the NIEMOELLER family, to the press attaché of the Swiss legation in BERLIN, Dr. HOCHSTRASSER, to the trustee of the Catholic bishop of BERLIN, Dr. WINTER, requesting a transmission to the bishop and the pope, to Dr. DIBELIUS and to many others, so that thousands were informed by me.		a German to find advice in his d i s t r e s s when he could not even find help and counsel in such a dreadful distress from the representative of His Holiness, the Vicar of Christ on Earth!… Risking my head daily, and at the risk of being tortured and hanged, I then reported all that to hundreds of important personalities, among others the secretary of the Catholic bishop of Berlin, Dr. Winter, in order that he transmit it to H. E. Monseigneur the Bishop and to the Holy See.

Comments

In T V, Gerstein claims to have informed thousands rather than hundreds, as claimed in T III and VI. In the five texts where Gerstein relates his attempt to contact the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, one can isolate the following constants: – Gerstein had no conversation with anyone at the nunciature. He was immediately requested to leave the premises; – Gerstein tells of having made a report – and not of having sent a report – to Dr. Winter, and requesting him to inform the Catholic bishop of Berlin and, if possible, the Holy See. Starting from these fragile bases, and not confirmed by a Catholic authority of any sort, the Protestant Rolf Hochhuth wrote a play for the theater, *The Deputy*, which caused a scandal at the beginning of the 1960s; it constituted the key document in an undertaking intended to discredit the behavior of Pope Pius XII during the war (*Le Vicaire*, in particular pp. 27-31.) Saul Friedländer has given a very personal interpretation of Gerstein's initiative. We read: "In August 1942, Gerstein, who had just witnessed extermination operations by gases, tries to have himself received by the nuncio Orsenigo; he is shown out. It is then that he communicates a report to the juridical counsellor of Msgr. Preysing, archbishop of Berlin, requesting that it be transmitted to the Holy See. There is no reason to believe that the text was not sent to Rome. The Gerstein report of 1942 [sic] was probably almost identical to that which he wrote on 4 May 1945, since it describes the same event; in fact, in 1942, the Colonel [Gerstein was only a lieutenant] could recollect the facts with more precision than three years later. As for the veracity of Gerstein's statements, no historian puts them seriously in doubt [sic]. It is useful to reproduce here a brief extract of the report of 1945 for, taking into account that the Holy See has not to this day denied having received the Gerstein report during the war, one has the right [sic] to assume that a text appreciably identical to that we are about to quote was transmitted to the Sovereign Pontiff by Msgr. Preysing at the end of 1942" (*Pius XII and the Third Reich*, p. 123.)

28. The Man Pursued

T I	T II	T III	T IV
On leaving the Holy Father's legation at Rauchstrasse in Berlin, I was pursued by a police officer who, after a few very unpleasant minutes of following me, left me.	(Almost the same as T I)	On leaving the embassy of the Holy See, I was pursued by a policeman on a bicycle who passed quickly in front of me, dismounted, but then totally incomprehensibly let me go.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
As soon as I left, I was followed by a policeman; a few minutes later, a bicycle officer also followed me. I spent	(Identical to T Va)	On leaving the papal embassy, I was followed by a policeman on a bicy-

minutes of immense hope and disappointment; I removed the safety catch from my revolver in my pocket and had mentally prepared myself for suicide. The incomprehensible happened; the policeman brushed by me within 50 cm, stopped for a moment and… walked away.		cle. I had lifted the safety catch on my revolver in my pocket to shoot myself dead when, incomprehensibly, this policeman passed very close by me, but then turned around.

Comments

The comparison of this passage in the different texts shows variations which are difficult to explain. Is Gerstein frightened to the point of seeing sometimes one policeman, sometimes two, sometimes on foot, sometimes on a bicycle? Is this man, now considering suicide because he no longer masters his fear, the same man who tells us of having spread rumors on the homicidal uses of the hydrogen cyanide among the Czech workers at Kolin, the same man again who claims to have buried 44 bottles of hydrogen cyanide at the Belzec Camp under the very eyes of Captain Wirth, with the complicity of the driver, who belonged to the Reich Security Main Office?

29. Large Quantities of Hydrogen Cyanide Stocked at Auschwitz and Oranienburg

T I	T II	T III	T IV
I must add that, in early 1944, SS Sturmbannführer Günther asked me for large supplies of prussic acid for some obscure purpose [dessein]. The acid was to be supplied to Oranienburg and Auschwitz, concentration camps [champs]. I had the acid sent faithfully as desired. But as soon as it arrived, I diverted it for disinfection. It was somewhat dangerous for me, but if someone had asked me where the acid was, I would have said: it was already in a dangerous state of dissolution, and that's why I had to use it for disinfection.	I should also add that, in early 1944, SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Guenther of the Reich Security Main Office asked me for very large supplies of prussic acid for some obscure purpose. The acid was to be supplied to Berlin, Kurfuerstenstrasse, to his place of duty. I managed to make him believe that this was not possible in the face of great danger. We were talking about several freight cars of toxic acid, enough to kill many people, millions of them! He told me that he wasn't sure if, when, for what circle of people, in what way, where this poison would be needed. I don't know exactly what the intention of the Reich Security Main Office and the SD was. But I later thought of Goebbels's words to "close the doors behind them, if Nazism would never succeed." Maybe they wanted to kill a large part of the German people, maybe the foreign workers, maybe the prisoners of war – I don't know! In any case, I made the acid disappear as soon as it arrived, for disinfection purposes. It was quite dangerous for me, but if someone had asked me where the toxic acid was, I would have answered: It was already in a dangerous state of dissolution, and that's why I had to use it for disinfection!	I must moreover add that SS-Sturmbannführer Günther of the Reich Security Main Office – I believe he is the son of "Rasse" Günther – in early 1944 ordered very large quantities of prussic acid from me again for a very obscure purpose. He showed me in the Kurfürstenstrasse, in Berlin, a shed in which he was thinking of stocking the prussic acid. I then declared to him that it was out of the question that I could take responsibility for this. It was a matter of several freight cars, enough to put to death millions of human beings. He told me that he himself did not know yet whether the poison would be used, nor when, for whom, by what method, etc.. But it was to be held available at all times. Afterwards I often had to think about Goebbels's words. I suppose they wanted to kill a large part of the German people, surely including the clergy or unpopular officers. This was supposed to happen in places like lecture halls or clubs, that is what I deduced from the questions of technical implementation that Günther asked me. It is also possible that he would have had to kill foreign workers or prisoners of war – I do not know. In any case, I made arrangements so that the prussic acid disappeared for some disinfection purposes right after its arrival in the camps of Oranienburg and Auschwitz. This was somewhat dangerous for me, but I simply could have said that the poison was already	(Nothing)

		in a dangerous state of decomposition.	
T Va		T Vb+c	T VI
I should add that GUENTHER from the R.S.H.A. (I think he's the son of GUENTHER from race studies) asked me again, at the beginning of 1944, for large quantities of prussic acid. The poison was to be delivered to his office in BERLIN's Kurfuerstenstrasse, and stored in a shed he showed me. These were very large quantities, several carloads at a time, to be piled up little by little and kept at his disposal. This poison was enough to kill several million people, who would then disappear without much ado. GUENTHER told me that he didn't yet know where, when, how, for what purpose, on what milieu this poison was to be used. In any case, it had to be constantly available. I deduced from several of GUENTHER's technical questions that at least some of this poison was to be used to kill large numbers of people in clubs and reading rooms. From the meager indications, I assumed that these were officers or priests, in any case educated people, and the poison was to be used in BERLIN itself. Having visited the site thoroughly, I told GUENTHER that I could not take responsibility for storing such quantities of poison in the capital, since there was enough to kill twice the number of all the inhabitants. With great difficulty, I get the poison stored in ORANIENBURG and AUSCHWITZ, in the concentration camps. I then arranged to have the poison removed on arrival, supposedly for disinfection purposes.		(Identical to T Va)	(Almost the same as T Va)
Comments			
In this long passage, Gerstein gives free rein to his imagination. These are only haphazard suppositions and deductions. We shall keep in mind that Zyklon B, a traditional pesticide used by the German armed forces since 1917 [recte: 1922], has been forwarded to the concentration camps of Oranienburg and Auschwitz, to be stored there. – On 5 May 1945, at Rottweil, Gerstein met two Allied investigators; among other documents, he gave them a sheaf of invoices of the Degesch Company, made out in his name, for a total of 2,370 kgs of Zyklon B (hydrogen cyanide [absorbed on gypsum pellets, packaged in tin cans; ed.]) to forward one half to Auschwitz and the other half to Oranienburg. – Gerstein declared to Commandant Mattéi, Examining Magistrate of the 2nd Military Tribunal of Paris, on 19 July 1945 that he had been twice on a mission to Oranienburg (*Le Monde Juif*, January-March 1980, p. 28); on the other hand, he does not name Auschwitz among the number of camps visited by him. How would Gerstein have been able to supervise the utilization of Zyklon B on arrival at a camp he never went to? In addition, Oranienburg is located north of Berlin, that is to say, within the 1937 frontiers of the Reich, where we have known officially since 19 August 1960 ("*Keine Vergasung in Dachau*" ("No Gassing in Dachau") by Dr. Martin Broszat, *Die Zeit* (weekly newspaper), 19 August 1960, p. 16) that no camp included a poison gas chamber. [Editor's remark: Martin Broszat only disputed mass gassings in camps on the territory of the "Altreich" (Germany in its borders prior to the end of 1937), but neither the existence of homicidal gas chambers as such nor small-scale gassings in them. In the case of Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp (as for the camps at Mauthausen, Dachau, Ravensbrück and Neuengamme), mainstream historians insist to this day that there was a homicidal gas chamber. For an overview and critique of these orthodox gas-chamber claims, see Carlo Mattogno, *Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2016.] The delivery of Zyklon B to Oranienburg thus presented nothing of a disturbing character. Why has an absolutely identical delivery to the camp at Auschwitz aroused, by contrast, such grave disquiet? – Since Gerstein himself stated that he had never been to the Auschwitz Camp, and, moreover, no evidence of his going there has ever been discovered, we read with astonishment what Pièrre Joffroy writes (*L'éspion de dieu*) in regard to Gerstein and Auschwitz. We quote two extracts: The first is on p. 199: "Gerstein comes and goes between Berlin and Auschwitz. A specialist, he is present at the visits by the high Nazi officials to this metropolis of what has no name – of what will have no name except from a distance in time: genocide." The second on p. 206: "At Auschwitz, the tall, tormented figure of Gerstein gives rise among the SS to clouds of perplexity." On p. 207, Joffroy reports comments which were presumably made to him in 1968, according to which certain SS doctors thought that Gerstein had introduced himself to the Auschwitz Camp in order to blow it up (sic).			

30. Services Offered by Gerstein to the French Occupation Army

T I	T II-IV
On 22 April 1945, I waited for the city of Metzingen/Württemberg to be taken. I had advised the citizens and town council of Metzingen to surrender the town to the French… So I crossed the French lines and presented myself as a volunteer to the French commander of the town of Reutlingen … Having examined the papers, Mr. Commandant of Reutlingen gave me a paper with the following text: "The incumbent is not a true SS man and should not be treated as such, but, on the contrary, with every consideration." It was Mr. Commandant of Reutlingen who proposed, according to my wishes, that I be introduced to a place of service which would be interested in my knowledge of Nazism and perhaps make use of my anti-Nazism.	(Nothing)

T Va-c	T VI
(Nothing)	(Nothing)

Comments

This passage is taken from a page which indisputably belongs to T I, although it is filed separately in the Archives of the Evangelical Church of Bielefeld/Westphalia. It will be noticed that there is nothing equivalent in the five other texts. Here, Gerstein appears in the very ordinary role of a deserter offering his services to the enemies of the day before. – A draft also filed at Bielefeld shows a fairly comparable text. In this draft, Gerstein presents himself as "Responsible head of the Christian youth"… "launched as an agent of the resistant church, as personal friend of the Rev. Niemöller, in the SS Army." Gerstein says he is a personal friend of Pastor Niemöller. This is at least a subject worth considering. In a letter of 24 May 1946, Pastor Niemöller wrote to Frau Gerstein (see p. 372): "Personally, I cannot do anything in this matter, because I lack any impression of your husband's evolution since 1937." To be sure, Pastor Niemöller has spent several years in a concentration camp, but the restraint he expresses is certainly not that of a "personal friend" of Gerstein. This letter from Pastor Niemöller to Frau Gerstein is preserved in the Archives of the Evangelical Church of Bielefeld.

31. Open-Air Gassing in the Moats of Maria-Theresienstadt

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(Nothing)	On another occasion, Guenther consulted me about the possibility of killing large numbers of Jews in the open air in the fortification moats of Maria-Theresienstadt. To prevent this diabolical idea, I declared this method impossible. Sometime later, I heard that the SD had obtained prussic acid in another way to kill those poor people in Theresienstadt.	(Almost the same as T II)	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
Sometime later, GUENTHER called me back to the R.S.H.A. and asked me how it might be possible to poison the Jews interned at MARIA-THERESIENSTADT by throwing prussic acid from the top of the fortifications. To prevent this plan from being carried out, I declared it unfeasible. I later learned that he had obtained prussic acid in a different way, and that he had still executed the Jews, who were supposedly leading such a good life at MARIA-THERESIENSTADT; these were Jews, fathers of sons who had been killed or who held high decorations and had rendered special service.	(Identical to T Va)	One other time, Günther asked me if it was possible at Maria Theresienstadt, in the moats of the fortress where the Jews who were interned there had the right to walk, to poison them by throwing cyanide cans from the top. To make this terrible plan ineffective, I stated that it was impossible. I learned later that the SD had nevertheless obtained the hydrogen cyanide in another way, and that they had killed all the same the Jews who were allegedly so comfortable at Theresienstadt. They were the fathers of sons who had fallen in battle, Jews of great merit, holders of high decorations.

Comments

Open-air gassing by throwing prussic acid from the top of the fortifications! One understands that the chemical engineer Gerstein would have declared this unfeasible, because hydrogen cyanide is highly volatile [and lighter than air; ed.]. However, it took place, he claims. This passage of his "confessions" is so improbable that one can understand the decision of Dr. Hans Rothfels not to publish it, followed in

this by Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf (*Dritt. R. u. J.*, p. 110, and *III R. et J.*, p. 118) and by Helmut Krausnick ("*Dok. z. M.V.,*" p. 15), only the last indicating the omission by ellipses.

32. Killing Children with a Wad Soaked in Prussic Acid Held Under the Nose

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(Nothing)	The method used to kill children was to hold a wad of prussic acid under the nose.	At Auschwitz, it was customary to kill children by holding wads with prussic acid under the nose.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
At Auschwitz alone, millions of children were killed by holding a wad of hydrogen cyanide under the nose.	(Almost identical to T Va)	(Identical to TVa)	At Auschwitz alone, millions of children were killed by holding a wad of hydrogen cyanide under the nose.

Comments

A faulty punctuation in T Vb has the beginning of the next sentence ("In the RAVENSBRÜCK concentration camp…") attached to the wad-murder sentence by a comma, rather than detached by a period. – T V and T VI mention the execution of millions of children. T III gives the same execution method but deletes the improbable "millions" of victims. Dr. Hans Rothfels has not reproduced this sentence (*V.f.Z.*, p. 193); for him, it is something which Gerstein repeats from hearsay ("*Hörensagen*"). Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, as well as Helmut Krausnick also omitted this passage.

33. Witnessed Experiments at Ravensbrück

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(Nothing)	I myself have seen experiments carried on until death with living people in concentration camps. For example, SS-Hauptsturmführer Gundlach, Dr. med., carried out such experiments at the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp near Fuerstenberg-Mecklenburg	Furthermore, I have myself seen at the Ravensbrück Camp, near Fürstenburg in Mecklenburg, the concentration camp for women, experiments made on the living. These were carried out on the initiative of SS-Gruppenführer Dr. Gebhardt Hohenlychen, by SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Gundlach.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
In the RAVENSBRÜCK concentration camp, I was present at these tests on living human beings, performed by Dr. Gundlach, Haupsturmführer, on the order of SS Gruppenführer Professor Dr. Gerhardt Hohenlychen.	I was present at these tests on living human beings performed by Dr. GUNDLACH, Hauptsturmfuehrer, on the order of SS Gruppenfuehrer, Professor Dr. GEBHARDT Hohenlychen.	(Identical to TVa)	At the Ravensbrück concentration camp for women near Fürstenberg in Mecklenburg, I saw tests on living women performed by Hauptsturmführer Dr. med. Grundlach on the order of SS Gruppenführer Professor Dr. Gebhardt-Hohenlynchen.

Comments

Dr. Hans Rothfels also considered this affirmation by Gerstein as hearsay. Nevertheless, one reads in T II, III, V and VI: "I have myself seen…," "I have been present," etc. Dr. Hans Rothfels therefore seems not to have believed completely in Gerstein's "confessions." Dr. Hans Rothfels therefore seems not to have believed completely in Gerstein's "confessions." How else could we explain the cuts he has made in the texts?

34. How Many Homosexuals Disappeared in Oranienburg, and in How Many Days?

T I	T II	T III	T IV
(Nothing)	One day, in Oranienburg, a concentration camp, I saw all the prisoners disappear in a single day, who were there for being perverts (homosexuals).	I was perplexed at Oranienburg that in just within a few days all the homosexuals – many hundreds – disappeared, namely in the furnaces.	(Nothing)

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
Another day, in ORANIENBURG, I saw thousands of pederasts disappear without a trace into a furnace.	(Identical to T Va)	In addition, one day at Oranienburg, I saw several hundreds and even several thousands of homosexuals disappear without a trace into the furnaces.
Comments		
Hundreds? Thousands? Disappeared in one day? In some days? For Dr. Hans Rothfels, in spite of Gerstein's "I have seen," this is again mere hearsay.		

The following tables juxtapose texts contained in supplements to version T III and T IV. Those supplements were worked into the texts of T V and T VI. Hence, the following tables only contain entries for T III through T VI.

35. Eyewitness Evidence?

T III	T IV
At Belzec, I had the impression that all were really dead… The day of my inspection at Belzec, it happened that a Jewess inflicted several cuts in the neck to some Jews of the labor unit with a razor that she had kept hidden… I think of some impressions profoundly moving for me…	At Belcec, I had the impression that all were dead… On the occasion of my visit to Belcec, a Jewess wounded some men of the labor unit with a razor… I remember some gripping impressions…

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
At BELCEC, I had the impression on the day of my inspection that, after such a long wait in the chambers, everybody was really dead… During my visit to BELCEC, a Jewish woman had cut several of the labor Jews with a hidden razor… Some particularly striking images never leave my mind…	(Identical to T Va)	(Almost the same as T V) Some touching scenes still pass before my eyes…
Comments		
We have chosen these extracts because Gerstein pretends, obviously, to make his statements as an eyewitness. But Dr. Hans Rothfels has refrained from taking the responsibility of publishing the supplements to the German version of 4 May 1945 (which we designate T III) on the pretext that they are certainly not based on eyewitness evidence (*V.f.Z.*, 1953, p. 179, note 5). To our knowledge, these supplements have never been published previously either in France or elsewhere.		

36. How Many Polish Priests Were Shot?

T III	T IV
It concerned thousands of Polish clergymen, who had to dig the ditches themselves…	It concerned several thousands of Polish pastors and priests, who were forced to dig the ditches themselves…

T Va	T Vb	T Vc	T VI
… about 8,000 Polish clerics were forced…	About 2,000 Polish clerks…	(identical to T Vb)	It concerned several thousands – 8,000 I believe – priests and members of the Polish clergy.
Comments			
8,000? 2,000? several thousand? In his handwritten text (T IV), Gerstein writes "several thousands."			

37. How Many Persons Presumed Dead Were Killed in the Morgue?

T III	T IV
While they were taking measurements for an alteration, two persons had suddenly moved. The SS-Rottenführer who was accompanying them had then asked: Where? Then he took an iron rod from nearby and smashed in the skulls of both.	Busy with their work, they suddenly saw some of them moving. The SS Rottenführer on duty only asked: Where? … Then he took a piece of round iron already at his disposal to break their skulls.

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
Thousands of corpses, most of them from typhus, were piled up there; suddenly they realized that some were still moving. The Rottenfuehrer, who was carrying the key, simply asked calmly: "Where?" and then took a round iron hammer from nearby, and bashed in the skulls of those indicated.	(Identical to TVa)	(Almost the same as T V)

Comments

Some? a certain number? two men? Gerstein seems not to have remembered precisely what was reported to him, and he varies from one version to another.

38. Was the Little Boy "Thrown" or "Gently Urged" into the Gas Chamber?

T III	T IV
…how a little boy of perhaps three bent down to pick it up, what pleasure it gave him – and then was thrust into the chamber, no, in that instance he is gently pushed!	… the three-year-old boy, who lifts it up, who is delighted by it – and then was thrown into the chamber.

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
…he picked up the little chain, looked at it with love, and seemed completely happy with it – and at the following instant was pushed – yes, I must say it: this time with gentleness into the interior of the chamber.	(Identical to TVa)	(Almost the same as T V)

Comments

It is in the handwritten text (T IV) that Gerstein writes that the little boy was "thrown into the chamber." The other texts have maintained the anecdote, but humanized it a little, if such an expression is permissible in such a context.

39. Two Killing Methods: Steam Boilers and Blast Furnaces

T III	T IV
But quite a few were tried. For example – undoubtedly on a fairly large number of people – death by compressed air in the old boilers, into which the air was pressed by compressors of the type ordinarily used to break up asphalt… One kind of death which was assured to me consisted of making people climb the stairway up to a blast furnace, to finish them off there with a coup de grâce, and to let them then disappear in the blast furnace.	For example, people were killed by means of compressed air in boilers, using the same compressors as for road asphalt… One way of killing people was to take them up the stairs to a blast furnace, shoot them there, and then make them disappear into the furnace.

T Va	T Vb+c	T VI
Tests had also been made with compressed air: people were put into cauldrons into which compressed air was introduced by means of ordinary compressors used for asphalting streets… In Poland, a confirmed method of killing people was to make them climb up the spiral staircase of the blast furnaces, then to execute them at the top with a pistol shot, and then to make them disappear into the blast furnace.	(Identical to TVa)	(Almost the same as T V)

Comments

We have closed this comparative table with these two scenes, worthy of Grand Guignol [horrific melodrama]. Did Gerstein the engineer really believe in this "hearsay," to use once more the expression used by Dr. Hans Rothfels? Executions by firing squad, machine-gunning, hanging, etc., were sufficiently tragic for it to be pointless to imagine execution methods as complicated as they are improbable.

Chapter II: Authenticity of the Texts

General Remarks

In this chapter, we will naturally only examine the material authenticity of the texts; the veracity of the stories will be examined in the following chapter. Please note that comments on veracity have already been made in the "Comments" fields of the comparative tables. With regard to the material authenticity of the six versions known to us, we will present both certainties and hypotheses based on strong presumptions. Our study has led us to classify these six texts into three distinct series:

1. Texts whose origin is certain and whose author is indisputably Gerstein; these are T I, T II and T IV.
2. A text whose origin is certain and whose drafting is not due to Gerstein, but to the ORCG. This is text T V, in its three versions (T Va, T Vb and T Vc).
3. Typed texts in German whose origins are suspect, and for which there is no evidence that Gerstein is the author in whole or in part. These are T III and T VI. Although T III is dated 4 May 1945, and T VI 6 May 1945, we will deal with T III last, for reasons we will explain later.

1. Texts by Gerstein

Text T I

This is the first "confession" written by Gerstein on 26 April 1945, after he had surrendered a few days earlier to troops of the French 1st Army. It is handwritten in French; examination of the handwriting, compared with that of earlier letters written by Gerstein, proves that the former SS Obersturmführer was indeed the author.

Gerstein dated it from Rottweil, where he enjoyed a privileged status as a parolee, and where he occupied a room at the Hotel Mohren. He used the paper available to him, which was rare at the time: letterheaded, white paper in the same format, white squared paper in a smaller format, and even a sheet of paper that he had begun to use almost five years earlier, since at the top of this page we read his name, his titles, his address in Hagen and the date 14.8.1940.

We have every reason to believe that the SS officer wrote his "confession" spontaneously. We can already see the irresistible urge of the former militant of the Confessing Church to make repeated "confessions," since the last two pages of T I repeat entire passages from the preceding pages.

Text T II

This text is typed in French, dated "Rottweil, 26 April 1945" as T I. It is the only one of the six texts that bears Kurt Gerstein's handwritten signature, at the bottom of the sixth page. Of the six pages of the "confession" itself, the first five are very similar to the first eight pages of T I, but with a few differences, one of which is very important, as it concerns the number of victims at the Belzec and Treblinka camps: there is no estimate in T I, whereas Gerstein puts the figure at 25 million (sic) in T II.

The sixth page of T II has no equivalent in T I: Gerstein recounts exterminations, atrocities and experiments on living beings that took place in camps other than Belzec and Treblinka, even in camps that the former Obersturmführer never visited, such as Auschwitz and Mauthausen, among others.

In parallel, the page numbered 9 in T I has no equivalent in T II: Gerstein gives details of his surrender to the French troops, the welcome he received from the military authorities, and the offers he made to enter their service.

One hypothesis is that Gerstein used part of T I as a draft for typing T II, but as he was a prisoner, "suggestions" may have been made for the sixth page; for example, he may have been asked to recount atrocities he had heard about, to flesh out his account, which only concerned Belzec and Treblinka. They may also have helped his hesitant French to write the expression by which he attests under oath to the veracity of his statements.

The seventh page, unsigned and headlined "Kurt Gerstein – supplement," calls for no particular comment. Here the former SS officer explains that a circle of anti-National-Socialist friends met at his Berlin address, and

he gives their names and addresses. He adds references to a few other people living outside Berlin.

T II is Gerstein's best-known "confession," particularly in France. Paradoxically, it was found in the files of the U.S. Justice Department at the Nuremberg Tribunal in January 1946. The explanation is simple: on 5 May 1945, Gerstein was still carrying the seven typewritten pages, which would seem to indicate that the French Military Security officers were not particularly interested in them. On that day, the prisoner of honor from Rottweil met two Allied investigators, British Major Evans and U.S. official Haught, in the lobby of the Hotel Mohren. He was seeing Anglo-Saxon officers in occupied Württemberg for the first time, and struck up a conversation with them. The Allied officers wrote an account of the meeting. Gerstein gave them the seven pages of his typed "confession" of 26 April 1945, together with a number of documents that constitute supporting documents, in particular a two-page handwritten note in English and a batch of twelve invoices from the Degesch Company concerning the delivery of Zyklon B.

The documents were examined in Paris by the Documentation Division, headed by Commandant Robert Storey, who decided to include them in the PS (Paris Storey) series under number 1553.

On 30 January 1946, French public prosecutor Charles Dubost insisted in vain that PS-1553 be accepted by the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal. The judges' refusal is significant, but it does not call into question its material authenticity. Only the invoices were accepted.

Let's conclude with a final point. What typewriter was used by Gerstein to type T II? We're pretty sure it was a machine with a French keyboard. The "é" and "è" are clearly typed with a single key, which is not possible with a German keyboard. There are also numerous circumflex accents that only exist on a French keyboard. There is therefore good reason to believe that the French Military Security provided its prisoner with a typewriter. The typing may have been that of an occasional typist, as Gerstein must have been.

Text T IV

This is Gerstein's second handwritten "confession," written in French, like the first, at the Hotel Mohren in Rottweil. It bears the date 6 May 1945. As we said in the chapter "Establishing the Texts," it consists of nine half-pages for the main "confession," and a further nine half-pages for the supplements.

a) The Main "Confession"

It is very short, giving the reader of T I and T II the impression of being unfinished. It stops at the point where SS General Globocnik instructs Gerstein to disinfect large quantities of textiles at the Belzec Camp. There is therefore no mention of any gassing of inmates in this "confession." This fact is surprising.

It does not appear, however, that any pages are missing, as the last half-page numbered 9 is not even completely filled.

This brief "confession" repeats the corresponding passages from T I and T II. However, there is one very important difference with the latter two texts: Gerstein says that he was ordered on 8 June 1942 to deliver 260 kg of hydrogen cyanide, instead of the 100 kg in the texts of 26 April 1945 (T I and T II). In addition to this discrepancy, there are other additions, personal comments that we will sometimes find with further developments in T III, T V and T VI.

b) Supplements

They are undated, but both LKA and Gerstein's widow believe they complete T IV. They have no equivalent in T I and T II. On the other hand, they are found, with variations, in T III, T V and T VI. However, in T V and T VI, they are not separated as in T III and T IV, but integrated into the text of the last part of the "confessions."

The authenticity of T IV is indisputable, but it is unclear what motive Gerstein had in writing it. We present three hypotheses:

<u>First Hypothesis</u>

Gerstein's repetitive writing of "confessions," essentially similar but with differences, was a trait of his character: as soon as he had a blank sheet of paper at his disposal, he couldn't resist the urge to write, starting with his biography and continuing with an account of his experiences in the SS.

<u>Second Hypothesis</u>

Gerstein wanted to send his wife an account; indeed, in his last letter to her, dated 26 May 1945, he wrote: "*geh mit dem Bericht, den ich anlege, zum Militaergouverneur*," translating to, "go with the enclosed report to the French Military Governor."

This would explain the redrafting in French of a document which, at least her husband hoped, would enable Elfriede Gerstein to receive preferential treatment from the French military authorities.

Why is this account so brief? Did Gerstein have any qualms to repeat for his wife, whose patriotism he knew, the essential part of the "confession," meaning the revelation about the gassing of deportees at the Belzec and Treblinka camps? Did he fear her skepticism, or even her incredulous indignation?

Third Hypothesis

The officers of the French military-security services were unpleasantly surprised to learn that the day before, on 5 May, their prisoner had handed over to Allied investigators the French-language document dated 26 April 1945, intended for the French services. Gerstein may have wanted to "redeem" himself by writing a new "confession."

When the French officers realized that the former SS man was repeating the same things over and over again, they may have ordered him to make new revelations.

This last hypothesis could explain the abrupt interruption of the main "confession" and the writing of heretofore unmentioned supplements.

In fact, it's possible that all three of our hypotheses have some truth to them, and that they coincide.

To our knowledge, no one before us has published, or even publicized, the existence of T IV (main "confession" and supplements).

2. Text T V, Drafted by ORCG

The origin of this text is certain, as we said in our chapter "Establishment of texts." The Directorate of Military Justice has a letter (see p. 373) from the head of the ORCG, dated 6 June 1945, the first lines of which we translate below:

"The Head of ORCG

to Professor Gros
Carlton Gardens 4
London

I have the honour of enclosing a copy of my interrogation of the actor: Gerstein of Tuebingen.

I'm sure you'll be interested in this document."

The document announced in this letter is the text T Va. Saul Friedländer reproduces part of the letter of 6 June 1945 (*K. G.*, p. 185), but adds: "the

text of the interrogation has not been found until now." The text has now been found (it was returned to the Archives of the Directorate of Military Justice on 3 August 1971), and can be consulted there.

Main Features of T Va:

– T Va is presented as a copy of an interrogation. We do not know where to find the original of this interrogation.
– The title "Report by Dr. Gerstein from Tübingen" already contains an error: Gerstein was a Diplom-Ingenieur (similar to a master's degree in engineering), not a PhD engineer.
– The style is sometimes incorrect, and the text is peppered with spelling mistakes, but the author clearly has a good command of the French language, which was not the case with Gerstein.
– T Va *may have* been written, at least in part, from Gerstein's answers to questions put to him by ORCG members.

There are a large number of errors in the proper names, which may be due to a misunderstanding of these names, pronounced, presumably with a Germanic accent, by the former SS officer. We will give five examples of these errors:

– in city names: Marbrug instead of Marb(o)urg (corrected in T Vb)
– Aachem instead of Aachen (corrected in T Vb)
– Pirmasinz instead of Pirmasens (p. 16 of T Vb)
– in personal names: Hockelchoc instead of Heckenholt
– Kraatz instead of Krantz.

Furthermore, at the beginning of his other "confessions," Gerstein speaks of his *exclusion* from the National-Socialist party; in T Va, we read: *execution*. This may be either a mispronunciation or a misreading.

– Other errors suggest moreover that the ORCG editors used handwritten texts written by their prisoner. For example, T Va refers to the collection of clothing from the *Danish* people, whereas it clearly refers to the *German people*. Did they misread *daenisch* (Danish) instead of *deutsch* (German)?
– Finally, the French writing of T Va is evidenced by typical expressions, such as *bachot* to translate *Abitur* (biographic part on page one of the document, not transcribed here) and above all E.M. (initials of Etat-Major) to designate the upper echelons of the SS (staff).

T Va has been used for two other versions, which contain some differences compared to their original; these are:

– T Vb, French text, of which we have a photocopy from the National Archives in Washington;
– T Vc, English text, which bears the word "translation" on its first page; our photocopy of T Vc comes from the Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation in Paris, which itself obtained this document from the Israeli Police.

Differences between Original (T Va) and Copies (T Vb and T Vc)

1) T Vb

There are few discrepancies, since errors in proper nouns and even spelling mistakes have generally been faithfully reproduced. However, we have noted the following three differences:

– T Va reads:[1] "28 minutes later, very few of them are still alive," and T Vb: "26 minutes…" This is probably a typing error.
– In T Va we read: "around 8,000 Polish clerics were forced to dig pits," and in T Vb: "around 2,000."
– On page 9, line 21, of T Vb, a typing oversight renders a sentence incomprehensible, as several lines of T Va have been skipped (see the transcript on p. 103).

2) T Vc

This English translation of T Vb bears on its last page the same declassification reference from the National Archives in Washington as its version T Vb, hence 01.0813. The transcription is faithful (same errors) in the spelling of proper names; same acronym E.M. (Etat-Major) which has no meaning in English; same number of victims among the Polish clergy: 2,000 as in T Vb and not 8,000 as in T Va. On two occasions, however, the translation has been somewhat "arranged":

– On the former, we read in T Vb, p. 3, lines 30-31: "Truly, the S.D. and its boss the R.S.H.A. have slept magnificently in this case,[2] and made a gardener of the goat in an exemplary fashion"; while in T Vc, page 3, lines 38-39, we simply read: "Truly, the SD and their chief the RSHA did sleep in this case and took the very wrong man." The expression "to make a gardener of the goat" is unclear both to the francophone and the anglophone; on the other hand, P. Joffroy (*op. cit.*, page 92, note 2)

[1] For T Va, we do not specify on which lines the differences are to be found. The photocopy of T Va is not included in our thesis, as we have not been authorized to do so by the Directorate of Military Justice.

[2] Gerstein alludes to his assignment to the SS Hygiene Institute, despite his known police record.

quotes a German saying, "*einen Bock zum Gärtner machen*," which means "to make a gardener of the goat," which roughly corresponds to the English expression "to put the fox in charge of the henhouse."

– On the second, in T Va and T Vb (page 6, line 4), we read: "[…] no one would ever be able to find matching pairs in the 35- to 40-meter-high pile." 35 to 40 meters represents a height of 10 to 12 stories; the translator, probably sensitive to this implausibility, simply writes, in T Vc: "[…] otherwise it would have been later impossible to identify the pairs in a heap of boots of *several meters*."

Léon Poliakov's Use of T Vc.

In 1964, L. Poliakov published "Le dossier Kurt Gerstein" (*Le Monde juif*, pp. 4-20); in his presentation of Gerstein's account, he writes:

> *"He* [Gerstein] *was interned by the French military authorities in a requisitioned hotel in the small town of Rottweil. There, between 21 April and 5 May, he wrote his account, which he then translated into French and typed himself.* […] *On 5 May 1945, the Allied military investigators, Major D.C. Evans and Mr. J. W. Haught, met Gerstein in Rottweil – by chance, they say – interviewed him, and translated the full text of his account into English."*

We have the following comments to make on this text:

a. L. Poliakov seems to be unaware that T Vc (English text) is merely a translation of T Vb, itself a more or less faithful transcription of T Va; at the same time, he is unaware that T Va is the work of the ORCG.
b. Did L. Poliakov have the English text in front of him, which clearly states "*6* May 1945," not *5* May?
c. The English translation was not made by the two Allied officers, but some weeks later; it had already been necessary for T Va, as we said earlier, to be sent to Professor Gros in London by a letter dated 6 June 1945.

With regard to Léon Poliakov's assertions, Pierre Vidal-Naquet was overconfident, stating publicly in 1981 that T Vc was "the interpretation given by the American and English investigators in their own report […]" (*Compte rendu sténographique*, 1981).

We mentioned earlier that L. Poliakov had only taken six paragraphs from T Vc and, after translation into French, inserted them in various places in T II. Of these six paragraphs, only two conform to the original text.

3. Texts of Uncertain Origin

These are T III and T VI, both in German and typewritten; neither is signed:

– T III bears the date 4 May 1945, but was only discovered in the spring of 1946 under unclear circumstances.
– T VI bears the date 6 May 1945; it was the subject of a Staff Evidence Analysis by U.S. services on 26 October 1945, based on a partial translation of the document made on 13 August 1945.

We will look at these two "confessions" in turn, starting with T VI, as we will be giving the reasons we consider valid for believing that T III was written last.

Text T VI

Saul Friedländer writes of T VI (*K. G.*, p. 11): "A German text of the report, dated *Tübingen, now Rottweil, Hotel Mohren, 6 May 1945,* comes from a man named Stass, who himself presumably received it from a police officer in Hersfeld in the summer of 1945, on his way back from the Buchenwald Camp in Cologne."

What do we know about Stass? What do we know about the Hersfeld policeman S. Friedländer himself refers to in the conditional tense? Friedländer himself speaks of in the conditional? As far as we know, nothing is known about these two characters. Frau Gerstein, questioned by us, replied that she had never heard of them; she added that her husband had enough imaginative wealth (*Einfallsreichtum*) to find the means to circulate his testimony during his captivity in Rottweil, where he enjoyed relative freedom.

Subjected to examination by Commandant Storey's Documentation Division, T VI was admitted to the PS series under number 2170. It was used at least once in the course of a trial: that against Dr. Gerhard Peters, former manager of the Degesch Company, which took place in Frankfurt. The Degesch Company, in which Dr. Peters held an important position, supplied Zyklon B to the German authorities, in particular to the department responsible for disinfesting the concentration camps. Dr. Peters was therefore in close contact with SS Obersturmführer Gerstein.

Three "confessions" were examined simultaneously by the Frankfurt court trying Dr. Peters: T II, T III and T VI; the court pointed out, without comment, certain differences found between these three texts, in particular

the quantity of hydrogen cyanide that Gerstein was ordered to transport to the Belzec Camp: 100 kg in T II and T III, instead of 260 kg in T VI.

Key Features of T VI

1. Material Aspect

The typing is very neat; it's clearly the work of a professional; in particular, the first word of the next page is underlined at the bottom right of each page. This cannot be the work of Gerstein, who was only an occasional typist.

The typewriter used had a German keyboard: in particular, it featured the specifically German character ß.

2. Numerous Errors in Proper Nouns, in the Most Common German Words and in Style.

a. Proper nouns

Here are a few examples:

- Page 1: *in Tübingen, Hartenstrasse 24*, instead of *Gartenstrasse 24* (Gerstein's address), *Schemann* instead of *Schmemann* (Gerstein's mother's maiden name), *Grafenesk* instead of *Grafeneck*, *Arnheim* instead of *Arnhem*.
- Page 13: *Dorothea Schult* instead of *Schulz*, *Heinz Nebenthau* instead of *Nebelthau*.

The above errors could possibly be explained by a misunderstanding on the part of the typist, if the text was dictated. As for the error on page 12, it is more difficult to hypothesize an explanation; indeed, Gerstein's Berlin address was: *Bülowstrasse* 47, and we read: *Lützowstrasse* 47.

b. Words and Style

There are too many typing errors for us to list them all; here are just a few examples:

- Page 1, last line: *hierbai* instead of *hierbei*
- Page 2, 1st line: *DS* instead of *SD* (initials of *Sicherheitsdienst*)
- 9th line: *Anseicht* instead of *Ansicht*
- 15th line: *Führlung* instead of *Fühlung*
- 16th line: *Führungsgauptamt* instead of Führungshauptamt
- Page 4, 36th line: *Binsfäden* instead of *Bindfäden*
- Page 5, 2nd line: *ich selbst stehen* instead of *ich selbst stehe*
- ditto: *pastoerale* instead of *pastorale*
- Page 6, 37th line: *Brillen* instead of *Brillanten*

…and many other errors. This profusion of errors suggests that the typist did not know the German language, but only how to type.

3. Analogy Between T V and T VI

For the most part, T VI reproduces in German the contents of T V, which is an interrogation copy by the French ORCG. We have already seen that T V contains gross errors and awkwardly worded passages, even though it was not written by Gerstein, but by one or more native speakers of French.

Gross errors have been corrected in T VI. For example, *execution* by the NSDAP court is changed back to *exclusion*; collection among the *Danish people* is changed back to collection among the *German people*; *Hockelchoc* is changed back to *Heckenholt*; the Star of *Davis* is changed back to the Star of *David*, etc. As for the awkward passages in T V, they have been either deleted, abridged or presented in a more correct form.

4. Peculiarities in this German Text

We said earlier that Gerstein could not have typed T VI. Could he nevertheless have dictated the text of T VI to a typist? We have serious doubts on this point; for, if this were the case, it would be incomprehensible that Gerstein, speaking in German, should commit the two errors we point out below:

1st mistake: On page 2 of T VI, we read: "*ich wurde daher sehr bald Leutnant und Oberleutnant*," i.e.: "I very soon became second lieutenant and then first lieutenant."

This sentence contains a double error. Firstly, while Gerstein quickly became a second lieutenant, he had to wait until 20 April 1943 to be promoted to (first) lieutenant. Secondly – and much more troublingly – the ranks mentioned in T VI did not exist in the SS. Gerstein was never *Leutnant* and *Oberleutnant*, but *Untersturmführer* and *Obersturmführer*.

In the French-language texts T I, T II and T IV, Gerstein wrote: "*je devins lieutenant*" (I became a lieutenant), thus giving the equivalent rank in the French army. He had no reason to use inappropriate terms to designate his successive ranks in his mother tongue. Indeed, when questioned by the military examining magistrate in Paris on 19 July 1945, he replied in German, in the presence of an interpreter: "I have been appointed Untersturmführer F" (F being the first letter of the word *Fachführer*, meaning: specialist officer or special assignment to a position of responsibility). It should also be noted that Gerstein never gives Wehrmacht ranks to the SS officers and NCOs he met at Belzec. If Wirth is referred to as Hauptmann,

it's because in August 1942, he was still a police captain, not a member of the Waffen SS.

2nd error: On page 8 of T VI, we read: "*ich traf dann Herm von Otter noch 2 mal in der schwedischen Gesandtschaft*," i.e.: "I then met Herr von Otter twice again in the Swedish embassy."

In the French texts T I and T II, Gerstein wrote that he had seen Baron von Otter *once* (T I) or *twice* (T II) at the Swedish legation. The German language is more precise than French in its use of prepositions. Thus, in French, "*à* la légation suédoise" can just as easily mean "*inside* the Swedish legation" as "*near* or *in front of* the Swedish legation."

Where did Gerstein actually see von Otter again? We know from the Swedish diplomat who, on several occasions, said that Gerstein had stood before him in a street near the Swedish legation (Joffroy, *op. cit.*, p. 173, and Friedländer, *K. G.*, p. 115). Had Gerstein been the author of T VI, he would have written in German: *bei* (or *vor*) *der schwedischen Gesandtschaft*, but certainly not *in*, since he did not enter the legation.

We were also intrigued by another passage in T VI. On page 4, line 9, we read: "*Sonderkommando Belcec der Waffen SS*"; this is an inscription on a sign at the entrance to the Belzec Camp. If this inscription has been reproduced accurately in T VI, we find it difficult to understand why Gerstein translated it in his French versions T I and T II as: "Belcec Service Site of the SS Army" ("*Lieu de service Belcec de la SS armée*"). The Obersturmführer proved in all his French texts that he knew our language well enough to translate it as: "special commando (or even: special team) of the Waffen S.S. Belzec." If Gerstein wrote "lieu de service" (place of service, service site), we can assume that he read on the sign *Dienststelle* and not *Sonderkommando*. Could it be that the word *Sonderkommando* was a fabrication by the editors of T VI? We know that the prefix *Sonder*…, never used alone, is widely used in German. For example, they speak of *Sonderzug* (special train), of *Sondernummer* (special issue of a newspaper), and so on. But after the Second World War, some people wanted to give this word *Sonder* a hidden, quasi-diabolical meaning. For them, *Sonderaktion* (special action) or *Sonderbehandlung* (special treatment) means, without any convincing evidence to back it up: action or treatment aimed at extermination, particularly in homicidal gas chambers.

In conclusion, the study we have just made of T VI leads us to believe that this document was "constructed" from texts written in French, notably from T V onwards. We can speculate that the reason for writing a text in German was that it seemed implausible that the German Gerstein had left

no written account in his mother tongue of his visit to Belzec and Treblinka.

Text T III

This typewritten text in German, dated 4 May 1945 and unsigned, was found late and under very peculiar circumstances. We have already seen that no explanation has been given for the origin of T VI; two intermediaries, whose existence we could not even verify, have only been cited by S. Friedländer. For the origin of T III, an explanation has been given, but it hardly seems convincing to us.

A Document Forgotten for almost a Year

Hans Rothfels wrote the following about this in 1953:

> *"Es ist daher als ein glücklicker Umstand zu betrachten, daß sich eine deutsche Parallelfassung zu dem französischen Hauptstück von PS-1553 gefunden hat. Sie ist datiert: Rottweil, 4 Mai 1945, ist also am Tag vor der amerikanischen Vernehmung verfaßt. Nach Angabe von Frau Gerstein hat ihr Mann diese Niederschrift für sie im Hotel Mohren in Rottweil deponiert, wo sie erst nach einem Jahr sie abholen lassen konnte, weil ihr die Tatsache der Hinterlegung vorher nicht bekannt war"* (*op.cit.*, p. 179)

This translates to:

> *"It is to be considered a fortunate circumstance that a German parallel version to the key document in French PS-1553 was found. It is dated: Rottweil, 4 May 1945, hence was composed one day before the American interrogation. According to Frau Gerstein's statement, her husband left this document for her at the Hotel Mohren in Rottweil, where she could have it picked up only after one year, because the fact of its deposition had not been known to her before."*

The above text raises several questions:

a. Gerstein mentions his Tübingen address on the first page of T III. Rottweil is less than 150 km from Tübingen. The German postal service, disrupted in the weeks following the surrender of 8 May 1945, did not remain paralyzed for a year. Why didn't the managers of the Hotel Mohren inform Frau Gerstein that a letter had been waiting for her since 26 May 1945, the day Gerstein left Rottweil to follow French Military Security officers to Konstanz?
b. Is it possible that French Military Security did not find out whether its prisoner had left any personal papers at the Hotel Mohren?

c. It seems to us even more implausible to imagine that Gerstein, unbeknownst to the hotel managers and unbeknownst to the French officers, could have hidden documents in his room or elsewhere in the hotel, documents which would not have been found until a year later.

The Role of the Pastor of Hagen/Westphalia

H. Rothfels got his information from Frau Gerstein ("According to Frau Gerstein's statement"); we ourselves questioned the widow on this point in letters, written in German, and obtained some interesting details from her. Here are the main points:

– At the end of January 1946, Frau Gerstein learned from a letter by Pastor Rehling[3] of Hagen/Westphalia that her husband had written an account of his experiences in the SS, while a prisoner of French troops.
– She succeeded in obtaining from Pastor Rehling the name of the place where the SS officer had been imprisoned: Rottweil. – She did not go to Rottweil herself, but asked a student at the Hotel Mohren to find out if her husband had left anything for her. – The student returned to Tübingen with the last letter written by the prisoner to his wife on 26 May 1945. Attached to this letter were two or perhaps three of Gerstein's stories, certainly T III and T IV, and possibly T I (Frau Gerstein was not certain about T I).

Who Was this Student Who Acted as Intermediary?

We wanted to know more about the student who acted as intermediary. Frau Gerstein replied with some reluctance. In her letter of 15 October 1982, she informed us that, as far as she could remember, it was a student who had stayed only one or two semesters in Tübingen; she added that she has had no news of him for several decades, and did not know his address; at our insistence, she gave us the student's name in her letter of 21 March 1983: August Pott (Frau Gerstein has reservations about this name, which she quoted only from memory).

Is there any chance of ever finding this student and elucidating his role in the discovery of this document? This is the most important "confession" in German, and to our knowledge the only one to have been published, albeit with omissions, first in Germany, then abroad, notably in France.

How Was Pastor Rehling from Hagen Informed?

We wrote earlier that Rehling was behind the discovery of T III:

[3] We'll explain later how the pastor had been informed.

On 27 January 1946, the pastor wrote to Kurt Gerstein (whose death, six months earlier, he was unaware of) at his address in Tübingen. This letter begins as follows (see p. 374):[4]

> *"Dear Mr. Gerstein, By chance I have in my hands a sheet* [*Blatt*] *dated 6 May, which relates your experiences in the SS Health Service. As you have named me as a witness, I have been asked whether this is true* […]*"*

The pastor received a letter from Frau Gerstein, informing him that her husband was not in Tübingen, but a prisoner of the French, and that she has had no news of him since the end of the war.

On 26 February 1946, the pastor answered the questions Frau Gerstein had put to him (see p. 375):

> *"I have been shown a report* [*Bericht*] *on Kurt's experiences; this report was brought here from southern Germany by the brother of our organist, who, to tell the truth, no longer lives in Hagen. It was dated May last year from a 'Hotel Mohren' in a village in Württemberg."*

This sheet (*Blatt*) referred to by the pastor, taken from a report (*Bericht*) dated 6 May 1945, appears to be page 13 of the "confessions" in German of 6 May 1945, classified as PS-2170 (T VI). Lines 24 and 25 of this page 13 read: "*Pfarrer Rehling, Hagen Lutherkirche, führendes Mitglied der westf. Bekenntniskirche*," which means: "Pastor Rehling, Hagen Lutheran Church, leading member of the Westphalian Confessing Church."

To sum up, the conditions surrounding the "discovery" of T III in the spring of 1946 seem somewhat confused.

The Typewriting of T III Analyzed

We have already described some of the features of T III in Chapter I, "Establishing the texts." This version is unsigned. Twenty-four half-pages, numbered 1 to 24, and eight half-pages of supplements, numbered 1 to 8, are typed.

1. The Keyboard is German

The typewriter used is obviously a machine with a German keyboard. For example, capital A's and O's are sometimes surmounted by umlaut dots, which is not possible with a French keyboard using a single key. However, it is curious to note that the German letter ß has never been used. It has always been replaced by a double s, contrary to what we found in T VI.

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[4] The sentences in Pastor Rehling's two letters translated here are marked XX on the reproductions in Appendix I.

It is obvious to the naked eye that the three typed versions attributed to Gerstein required the use of three different keyboard machines. We therefore fail to understand Saul Friedländer's assertion (*op. cit.*, p. 179):

> *"It was on the machine* [of Pastor Hecklinger of Rottweil] *that* [Gerstein] *first copied his French report, then wrote the German reports dated 4 and 6 May."*

If we place the three documents side by side, what S. Friedländer presents as a certainty is immediately refuted.

2. Spelling Irregularities

When Gerstein wrote the handwritten French versions, he systematically replaced the ü with ue. The same feature is found in the typed French version (which we call T II), for which a French keyboard was used.

But in the German version T III, there is no consistent spelling, and sometimes for the same word; here are a few examples:

– half-page 1, 1st line: Tübingen
– half-page 1, 6th line: Münster
– half page 1, 13th line: Tuebingen
– half-page 2, 1st line: Münster
– half page 2, 8th line: Bruening
– half page 8, 4th line: Fuehrer
– half page 8, 7th line: Führer

Another anomaly has come to our attention. It concerns the word "Nazi," curiously written with a final "e," which is not very German, but common in the French language:

– half-page 2, line 9: *Nazie-Statt*
– half page 2, line 19; *staats* (*nazie*) *feindlicher*
– half page 4, line 5: *Nazie-Sache*.
– half-page 22, last but one line: *Antinazies*

Finally, on line 9 of half-page 17, there's a serious spelling error: "*in typisch himmler-schen altdeutschen Stiel*" instead of *Stil*, which means: "in the old-German himmlerian style." The word *Stiel* exists, but it has a completely different meaning; it can be translated as: handle/shaft (of a tool), stalk/stem (of a flower), etc.

It is worth noting that H. Rothfels, when he reproduced T III in 1953 (*op. cit.*), corrected all these errors and anomalies.

3. Peculiarities Identical to T VI

T III contains two errors that would be difficult to explain if Gerstein were the author, namely the inappropriate use of Wehrmacht ranks for SS ranks,

and the use of the preposition *in* rather than *bei* or *nahe* to indicate that Gerstein met von Otter near the Swedish legation. The comments made earlier on the "Sonderkommando" inscription also apply to T III.

4. Peculiarities Specific to T III

On half-page numbered 6, line 12, we read: "*In der Fabrik in Collin*." However, in the *Larousse Grand Atlas*, as well as in the six-volume Larousse dictionary, the name of this town in Czechoslovakia is spelled *Kolin*. The two ls instead of a single l do not appear to us to be a serious error. On the other hand, no German will write *Colin* with a "C" instead of a "K." In French texts, Gerstein has written Collin with a "C," presumably in the belief that this would "Frenchize" the name of the town. But in a German text, the spelling "Collin" *is inexplicable*; in our view, the makers of T III were short-sighted on this occasion. Note that T VI reads *Kollin*.

5. Half a Page Handwritten

Between the typewritten half-page numbered 7 and the typewritten half-page numbered 8, there is a handwritten half-page with the words "*zu 7 am Schluss zusetzen*" ("add to 7 at the end") at the top left.

The presence of this handwritten half-page in the midst of twenty-four typed half-pages is difficult to explain. This all the more so, as the text on this half-page is devoid of interest. It gives almost exclusively details of the difficulties Gerstein encountered in disinfecting large quantities of textiles. There is no corresponding text in the other "confessions." It connects neither with the half-page 7 that precedes it, nor with the half-page 8 that follows it. It could easily be deleted, so much so that H. Rothfels reproduced it in brackets in 1953 (*op. cit.*, pp. 188f.).

As we, for our part, have serious doubts about the authenticity of T III, we are inclined to think that this half-page manuscript, indisputably written by Gerstein, was placed there to lend credence to the idea that the whole is authentic.

6. Supplements

We have already mentioned that eight undated, typewritten half-pages represent supplements (*Ergänzungen*) to T III. The first supplement, which bears no numbering whatsoever, is almost illegible due to its weak inking; it has been retyped on a separate sheet, titled "*Leseabschrift*," meaning "reading copy." This first supplement is nevertheless valuable, as it ends with four handwritten words apparently written by Gerstein. We make the same point about this supplement as we did about the handwritten half-

page: the presence of the handwritten words encourages the reader to silence his or her doubts about the authenticity of the entire "confession."

Conclusion

At the end of our study, we come to the same conclusion for T III as for T VI. These two "confessions" in German seem to us to have been fabricated from disparate documents left by Gerstein, documents that were not publishable in their original version.

In our next chapter, devoted to the veracity of the texts, we'll try to demonstrate that, while all the "confessions" contain oddities and implausibilities, T III contains a few less; we sense a desire on the part of the author of T III to eliminate or attenuate implausibilities that are too flagrant, in order to make T III a little less incredible than the other versions. This reinforces our conviction that T III, "discovered" almost a year after 4 May 1945 – the alleged date of its writing – is in fact a story written several months after Gerstein's death, when the other five versions had already been known and analyzed.

4. Additions and Drafts

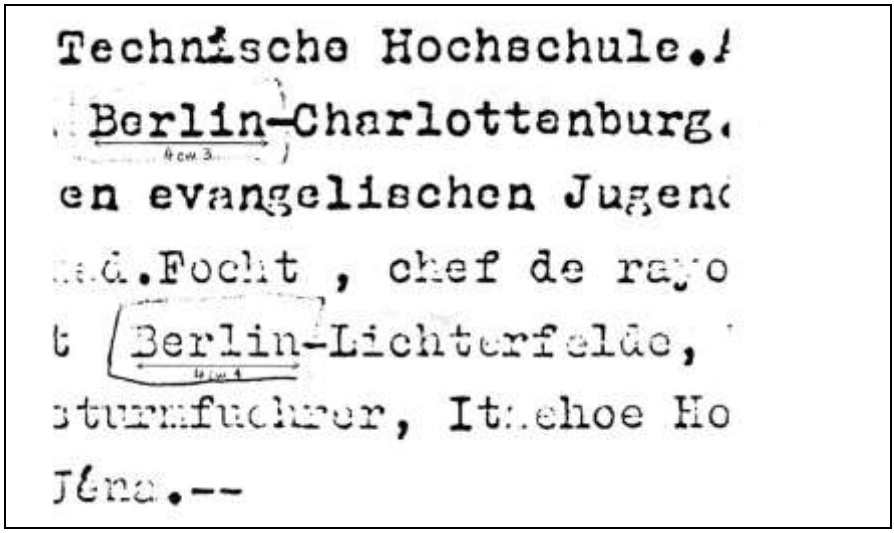
The authenticity of these additions and drafts (to be distinguished from the "Supplements") is obvious, so there is no need to study them. One of these additions calls for only a few remarks: it is the typed page, in French, titled "Post scriptum" and bearing the number 16.

1. The Keyboard Used is German

We have examined the typing of this text. The typewriter used had a German keyboard; to be sure, all you have to do is look closely at the grave, acute and circumflex accents; they have all been added, either by machine or by hand. In addition, one typo is significant. In the tenth line before the end of the page, the typist has typed a 2 instead of quotation marks; on the German keyboard, the 2 and the quotation marks occupy the same key, which is not the case on a French keyboard, for example.

2. The Keyboard Used for this Addition is Not the One Used for T III

We have enlarged a short passage from the supplement in question and a short passage from T III. In both passages, there are common letters and even a common word: Berlin. Close examination of the word Berlin shows


Technische Hochschule.
Berlin-Charlottenburg.
en evangelischen Jugen
d.Focht , chef de rayo
Berlin-Lichterfelde,
sturmführer, Itzehoe Ho
Jéna.--

Comparison of the width of the word "Berlin" typed in version T III (German text, top) and "Post scriptum" page (French text, bottom).

slight differences from one text to the other; the total length of the word Berlin is 4.3 cm in the T III passage and only 4.1 cm in the Addition's passage (see illustration on p. 197). For both texts, a German keyboard was used, but evidently not the same machine.[5]

We hypothesize that the postscript numbered 16 may have been typed on a machine loaned by Pastor Hecklinger of Rottweil. It's likely that the first fifteen pages, which can't be found at the LKA or elsewhere, were typed on that machine as well. In 1961, in connection with the Eichmann Trial, the pastor provided the Israeli Police with an attestation to the effect that Gerstein had used his typewriter around mid-May 1945 (see p. 376). In this attestation, he states that he owned two typewriters, including the one he used to type the attestation; a quick examination of the typing shows that, if Gerstein used a typewriter belonging to the pastor, it could not have been the one he used in 1961 (see, for example, the typing of the number 4); the use of the other machine, whose typing characteristics we do not know, remains possible; this is why we have put forward a hypothesis concerning the "post-script" piece numbered 16. We are not accusing Pastor Hecklinger of lying, but the fact remains that none of the three complete typed "confessions" currently known – T II, T III and T VI – appear to have been typed on the Pastor's machine.

[5] We have carried out an additional check which confirms the previous one: on a 16.8 cm line, we counted 62 typewritten spaces in the T III text, compared with 65 in the French supplement.

5. Letter from Gerstein to his Wife, 26 May 1945

The authenticity of this letter is beyond doubt. We previously stated the importance we attach to the following sentence, which reads translated:

> *"If you have any difficulties, go with the enclosed report to the French Military Governor."*

Note that Gerstein writes "report" (singular) and not "reports" (plural). We believe that the document announced by Gerstein was written in French, since the Military Governor of Tübingen, where Gerstein's family lived, was French.

Since 26 April 1945, the Obersturmführer had been in the habit of writing his "confessions" directly in French to the French officers who had taken him prisoner. Frau Gerstein received two reports attached to the letter of 26 May 1945, one in French, the other in German. It should be remembered that this letter and its enclosures were not received until the spring of 1946. Since we are convinced, if not certain, that T III is not authentic, we formulate a hypothesis: the sentence written by Gerstein in his last letter dated 26 May was sufficiently imprecise to allow an attachment substitution. If Gerstein had written to his wife "go to the Military Governor with the handwritten report in French that I am enclosing," there would have been no ambiguity. But Gerstein did not specify the language in which the document was written. We suspect that manipulators attached T III to the letter of 26 May 1945, and that this maneuver is the origin of what H. Rothfels calls the "fortunate circumstance that a German parallel version to the key document in French PS-1553 was found." The manipulators did not, however, destroy the handwritten text in French (T IV); the widow received a letter accompanied by two reports, one in French (T IV), the other in German (T III).

The authors' total silence on T IV is explained by the fact that it was a superfluous, even embarrassing, document with no raison d'être. According to the official truth, in the spring of 1946, Elfriede Gerstein had received a letter from her husband, dated 26 May 1945, accompanied by a single document, written in German (T III).

Gerstein's Statement on T IV

We have found information in Bielefeld (LKA) that confirms our hypothesis; it is contained in a document bearing the classification Bestand 5, 2 Nr. 14, Fasc 1 (see p. 377). It consists of questions put to Frau Gerstein and her answers; the text is typed on white paper without a header or signature, making it impossible to identify the person asking the questions.

We asked the Obersturmführer's widow for clarification on this point. In a letter dated 30 June 1982, she replied that she had been questioned by the Tübingen court on 16 February 1961, at the request of the State of Israel, as part of the Eichmann Trial.

Here is one of the questions the widow was asked to answer:

> *"What does Frau Gerstein know about the coming about of the French text (Rottweil, 26 April 1945)* […]*?"*

Frau Gerstein's reply, translated into English:

> *"Attached to my husband's last letter (handwritten), from which I am giving an extract below, was a handwritten report in French – without signature – with which he probably wanted to make it easier for me to translate his report written in German, to serve as a model for the French Military Governor; it bears the date 6 May 45."*

Frau Gerstein's sentence is not very clear in German; our translation, which we have tried to be as faithful as possible, is not clear either. This lack of clarity reflects the widow's perplexity. She was asked about a French text dated 26 April 1945, but Frau Gerstein did not have this text. At the end of the interrogation, she asked for a copy to be sent to her (this is PS-1553 – T II).

The widow only has a text in French dated 6 May 1945. She found attached to her husband's last letter a document in German, consisting of 24 half-pages, plus 8 half-pages of supplements. She is convinced – and her conviction is certainly being reinforced – that this comprehensive German account is the report announced in her husband's letter. Confronted, moreover, with a much shorter French text, she assumed that this was the beginning of a translation of the German text. The interruption in the translation could be explained by a lack of time on the part of the Obersturmführer. Indeed, on that same 26 May, he had to leave Rottweil abruptly to be transferred near Lake Constance.

It has to be said that Frau Gerstein, having studied French as a student, could perhaps – as her husband was well aware – have completed the translation for the French military governor in Tübingen.

However, Frau Gerstein's assumption does not provide a valid explanation, as the two texts are too different from each other for one to appear as the beginnings of a translation of the other. For Frau Gerstein, the presence of T IV next to T III as an attachment to her husband's last letter seems inexplicable. For us, on the contrary, it is the presence of T III next to T IV that intrigues us. It reinforces our suspicion that T III is not authentic, and that its alleged discovery in the spring of 1946 is a deception.

6. Military Justice Interrogations

There is no reason to question their authenticity. They were conducted according to the usual rules: each page is initialed, and the signatures of those present at the interrogation appear at the bottom of the last page.

7. Article Published in *France-Soir* on 4 July 1945

We lack all the information we need to examine the authenticity of the document presented to us in facsimile. On the other hand, it seems superfluous to analyze the content of the article. How can we distinguish, on the one hand, what Gerstein actually wrote in this new, unknown text of his "confessions," and, on the other, what the journalist made of it?

8. Lawyer Request

The authenticity of this handwritten and signed text is hardly questionable. At the very most, one might be surprised to find it written in capital letters. Gerstein's handwriting was difficult to decipher. Perhaps he wanted to be more legible.

9. Fragments of Documents Found after Gerstein's Death

As these document fragments have disappeared, it would be pointless to question their authenticity.

Chapter III: Veracity of the Texts

General Remarks

For Gerstein's "confessions" to be of any interest, they would have to be demonstrably true. This is why the chapter on their veracity is so important.

Chapter I established the rigorous accuracy of the texts; this work had to be done because, time and again, very unfaithful reproductions of these texts were given; under these conditions, it became increasingly difficult, even impossible, to distinguish between faithful and unfaithful reproductions.

Chapter II attempted to determine the authenticity of each version of the "confessions."

Chapters I and II paved the way for Chapter III.

The "confessions" of the former SS officer constitute one of the keystones, perhaps even the principal one, of the edifice built by authors who assert the indisputable existence of homicidal gas chambers in National-Socialist concentration camps. Such a keystone must have the quality, recognized by all, of a historical document. Do Kurt Gerstein's "confessions" have this indisputable quality? This is the question that historians and researchers cannot avoid answering.

In the course of this thesis, and particularly in the "Comments" field of our comparative tables, we have expressed our doubts and drawn attention to various implausibility. We would now like to address the question as a whole. It may be useful to recall the main points of the "confessions" as they are found in each of the versions, despite a few variations. We therefore exclude any supplements that do not exist in either T I or T II.

What Does Kurt Gerstein Say in his "Confessions"?

Which Version is the Most Authentic?

Our Choice:
Of the six known versions of the "confessions," we have chosen the typewritten text in French dated 26 April 1945, designated PS-1553, hence the text we call T II.

Our Reasons:

– T II is the most complete of the three texts, whose material authenticity is the least questionable. At the bottom of the sixth page is Gerstein's handwritten signature.
– T II, on the other hand, is not the most complete of the six versions. It contains no supplements (*Ergänzungen*). But for us, as for H. Rothfels, the supplements represent things learned from hearsay (*Hörensagen*) to which it seems superfluous to refer.
– T II is also the best-known text in France. Although it was practically rejected by the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal on 30 January 1946, it was subsequently used in other trials in Germany, as well as in Jerusalem during the Eichmann Trial.

Our Omissions:
We've made the same omissions as in our transcript, and for the same reasons.

Summary of the "Confessions" Themselves

1. Gerstein joined the SS voluntarily in March 1941, to see what was going on there, and then reveal it to the outside world.
2. Assigned to the health and hygiene services, he helped to curb epidemics by improving disinfection in the camps. His successes earned him promotion to Untersturmführer F (specialist second lieutenant) in November 1941.
3. Despite the efforts of those who, knowing of his pre-war activities against the state, wanted him expelled from the SS, he became head of the technical disinfection service in January 1942.
4. On 8 June 1942, he was ordered to supply prussic acid to a camp in Poland, the geographical location of which was known only to the truck driver.

5. In Lublin, he was received by SS Gruppenführer Globocnik, who told him: there are three camps in operation and one in preparation. What happens in these camps is a state secret. You, Gerstein, will have two tasks:
   – disinfect very large quantities of clothing;
   – improve our gas chamber installation by replacing the exhaust gases from our old diesel engine with prussic acid.
6. He visited the Belzec, Treblinka and Maidanek camps, but not Sobibor. He points out that the three camps in operation (Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka) could exterminate a combined 60,000 people a day.
7. On the following day, 18 August 1942, he visited the Belzec Camp and saw the entire facility.
8. On 19 August 1942, he witnessed the arrival of a train of deportees, their undressing, the handing over of valuables, the cutting of women's hair, the cramming of around 750 people standing upright in a chamber 25 m² in area and 45 m³ in volume, and their agony when the Diesel started up after 2:49. Through a small window, he observed all the details of this agony, which lasted 32 minutes, stopwatch in hand. He saw the corpses taken out by the Jews of the work commando, who recovered gold teeth and precious objects hidden in certain parts of the body.
9. He saw the corpses piled up in large pits next to the gas chambers; then he writes that, later, these corpses were burned in the open air, on railway tracks.
10. He estimates the number of victims at Belzec and Treblinka at twenty-five million.
11. The camp commander, Wirth, asked him not to propose to Berlin any changes to the current murder method, which he was satisfied with.
12. He writes he had the prussic acid buried, on the pretext that it had become unusable during transport.
13. On 20 August 1942, he visited the Treblinka Camp, a simple replica of Belzec, but much larger. He took part in a feast, at the end of which speeches praised the humanitarian role of the extermination camps.
14. On the Warsaw-Berlin train, he met a Swedish diplomat, Baron von Otter, to whom he revealed what he had just seen in Belzec and Treblinka.
15. He tried unsuccessfully to meet the papal nuncio in Berlin; a few months later, he saw von Otter again in the street near the Swedish embassy; he made a verbal report to Dr. Winter, secretary to the Catholic bishop of Berlin.

16. At the beginning of 1944, he received orders to purchase large quantities of prussic acid; he directed them to Auschwitz and Oranienburg, but ensured that they were used for disinfection; he had the invoices drawn up in his name, so as to have more freedom regarding the use of the product. He specifies that he carries invoices for 2,175 kg.
17. He reports on events that took place in various concentration camps that he did not visit himself.
18. He believes that Auschwitz and Mauthausen were the places where the most atrocities were committed.
19. He declares under oath that his statements are true.

Do All Authors Agree on a Reference Text for the "Confessions"?

This fundamental question is difficult to answer. Apart from revisionist historians, only Pierre Joffroy can give an unqualified endorsement. In his book (*op. cit.*, pp. 283-290), he accurately reproduces the version PS-1553 (T II), with the exception of two minor errors, as we have already pointed out.

The other non-revisionist authors have only presented extracts from the original text, which are sometimes accurate but more often distorted. It could be said that they agree on the broad outlines of the text of the "confessions," but do not stop to analyze what they call the details. For us, it is not a question of details, but of the very numerous facts that make up the very fabric of the story.

Léon Poliakov, for example, describes the cramming of 700-800 people into a gas chamber, but arbitrarily replaces the 25 m² with 93 m², and twice eliminates the 45 m³. German author Robert Neumann respects the 25 m² and 45 m³, but reduces the number of victims to 170-180 instead of 700-800. These are two extreme cases.

Historian Hans Rothfels did not distort the German text of 4 May 1945 (T III). He did, however, make some omissions, but always indicated them with explanatory notes. For example, he deleted the passage where Gerstein speaks of speeches given in Treblinka extolling the humanitarian role of the camps. He also deleted certain facts recounted by Gerstein, which are said to have taken place elsewhere than in Belzec and Treblinka: these are "hearsay" ("*Hörensagen*"), as H. Rothfels put it (*op. cit.*, p. 179, note 5). In another note, the same historian says that the figure of 25 million victims at Belzec and Treblinka mentioned in T II is unbelievable (*op. cit.*, p. 180, note 6).

Non-revisionist authors often make an identical claim both in French and German: they say that Gerstein's testimony is "essentially indisputable," which for them means that we must believe Gerstein's account without bothering to analyze the text in detail. In our view, the credibility or implausibility of the whole "confession" depends on this analysis.

For our part, we have given the six known "confessions" a very careful reading, and we have summed up a significant number of implausibilities and oddities, without claiming that our list is complete.

Improbabilities and Oddities in Gerstein's "Confessions"

1. Gerstein, who had twice been a victim of the National Socialists before the war, joined the SS voluntarily, on the recommendation of the Gestapo.
2. At Christmas 1941, Gerstein was about to be expelled from the SS, because the National-Socialist court had learned that he had joined the SS as a specialist second lieutenant (Untersturmführer F). Nevertheless, six months later, on 8 June 1942, he was given a top-secret mission: he was to transport 100 kg of hydrogen cyanide to the Belzec Camp ("confessions" of 26 April 1945, T II, and 4 May 1945, T III) or 260 kg ("confessions" of 6 May 1945, T IV, T V, T VI).
3. In Kolin, near Prague, Gerstein, who in other passages of his "confessions" claims to be so cautious because of the risk of reprisals against himself and his family, declares that he let Czech personnel at the Kolin factory know (T VI) that hydrogen cyanide was intended for the killing of people (T III, T IV and T V).
4. In Lublin, SS General Globocnik, who had never seen Gerstein or his traveling companion Pfannenstiel, immediately revealed to them the Reich's greatest secret.
5. Gerstein reports further remarks by Globocnik; these concern the three camps in operation, for which the SS general is said to have given the following details:

   – Belzec: 15,000 per day maximum.
   – Sobibor: 20,000 per day maximum.
   – Treblinka: 25,000 per day maximum.

The French manuscript versions (T I, II, IV) and the German version (T III) are identical. These figures could represent the respective totals of deportees arriving at these camps each day. In T V and T VI, however, the word "executions" is added. The latter two versions even give an average use for Belzec and Treblinka, namely 11,000 for Belzec (T V) and 13,500 for Treblinka (T VI). We have consulted the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* to find the dates of operation of the camps concerned. In the case of Belzec, it is not clear whether the extermination mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* ended on 31 December 1942, or in the spring of 1943. Did the exterminations mentioned by Gerstein take place every day? On this point, the "confessions" provide no information.

The results of our calculations are shown below.

Claimed Total Death Toll of Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka

Calculated Death Toll Following Numbers Given by Kurt Gerstein				*Encyclo. Judaica*
Belzec,[1] spring 1942 to end 1942	280 days	if 11,000 daily:	3,080,000	600,000
		if 15,000 daily:	4,200,000	
spring 1942 to spring 1943	365 days	if 11,000 daily:	4,015,000	
		if 15,000 daily:	5,475,000	
Sobibor, May 1942 to 14 Oct. 1943	530 days	20,000 daily	10,600,000	250,000
Treblinka, 23 July 1942 to 14 Oct. 1943	450 days	if 13,500 daily:	6,075,000	750,000
		if 25,000 daily:	11,250,000	
Totals		Minimum total:	23,770,000	1,600,000
		Maximum total:	31,525,000	
		Total average:	27,647,500	

The *Encyclopaedia Judaica*'s statistics appear to have no scientific basis. According to these statistics, a total of 1,600,000 people died in Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. If Gerstein's figures are to be believed, the total would be around 28,000,000, which is seventeen to eighteen times higher than the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* figure.

In a book titled *Treblinka*, a certain Jean-François Steiner wrote:

"An average of 15,000 Jews a day were gassed at Treblinka."

After reading this sentence, David Rousset was outraged and let it be known in the newspaper *Candide*, where he wrote (18 April 1966, p. 18):

[1] More-recent orthodox death-toll estimates for Belzec adopt the number given in a radio transmission by Hans Höfle: 434,508 Jews deported to B[elzec] by the end of 1942; see Carlo Mattogno, *Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2004, pp. 47-50. Editor's remark.

> *"It's obviously false. It's enough for these devil's advocates* [*i.e*. Holocaust skeptics] *to seize on this figure of 15,000 per day and show its absurdity by simple calculation to do harm that we can scarcely imagine."*

Does D. Rousset know that, according to Gerstein's "confessions," there were between 44,500 and 60,000 victims per day in three small camps in Poland – including Treblinka?

6. Of the four camps cited by Globocnik, Gerstein claims to have visited three. But in five "confessions," the unvisited camp is Sobibor, and in one "confession" (T V), it is Maidanek that he didn't see.
7. Hitler and Himmler are said to have visited Belzec on 15 August 1942. This is historically proven to be untrue (see Prof. H. Rothfels, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, April 1953, No. 2). Was the SS general boastful? Some have claimed so. Impossible, it would have been quickly discovered by Gerstein's conversations with the Belzec Camp leaders.
8. Room dimensions: In the "confessions" of 26 April 1945 (T I and T II): 4 m × 5 m × 1.90 m, hence 20 m² and 38 m³. In the "confessions" of 4 and 6 May 1945 (T III, T V and T VI): 5 m × 5 m × 1.90 m, hence 25 m² and 47.5 m³. However, engineer Gerstein writes in all his "confessions": 25 m² and 45 m³.
9. 6,700 people in 45 railway cars, *or more than 148 people per car*. Of these, 1,450 were already dead on arrival, leaving 5,250 alive.
10. A 3-4 year-old boy – apparently he alone, since Gerstein speaks only of him – hands out string to 5,250 deportees in succession to tie their shoes together.
11. Heaps of shoes 35 to 40 meters high (in most "confessions") or 25 meters high (T III). In the first case, this would mean a height of ten to twelve stories, and in the second case, seven to eight stories. How could shoes be placed at such heights? What is more, these veritable "hills" would have been visible from far and wide.
12. 700-800 people standing on 25 m², in 45 m³ (this is a constant in all versions). Can one imagine a room of this size and this volume containing around 750 people standing up against each other? Thirty people standing on 1 m² (10 sq ft)?
13. Unbelievable arithmetic (in two "confessions" of 6 May: T V and T VI). More than half are children. Average weight: 35 kg (T V) or 30 kg (T VI). So, adds Gerstein, 25,250 kg per room. Where does this precise total come from, which can be divided neither by 35 nor by 30?

14. Police Captain Wirth, head of the Belzec Camp, "thoroughly" (sic) questions Gerstein as to whether he prefers people to die in a lit or unlit room (T V and T VI).
15. Gerstein claims to be present at the gassing. He coolly consults his stopwatch. The diesel engine doesn't start. Impassive and inactive, Gerstein counts down the minutes: 50 minutes, then 70 minutes. Finally, after 2 hours 49 minutes, the diesel engine starts. He reports that after 25 minutes most of the victims are dead, after 28 minutes a few still survive, and after 32 minutes everyone is dead.

    If engineer Gerstein is so cool-headed, the calculation errors reported in Point No. 8 cannot be explained by the fact that he would have been upset. On the other hand, assuming that 700 to 800 people could be crammed on a surface of 25 m^2, they would not have been able to survive for 2 hours 49 minutes. They would have rapidly run out of oxygen. And even if they had survived, how could Gerstein, through a window, have discerned between the living and the dead in this extraordinarily compact group? Indeed, the dead could not have fallen to the ground.
16. In all the "confessions," it is written that the gassing is carried out using a diesel engine. The word "Diesel" is repeated three or four times, depending on the version, in the relevant passage. Previously, Gerstein, recounting his interview with SS General Globocnik, wrote that the latter had informed him at the start of the conversation that the gas chambers were operated with exhaust gases from an old Diesel engine. Diesel is an internal combustion engine that produces little carbon monoxide (CO), a deadly odorless gas, but a lot of carbon dioxide (CO_2), an asphyxiating gas that first makes you sick and only causes death after a long delay. It would have been more efficient to use a gasoline engine.[2]
17. Gerstein states (T V, and similar T VI): "There aren't ten people who have seen what I have seen, and who will see it. […] I am one of 5 men who have seen all these installations." And yet, in his account, Gerstein himself cites the names of people who, between 15 and 19 August 1942, either participated or witnessed the Belzec massacres. There are already more than ten for this short five-day period. They are as follows:

    – Hitler, Himmler, Dr. Linden (August 15)

[2] Editor's remark: The original has here "moteur à explosion" = internal combustion engine. However, a Diesel engine is also such an internal combustion engine. It should have been "spark-ignition engine", which sets apart a gasoline engine from a diesel engine (which is a compression-ignition engine).

– Globocnik, Wirth, Obermeyer, Heckenholt (daily)
– Pfannenstiel, Gerstein (19 August)
– anonymous people: a tall SS man with a pastoral voice who reassures the deportees about the fate that awaits them; a duty Unterscharführer (non-commissioned officer) who informs Gerstein about the use of women's hair; an SS man who, in his Low German dialect, declares that the deportees can wait naked, in the open air, at any temperature, since they are there to die anyway; SS men who whip deportees as they enter the gas chambers; a Ukrainian man who helps Heckenholt start the engine; etc.

In any case, how could mass exterminations carried out in several camps over many months have been witnessed by fewer than ten people?

18. Corpses are dumped in pits measuring 100 m x 20 m x 12 m, located near the chambers. The depth of 12 meters equals a building of 3 to 4 stories. The bodies are covered by a ten-centimeter layer of sand, with only a few heads and arms protruding. These are favorable conditions for the development of an epidemic that would not have spared the SS or their auxiliaries.
19. The number of victims at the Belzec and Treblinka camps: 25 million (T II) or 20 million (T V and T VI). These figures are implausible (see D. Rousset's opinion in Point 5).
20. Wirth suggests to Gerstein that the gassing method should remain unchanged. Thus, a simple police captain opposes the orders of an SS general, since Globocnik had instructed Gerstein to change the method.
21. In T V, Gerstein says: "What is strange is that I wasn't asked any questions in Berlin." (He repeated the same thing to Commandant Mattéi, who questioned him in Paris on 19 July 1945; he drew the following retort: "You were charged with a mission. You tell us of not having fulfilled it at all. […] on your return to Berlin, you did not report to anyone on the result of your mission. […] such things were not exactly customary in the German armed forces.")
22. He had the hydrogen cyanide buried, on the pretext that it had deteriorated during transport, and had become dangerous. It would be possible to accept Gerstein's assertion, but only if we were given details of the operation. However, during the interrogation on 19 July 1945, Gerstein specifies that he was transporting 45 bottles of hydrogen cyanide, one of which had arrived in poor condition. He adds that these 45 bottles were hidden (sic) 1,200 meters from the Belzec Camp. It must have

been no mean feat to hide 45 bottles. Gerstein claims to have been helped by the driver, whom he didn't know before, who he says belonged to the Reich Security Main Office, and whom he won't see again after their joint trip to Poland.

23. In T I, Gerstein says that, after his meeting on the train with the Swedish diplomat von Otter, he went to see him in Berlin at the Swedish Legation *once more*. In all the other "confessions," Gerstein says he saw von Otter *twice* (the diplomat remembers only once).
24. Gerstein tells us that, from the beginning of 1944, 8,500 kg of hydrogen cyanide were stored in Berlin. He provides no evidence to confirm this quantity of poison. He then goes on to speculate about the homicidal intentions of SS Sturmbannführer Günther, who would have given him the order to place these very large orders. Gerstein then goes on to review the possible categories of victims, estimating them at eight million.
25. On Gerstein's advice, hydrogen cyanide is shipped to the Auschwitz and Oranienburg camps; the Obersturmführer arranges for the acid to be used *for disinfestation only*. In none of his "confessions" does Gerstein mention having been to Auschwitz. In his interrogation on 19 July 1945, he does not list Auschwitz among the camps he visited. How could he have acted from a distance?
26. Günther planned to kill Jews walking along the Theresienstadt moats with hydrogen cyanide in the *open air*. Gerstein dissuaded Günther from going ahead with this project, which was in any case unfeasible. However, Gerstein learned that the operation had gone ahead all the same. Hydrogen cyanide, which is highly volatile, could not be used "in the open air" in this way.
27. Gerstein saw homosexuals disappear into a furnace (several thousand, in T V and T VI; several hundred, in T III) in a single day (T II, T V and T VI) or over several days (T III).
28. In Poland, it is *attested* that, to kill people, they were made to climb a blast-furnace staircase. At the top of this staircase, they were shot with a pistol, and thrown down the blast furnace (T III, T V, T VI). Can one imagine the scene? People climb one by one to the top of the "staircase"; an SS man or SS auxiliary waits at the top in the blast furnace fumes to execute them.
29. At Auschwitz, where Gerstein never went, several million children were killed by holding a wad soaked with hydrogen cyanide under their

noses (T V and T VI). The same method of killing children is mentioned in T II and T III, but there is no mention of several million.

In addition to these implausibilities and oddities, the list of which is certainly not complete, we can question the value of certain assertions which do not have the quality of eyewitness testimony. On the first day (18 August 1942), Gerstein himself tells us that he didn't see much. He only had his suspicions. The next day (19 August 1942), he claims to have witnessed the arrival of the deportees and the gassing operation. The following day (20 August 1942), he was in Treblinka, and he took the Warsaw train to Berlin in the evening.

If that was so, how can he then write [T II, similar T I, III, V, VI]: "After a few days, the bodies began to swell, and the whole thing rose by 2-3 meters by means of gas, which formed in the corpses. After a few days, when the swelling was over, the bodies fell together"?

The German historian Rothfels, on the other hand, refused to publish the supplements as a whole, as well as certain passages from the main "confession," claiming that they could only be hearsay. However, some of the extracts not published by H. Rothfels are presented by Gerstein as eyewitness accounts. For example (emphases added):

– "[…] I have *myself* seen at the Ravensbrück Camp […] experiments made on the living;" [T III]
– "At Belzec, *I had the impression* that all were really dead"; [T III Supplements]
– "I think of some *impressions* profoundly moving for me"; [*ibid.*] etc.

It is also worth noting the sentences in which Gerstein implicates two of his compatriots, Professor Dr. Pfannenstiel on the one hand, and Dr. Gerhard Peters on the other. Both of them deny having had the attitude or made the remarks that Gerstein has attributed to them. H. Rothfels has deleted all the passages disputed by the parties concerned. He quotes Professor Pfannenstiel only once in his explanatory notes, and completely avoids naming Dr. Peters, whom he simply refers to as the director of the Degesch Company. As for the rest of the "confession," it is essentially made up of what Olga Wormser-Migot calls leitmotifs "so identical to fifty other evocations – including those in Höss's Memoirs" (*op. cit.*, p. 426).

Are there Degrees of Implausibility in the Confessions" from One Version to the Next?

All versions contain a number of implausibilities and oddities that make them not credible. However, the degree of incredibility varies from version to version. There's a sort of escalation in implausibility from T I and T II to T V.

The case of T IV is very special: its main "confession" is very short, hence there are obviously fewer implausibilities; on the other hand, T IV contains supplements containing statements that are difficult to accept, statements that are found with variations also in T III, T V and T VI.

In the chapter devoted to the authenticity of the texts, in the absence of impossible-to-find evidence, a number of strong presumptions have been put forward to reinforce our hypothesis that the two German versions (T III and T VI) are textual fabrications. A relative regression in implausibility can be seen as we move from T V to T VI, and then to T III.

T VI, the version dated 6 May, broadly reproduces T V, but eliminates gross errors, sometimes bizarre details, corrects certain errors in proper nouns, and so on. Thanks to these changes, T VI was deemed worthy of inclusion in the PS series under number 2170. However, T VI was little used and, as far as we know, was never published, not even in part. T III was more carefully crafted. Its "discovery," only in the spring of 1946, gave its editors sufficient time to present a text in Gerstein's mother tongue that would less spontaneously arouse the reader's skepticism. It was T III that was first published by Hans Rothfels in 1953 (*op. cit.*, pp. 177-194), and often reprinted by other authors, both German and foreign. In France, L. Poliakov and J. Wulf's translation of T III (*Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs*) has been used quite often, most recently when François de Fontette published *Histoire de l'antisémitisme* in 1982 (Presses universitaires de France, "Que sais-je?" collection). On pages 120f., we can read excerpts from this version of 4 May 1945 (T III) – very partial excerpts, to which we will return later.

If we accept our hypothesis of text production for T III, we can identify some of the editors' intentions, which are set out below:

1. T III is in Harmony with T II on Several Points

T II (PS-1553) was already known when T III was "discovered." PS-1553 had been discussed at the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal in

January 1946, and it was hoped that there would be no obvious differences between T II and T III.

a. The order given to Gerstein to transport hydrogen cyanide to the Belzec Camp concerned 100 kg in the 26-April versions, but 260 kg in the 6-May versions. T III follows T II and mentions 100 kg.
b. Gerstein has often distorted proper names. For example, he spells the name of a ministerial advisor as Lindner, who is actually called Linden. Lindner can be read in T I and T IV (handwritten versions) and in T II (PS-1553), while T V and T VI have the correct name: Linden. T III again follows T II and mentions Lindner.

2. T III Eliminates Implausibilities

Some of the implausibilities in T II may explain why the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal refused to accept PS-1553. T III eliminates some of them.

a. Number of victims at Belzec and Treblinka: 25 million (T II) or 20 million (T V and T VI). T III cautiously offers no estimate.
b. A 3-4-year-old boy distributes strings to over 5,000 people to tie their shoes in pairs (T I, T II, T V, T VI). In T III, the 3-4-year-old boy has disappeared.
c. Gas chamber dimensions: 4 m × 5 m × 1.90 m in T II, meaning 20 m² and 38 m³ (T I, T II) and 5 m × 5 m × 1.90 m, hence 25 m² and 47.5 m³ (T V and T VI). However, all versions read: 25 m², 45 m³. T III has chosen dimensions that give an exact surface area and a fairly close volume. In this case, T III does not follow T II (PS-1553).

3. T III Mitigates Certain Implausibilities

a. Most versions refer to a pile of shoes 35 to 40 m high (10 to 12 stories). Did the editors of T III make the statement more believable by reducing the height to 25 meters? That's still 7 or 8 stories!
b. Several *thousand* homosexuals disappeared in a furnace *in a single day*, we read in four versions. In T III, several *hundred* homosexuals disappeared *in a few days*.
c. At Auschwitz, millions of children were killed by the application of a hydrogen-cyanide wad (T V and T VI). In T III, the children died in the same way, but no number is mentioned.
d. We read in T IV (supplements), in Gerstein's own handwriting: "Busy with their work, they [*two architect officers*] suddenly saw some of them moving." These were presumably corpses, and an SS Rottenführer finished them off by breaking their skulls with a round iron already at

his disposal. The grim anecdote is repeated in the supplements to T III, but "some" are reduced to "two." It's interesting to note that, in T Va and T VI, we read that these dying men were among "Thousands of corpses, most of them from typhus." Can you imagine architects and the SS walking among typhus corpses? Does Gerstein, head of the disinfection department, have a basic understanding of hygiene? Clearly, the word "typhus" has disappeared from T III.

e. Gerstein saw (T IV, supplements) a 3-year-old boy thrown into the room. In T III, the boy does not escape the room, but he is "gently pushed" into it.

The few points set out above all contribute, we repeat, to making T III not a credible "confession," but only the least incredible. This reinforces, if anything, our conviction that T III is a text carefully crafted in German from the French versions (T I, T II, T IV and T V).

Chapter IV: The Perception of Gerstein's "Confessions" by Their Readers

I. Before the Publication of the "Confessions

Until 1951, the texts written by Gerstein between 26 April and 6 May 1945 were only read by a very small number of people, mainly Allied intelligence officers, judges of various nationalities and a few journalists.[1]

For these early readers, the reality of mass extermination in gas chambers was not in doubt. Gerstein's "confessions" simply reinforced their conviction. But far from seeing the SS officer as an anti-Nazi who had taken it upon himself to reveal hitherto unknown atrocities to the outside world, these unconditional enemies of National-Socialist Germany saw Gerstein as a war criminal who had chosen an original defense strategy to exonerate himself. If they found implausibilities in the texts, probably read in haste, these implausibilities were for them additional reasons to reject the good faith of the author of the texts, albeit without contesting the authenticity of the facts exposed.

Gerstein lost his life in this adventure. His suicide is plausible, but not certain. In Germany, his Protestant family and friends do not believe in suicide. It is true that the circumstances of his death are unclear, and it's not clear why his wife wasn't informed of his death until 1948. At the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, Document PS-1553 was not accepted. In any case, it was not used. At France's insistence, only a few invoices for Zyklon B appended to the main document were taken into consideration. These invoices need to be studied in detail, both in terms of their wording and their typed presentation. They raise questions that may

[1] Among these journalists, one can name:
- Geo Kelber, writer of an article published in *France-Soir*, 4 July 1945.
- Madeleine Jacob, who in January 1946 submitted to the Assistant Prosecutor-General of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, the Frenchman Charles Dubost, photographs of the documents constituting PS-1553 (Pierre Joffroy, *op. cit.*, p. 266).

cast doubt on their authenticity. We intend to publish an analytical work on the subject.

In Tübingen, in 1950, the denazification chamber refused to rehabilitate the former SS officer. It only granted him extenuating circumstances, and classified him in a category of minor National Socialists (*Belastete*).

II. After Publication of the "Confessions"

In our introduction, we have followed the metamorphosis of the "confessions," and talked about the three authors who have each devoted a book to Gerstein's biography. At the outset of this thesis, our main concern was to identify the versions known to each of the authors, and to assess the fidelity of the complete or partial reproduction of any given document.

We would point out that L. Poliakov in France and H. Rothfels in Germany were the leaders whom most non-revisionists followed in their footsteps. As a result, L. Poliakov's followers have copied Poliakov's serious distortions of the texts, while H. Rothfels's followers have not questioned the historian's assertions that the German version of 4 May (which we have called T III) was entirely authentic, without providing the slightest proof. These same followers have repeated Rothfels's omissions. But generally speaking, their explanatory notes are less numerous and less clear, to such an extent that it is difficult for their readers to understand the reasons given by H. Rothfels. For the latter, the omissions are justified by the following two reasons:

– some passages in the "confession," and the supplements as a whole, are not eyewitness accounts, but hearsay;
– certain remarks made by Gerstein about two Germans – Prof. Dr. W. Pfannenstiel and Dr. Peters of the Degesch Company – were vigorously denied by the persons in question.

Having completed our work, established the texts, studied their authenticity and assessed their veracity, we propose to classify the authors who have dealt with the Gerstein case into three broad categories.

A. Those Who Have No Doubts

Pierre Joffroy has made himself Kurt Gerstein's hagiographer, and leads the meager band of those who are not swayed by doubt. In the course of a lengthy investigation, he has gathered numerous testimonies to the

strangeness of Gerstein's character and behavior. He sees in them the mark of sanctity, the divine seal that makes God's chosen one misunderstood by mere mortals, an exceptional being condemned to solitude on earth. As for the implausibilities contained in the "confessions," he reproduces a number of them without comment. Perhaps he didn't notice them as such?

In his book published in 1964, Helmut Franz expresses the loyalty he has retained towards his former friend Kurt Gerstein. However, he recalls on several occasions that the engineer's propensity for fixed ideas and eccentricities had often baffled him. By regretting that he had not spontaneously accepted the former SS officer's revelations, Franz gives his book the character of self-criticism.

B. Those Who Don't Believe

Paul Rassinier, the initiator to whom every historian of the revisionist school refers, was the first to be intrigued by Gerstein's strange account. He alluded to it for the first time in 1961 in his book *Ulysse trahi par les siens* (p. 112). He found it surprising that, in January 1947, the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, judging certain concentration camp doctors, should have accepted as incriminating testimony a text in which it was stated, among other things, that "the Jews were asphyxiated in groups of 700 to 800 in gas chambers that had a base area of 25 m² and a height of 1.80 m." It should be noted that Rassinier never had the original documents of Gerstein's "confessions," nor the French military justice file, which disappeared in November 1945 and was only found in 1971. Unable to carry out any personal research, he noted what newspapers, magazines and books had written on the subject, and then expressed his surprise at the astonishing variations he was confronted with. But Rassinier did not know what the former Obersturmführer had actually written. Indeed, he began by seriously doubting the document's authenticity. He made assumptions about the origin of the story, about the extortion of the "confessions," about the place and conditions of Gerstein's death, which were incorrect.

Paul Rassinier was forced to make assumptions, as his only sources of information were the books of Léon Poliakov, the publications of Hans Rothfels and a few other non-revisionist authors. One of the latter, Georges Wellers, attempted to ridicule Rassinier's errors, real or otherwise, by devoting a few pages to them in the 1977 publication of the Paris Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation in Paris, titled *La Solution finale et la mythomanie néo-nazie.* It should be noted that G. Wellers's critical study was carried out ten years after P. Rassinier's death. Relying on documenta-

tion that Rassinier was never able to consult, he re-establishes the truth on a few secondary points, but fails to achieve his main aim: to make a story credible that is incredible. As for the "liberties" taken by Léon Poliakov in the reproductions of the "confessions," he doesn't even mention them. And yet, on this point, Rassinier was absolutely right. It was Paul Rassinier who took the initiative, back in 1964, in his book *Le drame des juifs européens* (pp. 93-107), of putting face to face two publications by Léon Poliakov of an extract from PS-1553 (which we call T II):

– one from the book *Bréviaire de la haine*, 1960 edition;
– the other from *Le Procès de Jérusalem* (1961).

Already, this comparison brings to light some important and perfectly unexplained differences.

It was Paul Rassinier again who spoke out against the excessive role attributed to Gerstein in the verbal dissemination of information about the Belzec and Treblinka camps, since some claimed, without proof, that it had reached Rome. In his book *L'Opération Vicaire*, Rassinier has courageously defended the memory of Pius XII, which has been attacked in a manner we consider dishonest by Rolf Hochhuth, author of the play *The Deputy*, and by Saul Friedländer, author of the book *Pius XII et le IIIe Reich*. We mention here only the two main protagonists, who were so influential that it has become commonplace to set oneself up as a censor when questioning the Pope's attitude during the Second World War: Pius XII is acknowledged for his unreserved condemnation of racial persecution and his intervention on behalf of the Jews, but he is criticized for not having denounced the existence of homicidal gas chambers. Could he have done so on the basis of reports that, like those of Kurt Gerstein, were full of implausibilities? As nuncio to Bavaria in 1914, he had heard similar rumors from Allied war propaganda. (It should be noted that neither Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, nor any governmental authority of the countries opposing the Third Reich spoke of homicidal gas chambers). Faced with the undeniable excesses committed against civilian populations by each of the belligerents, the Pope could only protect, according to his possibilities, the millions of Catholics who existed in both camps, as well as the non-Catholics who asked for his help.

After Paul Rassinier, and because most authors had read his texts, some expressed skepticism about Gerstein's account. These were, of course, all the revisionists, such as Arthur R. Butz (*The Hoax of the Twentieth* Century, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-258), Wilhelm Stäglich (*Le Mythe d'Auschwitz*, pp. 10f.), Robert Faurisson (*Mémoire en défense*, p. 119, and *Réponse à Pierre*

Vidal-Naquet, pp. 42f.), but also other authors who, on this delicate subject, expressed a non-conformist opinion.

Thus, historian André Brissaud wrote in 1969:

> *"The testimony of SS man Kurt Gerstein, whom some would like to make a 'saint' today, is suspect to say the least, as are the very strange circumstances surrounding his 'suicide' and the 'discovery' of his diary."* (*Hitler et l'Ordre noir*, p. 456)

In 1980, in Volume III of his memoirs, writer Raymond Abellio tells us that he has read the works of Paul Rassinier and the declaration of the thirty-four historians published in *Le Monde* on 21 February 1979. Abellio adds that he knows the Faurisson affair from Serge Thion's book, *Vérité historique ou vérité politique?* He expresses his feelings on the Gerstein case in the following sentence:

> *"Kurt Gerstein is a very enigmatic character, who says he is 'horrified' by what he sees at Belzec and who, at the same time, takes out his stopwatch to time the agony of the victims, without explaining why."* (*Sol Invictus*, p. 482, note 4)

This thesis has already mentioned the nuanced point of view of historian Olga Wormser-Migot, who does not endorse the revisionist theses, but who has nevertheless asked herself "many questions about Gerstein and his confession, without succeeding in elucidating many of the obscurities" (*Le Système concentrationnaire nazi*, *op. cit.*, p. 426). A few lines further on, she adds: "personalities like Gerstein's, Sorge's and many double agents' are not easy to decipher."

For our part, we do not believe that Gerstein was a double agent. It is true that Pastor Rehling of Hagen/Westphalia, who knew Kurt Gerstein well from 1928 onwards, reported to P. Joffroy (1969, pp. 41f.) that Gerstein had boasted of spying for the Reichswehr, particularly in the Thionville region of France. But here again, no proof of this mysterious activity can be put forward. What seems much more certain is that Gerstein had no support at home or abroad during the war, and that he had no correspondents among Germany's adversaries – be they French, Anglo-Saxon or Dutch – to whom he would have reported his SS activities, and whose directives he would have followed. Gerstein, from his earliest years, felt the need to intrigue his friends by attributing to himself a role in which, moreover, he perhaps came to believe himself.[2]

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[2] The posthumous legend has taken firm root over the years. Imagine our surprise on reading an article in *Le Monde* (23/24 January 1983) signed by Jacques Nobecourt and titled: "*Berlin, 30 Janvier 1933: 'L'apocalypse en gibus'*" ("Apocalypse in a Top Hat"). We have selected the following passage from it:

But what did Gerstein's resistance to Hitler consist of?

– During the war, he told friends, pastors and diplomats about what he had seen in Belzec. Who really believed him at the time? And do we have to?
– He claims to have stopped one, or perhaps two, deliveries of hydrogen cyanide. If this is true, did he thus prevent a hypothetical homicidal action, or did he simply reduce the stock of the product reserved for disinfesting the camps in his charge?
– It's important to note that Gerstein always refers to hydrogen cyanide and never to Zyklon B.

His death – whether or not we accept the official version of suicide – in the Cherche-Midi military prison is not that of a double or triple agent, capable of calling on protectors. It is that of a loner and, for us, of a mythomaniac caught in the trap of his own game: the very judicious questions of a Cartesian-minded French investigating magistrate unsettled him to the point where he saw no other way out than death, a death as mysterious as his alleged activities within the SS had been.

We therefore do not follow Olga Wormser-Migot's hypothesis, but we note that her overall assessment is close to our own. Indeed, she writes in her thesis (*op. cit.*, p. 11, footnote):

> *"Gerstein's confession, many points of which remain obscure, including the conditions, place and time of its writing. Since the use of his confession in Rolf Hochhuth's* The Deputy*, Gerstein has emerged as a symbol rather than a historical figure."*

Since the publication of this historian's thesis, most of the points she raised are no longer obscure. On the other hand, Gerstein still appears, and even increasingly so, as a symbol.

C. Those Who Believe in the Essentials

Very few authors have failed to notice the improbabilities and oddities that riddle the former SS officer's account, but many have gone beyond it, unable to bring themselves to reject this unhoped-for testimony, unique of its kind in that it comes from within the SS and was given spontaneously,

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> *"The mass of the Germans closed ranks* [behind Hitler]. *It is a fact. The rest of Europe understood nothing of what had happened. That is another fact. But if the masses as a whole have been brought to heel, it is against one individual (Hitler) that a stand has been taken by other individuals one by one (Willy Brandt, Kurt Schumacher, Klaus von Stauffenberg, Hans and Sophie Scholl, Kurt Gerstein. – Two socialists, one officer, two students, one SS officer). Alone they have chosen their fight, and, for some, their death."*

without any physical or moral torture being inflicted on its author. What we consider inexplicable, we have tried to explain by resorting, for example, to the following arguments:

– Gerstein's behavior in everyday life was unusual. His friends, interviewed by P. Joffroy and S. Friedländer, gave many examples. Friedländer, gave numerous examples. In such circumstances, wouldn't it be natural for a "saint lost in the century" to baffle ordinary people? His story is a simple reflection of his strangeness.
– Gerstein was deeply distressed by what he had seen at Belzec in August 1942, and his physical and mental health deteriorated rapidly from then on. In April-May 1945, he would have undergone a crisis of agitation that Germany's defeat had only heightened. Is it any wonder, then, that Gerstein gave such incredible details and figures? But how, on the other hand, can we explain the precision of his timekeeping, or even the number of whips administered by this or that guard?
– Gerstein's "predominant quality was not numerical precision"; this is the explanation given by Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet (*Le Monde*, 8 March 1979, p. 30). Paradoxically, these two authors remind us a few lines later that Gerstein was an engineer (see the translation of this article starting on p. 224).

Some of those who consider the former SS officer's document to be "essentially indisputable" seem to have had no qualms about seriously altering what, for them, did not seem to be an essential point. The manipulations and fabrications of Léon Poliakov's texts have been noted throughout this thesis.

Relying on L. Poliakov, considered a specialist on the subject, many authors have taken up his distorted texts, notably Saul Friedländer and François Delpech. In Germany, Robert Neumann on the one hand and Heydecker and Leeb on the other have also replaced incredible figures with others that are less so. In our comparative tables, we have pointed out these fabrications, which are different from those of L. Poliakov.

Often, authors, perhaps perplexed by implausibilities or differences between reproductions, have simply summarized this or that passage of the "confessions" more or less correctly. These include – but are not limited to – Raul Hilberg, Lucy S. Dawidowicz, Gideon Hausner, Gerald Reitlinger, John Toland and others. All these authors, who often claim to be historians, have postulated that Gerstein's account is essentially true. They have then silenced their critical spirit, blurring at best anything that might undermine their belief.

Recently, we've even seen the application of a new and surprising method for using Gerstein's "confessions." We will give two examples from works published in 1982 and 1983.

1. François de Fontette

We reported on p. 212 the publication *Histoire de l'antisémitisme* as part of the collection "*Que sais-je?*" (No. 2039; by Presses universitaires de France), authored by François de Fontette, Honorary Dean of the Faculty of Law and Economics at Orléans, currently Professor at the Faculty of Law of the René-Descartes University (Paris-V). In his chapter V, sub-chapter 5, "*L'extermination, 'solution finale'*," subsection 3: "*Les exterminations rationalisées*," F. de Fontette uses "a single testimony, that of Kurt Gerstein, a Christian who joined the SS precisely for the sole purpose of bearing witness for the future […]" (*op. cit.*, p. 120).

F. de Fontette has thus made the same choice as the thirty-four historians who, in February 1979, endorsed a declaration on Hitler's policy of extermination published in *Le Monde* (see the translated text on p. 54). He does not indicate his source, but it is easy to recognize in the text that he partially reproduces the French translation of the German version of 4 May 1945, as given to us by L. Poliakov and J. Wulf in their book *Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs*. F. de Fontette has copied twenty-six and a half lines from page 114 of the aforementioned book. This extract describes the progression of the deportees towards the death chambers.

Then the author omits thirty-five lines, which purport to describe the gassing operation itself. At this point, F. de Fontette writes the following sentence:

"And this is the result when the operation is over."

Seventeen lines from page 115 of L. Poliakov and J. Wulf's book then follow, describing the treatment of corpses after gassing.

Certainly, in the two excerpts reproduced by F. de Fontette, which in total represent forty-three and a half lines, it's impossible to detect the slightest implausibility. The implausibilities we noted starting on our p. 205 are invisible, since they are located in the thirty-five lines that have been omitted. For our part, we do not believe that this major amputation of the text T III is due solely to chance or to a layout imperative.

2. Kogon, Langbein, Rückerl

This book, published in Germany in 1983, was later translated into French as *Les chambres à gaz, secret d'état* (Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1984). Chapter VI was written by the Israeli Yitzhak Arad, with a sub-chapter

headlined "The Gerstein Report" ("*Der Gerstein-Bericht*") on pages 171 to 174. Extracts from the German version of 4 May have been reproduced.[3] This reproduction is preceded by four lines which already contain three errors:

1. In 1942, Gerstein was Untersturmführer, not Obersturmführer;
2. He stayed at the Belzec Camp on 18 and 19 August 1942 and saw the Treblinka Camp on 20 August 1942: He was not there "in June 1942."
3. The version reproduced in part is not dated 26 May 1945, but 4 May 1945.

We point out these errors as a matter of principle, since the essential point lies elsewhere. The text proposed by Yitzhak Arad corresponds to the one published, for example, by L. Poliakov and J. Wulf in their book *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*.

The reproduction of the story begins with a line and a half, found on page 115 of the aforementioned book. This short extract is followed by omission ellipses which replace fifty-one lines.

The story resumes with four and a half lines, behind which we are confronted with new omission ellipses, which cover the evisceration of fourteen lines.

The "confession" regains its breath to reproduce eleven and a half lines; the text then stops in the middle of a sentence, neglecting the second half of the sentence; and this second half of the sentence includes one of the implausibilities noted in our review, namely the height of the pile of shoes, estimated at 25 meters, hence 7 to 8 stories, at the top of which each deportee had to place his own pair of shoes.

Having bypassed the obstacle, the author returns to the text for seven and a half lines; this time, the omission ellipses eliminate two words, namely "*ohne Prothesen*," meaning "without prostheses."

The ordeal continues and ends with twenty-two uninterrupted lines. Beyond this final passage of the narrative unfolds Gerstein's actual description of the gassing operation itself, hence the heart of the story, which the authors have completely omitted.

In this book, endorsed by the three highest non-revisionist authorities in Germany and Austria (Kogon, Langbein and Rückerl), the account they persist in calling "The Gerstein Report," is carefully purged of all unbelievable assertions: they concern the train made up of 45 carriages with

[3] Starting on p. 129 of the English edition *Nazi Mass Murder* (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven/London, 1993).

6,700 people, 1,450 of whom were already dead on arrival, which gives almost 149 people per carriage, including over thirty dead!

We have examined in detail the procedure adopted, on the one hand, by François de Fontette, and on the other by three German or Austrian luminaries in the field. This procedure leads us down an even more dangerous slope than those on which Gerstein's texts previously strayed. This time, there are no longer any manipulations to speak of, still less any fabrications. The procedure is one of broad omissions, of amputations: "pious cuts," we might call them, as we speak of "pious lies."

* * *

We translate here an article published on 8 March 1979 in *Le Monde* (mentioned by us on p. 10). It is based on a letter written by Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, meant to clarify some issues brought up by readers concerning Gerstein's "confession" as quoted in the "Declaration by Historians," which was published in *Le Monde* on 21 February 1979. (See the translation of that article starting on p. 54.) For a reproduction of this original French article, see p. 255 in the Appendix.

Concerning the Evidence of Kurt Gerstein

Readers of Le Monde *were astonished to read, in the report by Kurt Gerstein quoted in the "Declaration of the Historians" on the "Hitler Policy of Extermination" (*Le Monde*, 21 February), that, in the Belzec gas chambers, seven to eight hundred persons were crammed into an area of 25 square meters. Messrs Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, signatories of the declaration, write the following clarification:*

We have written that the account of Kurt Gerstein – an ardent Christian and member of the SS who had visited the extermination camps of Belzec and Treblinka in the month of August 1942 in performance of his duties – was 'indisputable as to the essentials.' This meant, in good French, that, as for the great majority of human testimony, one could discuss certain details of it. It is in fact clear that, in a room of 25 square meters, one can hardly cram, taking into account the number of children, more than three hundred people. This s i g n i f i e s quite simply that Gerstein was mistaken either on the dimensions of the room or the number of victims. This mistake is easily explained: precision in the matter of figures was not Gerstein's predominant quality, and he had dramatically lived his visit to Belzec.

What remains is precisely what is essential. Kurt Gerstein, SS lieutenant, chemical e n g i n e e r, charged by the SS authorities with disinfection problems, was he or was he not present on 20 August 1942, at the arrival of

a train of Jewish deportees at Belzec, and was he a witness to the extermination by carbon monoxide of these men, these women and these children? The answer is: Yes, without the slightest doubt. In his report written on 26 April 1945, Kurt Gerstein pointed out that he had been accompanied by Professor Wilhelm Pfannenstiel of the University of Marburg. Now, the latter, in testifying on 6 June 1950 at Darmstadt, while disputing certain details of Gerstein's account concerning the figures put forward by him or the role and the remarks imputed to himself, declared no less than:[4]

> *"After having cut the women's hair, the whole batch was led into a building of six chambers. To my knowledge, only four were utilized. The people were locked into the chambers where the exhaust gases of an engine were introduced. Gerstein stated that about eighteen minutes were necessary to reestablish calm inside these chambers. When the Jews were led in, the rooms were lit by electricity, and everything proceeded calmly. But, when the light went out, screams could be heard, then quieted down little by little."*

In addition, Gerstein, immediately after his visit to Belzec and Treblinka, confided in a Swedish diplomat, Baron von Otter, who reported to his government. That this latter should have waited until 7 August 1945 to communicate Gerstein's account to the Allies[5] brings into question the courage of this neutral government, not the veracity of Gerstein's account. It would be possible to give other details, but one would not wish to insist.

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4 Saul Friedländer, *Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, Paris, Casterman, 1967, page 111.

5 L. Poliakov, J. Wulf, *Le IIIe Reich et les juifs*, Paris, Gallimard, 1959, pp. 122-124.

Conclusion

Ultimately, what contribution can the present thesis make to our knowledge, if not of Gerstein, then at least of Gerstein's "confessions"? Our work is the first in-depth study to date of texts that historians and legal scholars have invoked in support of certain theses on deportation over the past thirty years. Breaking new ground in this field was difficult in some respects, and easy in others:

– *Difficult*, because we had to gather materials whose number and origin we were unaware of. Some were found in Germany, at the LKA in Bielefeld/Westphalia, others in the United States, at the National Archives in Washington, and still others in Paris, in the files of the French military justice system.
– *Easy*, because as we moved forward on virgin ground, we could harvest a wealth of previously unpublished documents.

The outcome of our research and work could, it seems to us, be described as follows:

1. Discovery of a Sixth Version of the "Confessions

In addition to the five versions that some authors have claimed to know, we have been able to add a sixth, handwritten version, dated 6 May 1945, written in French by Gerstein himself, and so short that it does not describe any gassing. This sixth version is accompanied by supplements. The whole, consisting of the main "confession" and the supplements, has never been published, nor even mentioned by any author.

2. Restoring the Original Text of Each "Confession" (Including Supplements)

The exact texts of the six versions have now been established by us, including the texts of the supplements, independent of the main "confession."

3. Examination of the Origin and Authenticity of Each Text

We have studied the origin and authenticity of each of these texts. For some of them, we have expressed certainties; for others, we have put forward hypotheses whose foundations seem solid to us. We have submitted a

dossier on the origin and authenticity of these texts to historian Alain Decaux, who devoted a television program to Gerstein in March 1983*: "Espion de Dieu."* In his book *L'Histoire en question, 2*, A. Decaux opined that our demonstration was convincing (*op. cit.*, pp. 309f.).

4. Examination of the Veracity of All the Texts, with a List of Their Implausibilities and Oddities.

A list of implausibilities and oddities has been drawn up in our chapter titled "Veracity of the texts." Although it is certainly not complete, we feel that it is already sufficient to cast doubt on the soundness of a document that has always been presented to us as having historical value. What's more, text comparisons from one version to the next have brought out inexplicable differences and even contradictions in our comparison tables.

5. Thanks to a Rediscovered French Military Justice File, a Few Obscure Points Are Clarified.

Consultation of the Gerstein file at the Directorate of Military Justice has enabled us to elucidate a number of obscure points, and to shed new light on the troubling disappearance of texts found in the cell of the former SS officer after his death. We were the first to uncover and make use of a file that the French military justice system recovered on 3 August 1971, more than twenty-five years after it had been relinquished.

So much for the credit side of the balance sheet. But there are also debits. It might have been that, by gathering and analyzing these documents, by hearing so many "confessions," Gerstein's personality would have become less enigmatic. But this is not the case. After this study of the texts, we need to undertake further research, particularly biographical and historical research, especially studies of eyewitness accounts. We have not dealt with testimonies collected after the war, from people who, between August 1942 and April 1945, received confidential communications from the Obersturmführer.

Our thesis was not primarily concerned with the personality of Kurt Gerstein. It was about the stories that Gerstein wrote or that are attributed to him. What attitudes can we adopt to these stories, not at first glance, but after careful reading?

The *more indulgent* will be inclined to think that Gerstein witnessed harrowing scenes, that he saw convoys of deportees arrive, among whom were a number of dead or dying people, that he saw unfortunate people being stripped naked on the orders of Ukrainian auxiliaries, that he witnessed the cutting of women's hair, that he heard the lamentations of poor

people worried about the fate that awaited them as they were pushed towards the showers or disinfestation rooms. These are the preliminaries to the story. The main part concerns the gassing operations and their aftermath. Even the most indulgent reader will find it difficult to accept this, given the abundance of physical impossibilities. He will think that Gerstein was psychologically shocked; who wouldn't have been in his place? Moreover, the witness's physical and mental equilibrium was very precarious. Diabetes sometimes provoked in Gerstein "pre-comatose states […] which would explain his absent-mindedness and some of his strange reactions" (*K. G.*, p. 152: letter of 30 September 1957 from Dr. Nissen to Gerstein's widow).

The *most ungenerous* will consider that the preliminaries of the story are already tainted with implausibility when Gerstein reports the excesses committed on civilians, which are unfortunately common in many wars. But when Gerstein, who was a scientist, gets to the heart of the matter, meaning the extraordinary invention in the technology of crime that would have been these gas chambers for gassing masses of people, the physical impossibilities he lists and repeats without realizing it, finally strip his "confession" of any probative value.

Among careful readers, the most indulgent as well as the most ungenerous would in any case be unable to affirm that the "Gerstein document" is of such quality and solidity that it can reasonably constitute the fundamental proof of the existence of homicidal gas chambers in certain camps in occupied Poland.

And yet, these stories have been retained. They have been widely used over the past thirty years. In fact, it seems to us that they are being used more and more. Is it because these "confessions" were written on his own initiative by an SS officer that they have become a centerpiece, perhaps even the keystone, of the intellectual edifice tending to prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers? We note that they are referred to as "Holy Scripture." To admit this reference, we would have to be sure that the non-revisionist authors had first checked the accuracy of the texts. Did they take this elementary precaution? Our study leads us to answer without hesitation in the negative.

Our previous chapter was devoted to the reactions of various reader categories of Gerstein's "confessions" (starting on p. 215). However, at the end of the present study, we feel that the difference in reactions is partly due to the fact that these readers did not read the same text. Many were probably only aware of the existence of a single text, and not always the

same one. A few were familiar with several texts, but if they noticed differences, or even contradictions, they always minimized them, and sometimes even hushed them up.

The obligation to establish a text before talking about it doesn't seem obvious to everyone.

At the start of our work, we had planned to present Gerstein's stories in the manner traditionally adopted for classic texts, in the Belles Lettres collection commonly known as the "*collection Budé*." The usual practice is to choose a reference text that occupies most of the printed page, and to indicate the various differences of this text at the bottom of the page, in the critical apparatus. We had to abandon our project, as the method is inapplicable in the case of Gerstein's "confessions," and this impossibility in itself gives cause for reflection on the nature of these "confessions."

Had we adopted this traditional method of reproducing texts, we might have chosen as our reference text document PS-1553, the one we call T II. We would have explained our choice on the grounds we set out on page 202, but these grounds would have been questionable. Indeed, while PS-1553 is the best-known version in France, thanks to Léon Poliakov, Saul Friedländer and Pierre Joffroy, the same cannot be said of Germany, where, among other authors, Hans Rothfels and Helmut Franz have given preference to the German version of 4 May, which we call T III. As T II and T III are very different from each other, we would have been obliged to mark these differences and add the differences in all the other texts.

Let's suppose, however, that we had arbitrarily chosen T II as our sole reference text. In this case, because of the profusion of variations, the critical apparatus would have taken up a disproportionate amount of space in the printed page in relation to the reference text. A single line from T II might have required a whole page of variations. The reader would have been lost in this abundance of notes. They would not have been able to reconstruct the complete version of any given manuscript, unless they had worked hard at it.

For this reason, we have decided to adopt the following solution:

– Typed transcriptions of the texts in their entirety, in French (here translated into English), after prior translation for the German versions and for certain supplements in English (here simply transcribed).
– Comparative tables of the main differences, supplemented by a comments field.

In 1911, in his *Manuel de critique verbale*, Louis Havet coined the expression "pathology of texts." Texts are like a living body subject to disease.

The diseases of texts are their deformations through the ages. We must try to return texts to their original form. Louis Havet shows that most deformations or malformations are due to the passage of time and the multiplicity of scholiasts, but that others may be due to the mentality or ideology of the person reproducing them. For example, Christian scholiasts had unwittingly, or sometimes deliberately, Christianized Latin texts.

Many texts have undergone a number of changes, at all periods of history. One might have thought that our age, with its considerable technical means of information and communication, would shield texts from the mishaps of the past. The case of Gerstein's "confessions" proves that this is not the case. Indeed, in their case, there is an extraordinary proliferation of manipulations and fabrications, since these took place in a very short space of time (1945-1983).

The widespread misuse of the Obersturmführer's "confessions" calls for extreme vigilance, especially in the case of texts whose content is liable to be distorted or misused for unscientific reasons.

The Fertile Spirit of Doubt

We needed a skeptic – a person who examines, doubts and reserves judgment – to study with slowness and circumspection stories that have aroused too much passion since their successive and divergent publications. Our ambition is to be that skeptic. Proceeding according to the academic methods applicable to textual criticism, we wanted to offer historians a solid basis on which to express and compare their opinions. Henceforth, each historian will be able to choose his or her text from the "confessions" with full knowledge of the facts, and will be obliged to make his or her choice clear to his or her reader: in this way, a few unfortunate misunderstandings will be dispelled.

We hope that the many questions raised by Gerstein's "confessions" will one day be satisfactorily answered. No one has yet succeeded in providing this answer, which in any case was impossible to find, as long as no one had first bothered to find out what Gerstein had really said and written.

Montaigne can be taken as a model for skeptics. In the third book of the *Essais*, we read chapter 11 titled "Of the lame" ("*Des boiteux*"). In it, the author notes that, in response to a reported fact, many people ask: "How

was it done?" But, for his part, Montaigne believes that, before asking such a question, we should first formulate an elementary question, which is: "But… was it done?" In this instance, we wanted to show what was being "done," and leave it to others to find out "how it came about."

Establishing the texts attributed to Gerstein was essential, but reading them carefully and cautiously is no less important.

As we discovered the inconsistencies, implausibilities and oddities of these accounts, a phrase from Léon Poliakov himself came to mind. In his afterword to Saul Friedländer's book, Poliakov writes: "Psychiatrists would have much to tell us about the case of Kurt Gerstein" (*K. G.*, p. 200).

Gerstein's texts were generally read with haste, without questioning their veracity "for the most part." Paul Rassinier was the first to call for particular vigilance when reading them. Inspired by Paul Rassinier's example, we have taken the liberty of going beyond the simple establishment of texts, by questioning their authenticity and veracity.

Raymond Aron, in one of his latest works (*Le Spectateur engagé*, p. 332) reports on a long interview with two journalists, then concludes:

"I didn't convince them, but I instilled in them the fertile spirit of doubt."

Gerstein's "confessions" provided a basis for the emergence of a variety of beliefs. In our opinion, this basis was untrustworthy.

We must now reread the SS officer's "confessions," without forgetting for a moment what Raymond Aron called "the fertile spirit of doubt."

40 Years Later – 2025

By Germar Rudolf

After the completion of his PhD thesis, Henri Roques wrote several pieces on the topic of his thesis, which are reprinted here in translation as Appendices V through XI. (Appendices I through IV are part of his original thesis.) Mr. Roques passed away on 16 March 2014. His legacy lives on, and we are proud to include his PhD thesis in our series Holocaust Handbooks, complementing Carlo Mattogno's comparative study of the testimonies of Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder (Volume 43 of the series). Forty years have passed since the release of Dr. Roques's thesis. During those decades, both revisionist and orthodox researchers have gained new insights into the various topics addressed in this thesis, which I will subsequently summarize.

The Disappearing Diesel Engine

In the spring of 1984, *The Journal for Historical Review* published a paper by U.S. engineer Friedrich P. Berg headlined "The Diesel Gas Chambers: Myth within a Myth," (Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 15-46). In this paper, Berg argued that it would have been physically impossible to kill anyone with Diesel-engine exhaust gases, because they do not contain enough carbon monoxide, the lethal component of combustion-engine exhaust gases.

Berg was a licensed engineer who, for most part of his professional life, was responsible for the environmental safety at a major U.S. airport. This included monitoring the air quality in tunnels and parking garages. As such, Berg was intimately familiar with the fact that, among all combustion engines, Diesel engines are the least to worry about when it comes to short-term exposure to their exhaust gases.

Although Berg's paper had appeared roughly a year before Henri Roques submitted his PhD thesis to his supervisor for review, Roques made no reference to Berg's trail-blazing paper. While he mentions, when discussing the "Improbabilities and Oddities in Gerstein's 'Confessions,'" that Diesel-engine exhaust gases contain too little carbon monoxide to kill

(see his Point 16 on page 208), this claim is not backed up by any reference.

Berg himself made a crucial mistake in his initial paper. While he was correct that Diesel-engine exhaust gases have relatively little carbon monoxide even under the worst circumstances, he ignored the fact that, under such circumstances, they also contain little oxygen. He should have combined the toxic effect of small amounts of carbon monoxide with the asphyxiating effect of low oxygen contents. He fixed that mistake in a later updated and expanded version of his paper, which is part of a revisionist anthology.[1]

So, is it possible to kill humans with Diesel-engine exhaust, or is it not? And if so, how long does it take? After all, Gerstein wrote that it took 32 minutes to kill everyone in the Belzec gas chambers. Hence, not even Gerstein claimed that it was a quick way of mass-murdering people.

To answer this question with certainty would require extensive experiments on humans, which is of course impossible. The second-best way of addressing this question is by conducting experiments with animals. In his revised paper, Berg quotes an article published in 1957 in the *British Journal of Industrial Medicine*, which reports about exactly the type of experiments needed to figure this out.[2] It was conducted on rabbits, mice and guinea pigs, using the exhaust gases of a Diesel engine run under the worst possible circumstances. The animals were placed in the chamber already filled with the toxic Diesel fumes. Although these small mammals succumb faster to toxic gases than humans due to their smaller sizes and higher breathing rates, it still took more than three hours to kill them all. To achieve the same result with humans placed inside a chamber starting out with clean air would easily take twice that time.

On the other hand, documented cases of suicides with gasoline-engine exhaust show that this takes about 20 minutes,[3] which is much closer to the time Gerstein reported.

So, did Gerstein mistake a gasoline engine for a Diesel engine? Gerstein was a mining surveyor, and had gathered experience in the mining industry

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1 F.P. Berg, "Die Diesel-Gaskammern: Mythos im Mythos" in E. Gauss (ed.), *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, Grabert, Tübingen 1994, pp. 321-345; in English, again updated and expanded, as, "Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder" in G. Rudolf, *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 4th ed., Armreg, London, 2024, pp. 421-462.

2 R. E. Pattle, H. Stretch, F. Burgess, K. Sinclair, J.A.G. Edginton, "The Toxicity of Fumes from Diesel Engine under Four Different Running Conditions," *British Journal of Industrial Medicine*, Vol. 14, 1957, pp. 47-55.

3 N.G. Flanagan, D.G. Wootton, D.K. Goff, "An unusual case of carbon monoxide poisoning," *Medicine, Science, and the Law*, Vol. 18, No. 2, April 1978, pp. 117-119.

in his early years. Diesel engines were playing a pivotal role in the German mining industry since the 1920s, because, in contrast to gasoline engines, their relatively harmless exhaust gases could be released into mining tunnels and shafts without killing anyone.[4] It must be assumed that Gerstein was familiar with this fact, and that he also knew how to distinguish a Diesel from a gasoline engine. So why would he have insisted on a Diesel engine anyway, and not just once, as his account mentions a Diesel engine explicitly many times?

For decades, orthodox scholar stubbornly ignored revisionist research on the non-suitability of Diesel engine exhaust gas for mass murder. That changed in 2011, when German toxicologist Achim Trunk, in a contribution to an orthodox anthology attempting to refute revisionist arguments, more or less embraced the revisionist stance and ditched Diesel-engine claims altogether,[5] replacing them with gasoline engines instead.[5] He thus jettisoned decades of orthodox insistence on Diesel engines laid down in numerous witness statements and court rulings, from the 1961 Jerusalem Eichmann Trial via the 1965 Munich Belzec Trial, the 1964/65 and 1970 Düsseldorf Treblinka Trials, and the 1987 Jerusalem Demjanjuk Trial centering around claimed events at the Treblinka Camp. Trunk relegated to the memory hole all Diesel claims made during these key trials.

With regards to Belzec, Trunk ignored Gerstein and switched over to the only other early witness testimony we have on Belzec that contains a description of the killing mechanism:[6]

> *"The fact that gasoline engines were indeed employed in the 'Aktion Reinhardt' extermination camp is substantiated by reliable sources. Rudolf Reder for instance, one of the very rare survivors of the Bełżec extermination camps, speaks of a gasoline engine standing in a small room near the gas chambers."*

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4 See Berg's elaborations on this in the latest, 2024 version of his paper (Rudolf, *Dissecting*, *op. cit.*). Cancer risks due to aerosols and particulate matters started causing concerns only many decades later. Since cancers takes years if not decades to kill, we ignore it here.

5 Achim Trunk, "Die todbringenden Gase," in: Günter Morsch, Bertrand Perz, (eds.), *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas: Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*. Metropol, Berlin, 2011, pp. 23-49, here p. 32; "[…] serious research does not believe at all that diesel engines were generally used at the 'Aktion Reinhardt' extermination camps."

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 34f.

Rudolf Reder

This brings us to Rudolf Reder, who indeed mentioned "a gasoline engine standing in a small room near the gas chambers," as Dr. Trunk puts it ambiguously. Note that he did not claim that this engine's exhaust gases were used to kill the claimed victims. And indeed, in his various postwar declarations, Reder repeatedly and explicitly insisted that the exhaust gases of this engine were most definitely *NOT* used to kill the victims. As the camp's mechanic asked to repair the device, he must have known what he was talking about, right?

The problem with Reder is that he has been lying through his teeth with almost anything he wrote about his stay at Belzec, as Italian historian Carlo Mattogno has shown in his already mentioned detailed comparative study.[7] Among other things, Reder claimed the following:

- He claimed that the camp covered an area of one square kilometer, and that the forest around it had been cut down to a radius of three kilometers, when in fact the camp wasn't even a tenth of this size, and air photos taken after the camp's closure show that the forest around it had not been cut down at all.
- He described the concrete-and-brick building containing six homicidal gas chambers as having measured some 100 m in length and width, hence 10,000 m² in surface area. That makes some 1,600 m² per chamber. However, archeological research has not found any trace of a footprint or any remnants of such a building.
- He claimed that Jews from all over Europe arrive at Belzec, although only Jews from Poland were deported there.
- He claimed that, on average, 10,000 to 20,000 deportees arrived daily during his four-months stay, which would result in 1.2 to 2.4 million deportees, although only just over 400,000 Jews were ever deported to Belzec in total.
- He estimated the total number of Jews killed during his 4-months stay at 3 million.
- He claimed that mass graves with a total volume of some 600,000 m³ were dug inside the camp, although archeological research after the war has demonstrated that in total only some 20,000 m³ of soil were ever *disturbed* in the camp area or its immediate vicinity. Only an (unknown) fraction of this disturbed soil could have been caused by mass graves.
- Reder claimed that "thick blood burst out of the pits and flooded the

[7] Carlo Mattogno. *Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein: Two False Testimonies on the Belżec Camp Analyzed*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2021, esp. pp. 7-88, 147-170.

whole surface," as if the blood of dead victims could explode out of their bodies and eject out of graves like geysers.
– He claimed that Himmler visited the camp in late 1942, although there is no trace of Himmler ever having set foot in that camp.
– In a camp where the old, sick and weak were allegedly constantly killed, the 61-year-old Reder miraculously survived for four months.
– Six times Reder told his story of how he managed to escape, each time with drastic contradictions to the others.

In a 2000 book, the orthodoxy's expert on the history of the Belzec Camp, Polish scholar Michał Tregenza, concluded succinctly after reviewing Reder's and Gerstein's testimonies that these "eyewitness reports on the Bełżec Camp are to be considered unreliable".[8] With that indubitably being so, what is left to determine what type of engine was used at Belzec, if any?

Barking up the Wrong Tree

Claiming that, at Belzec and Treblinka, gasoline engines were used instead of the attested-to Diesel engines merely shows that those switching away from the impossible don't know what they are doing.

During the years these camps are said to have operated as mass-murder centers employing toxic gases, Germany was awash with devices that could have killed the entire planet's population many times over. Having been cut off from almost all petroleum resources, Germany gradually switched over its transport fleet from liquid fuels to gaseous fuels using so called wood-gas generators, also called producer-gas generators. These devices smoldered wet wood, coal or coke with a limited supply of oxygen, thus generating a gas with high amounts of carbon monoxide – between 18 and 35 percent! That was roughly 100 times more than diesel engines could produce at best, and many times more than gasoline engines could generate.

This combustible gas was the gaseous fuel that was then burned in a vehicle's engine. These gas generators were mounted on vans, trucks and buses, and even on some tanks. Hundreds of thousands of them were in operation everywhere in German-controlled areas.

They were being mass-produced, and the fuel to operate them was rather cheap and almost unlimited. The highly dangerous toxicity of their fuel gas was known to every driver operating such vehicles, and also to the

[8] Michael Tregenza,"Bełżec – Das vergessene Lager des Holocaust," in: Irmtrud Wojak, Peter Hayes (eds.), *"Arisierung" im Nationalsozialismus, Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis*, Fritz Bauer Institut/Campus Verlag, Frankfurt on Main, 2000, pp. 242f.

political and military elites of the Third Reich, who pushed this technology with legislation and propaganda.

Had anyone ever considered killing people on a grand scale using carbon-monoxide fumes in remote areas, such as is claimed happened at Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka, these devices would have been perfect: they were cheap to acquire, fuel for them was abundant, their gas was extremely fast-acting, and they were easy to operate and maintain.[9]

In fact, in the early 1900s, the Germans developed a method to kill rodents (rats and mice) using a technology of this type. This Nocht-Giemsa method, named after its inventors Bernhard Nocht and Gustav Giemsa, was a rather common method before, during and after World War One to combat rodents in freight ships and storage facilities in harbors. It was later replaced by Zyklon B, which not only kills rodents, but also insects.[10]

The reason why no one ever thought of using this technology for mass murder during World War Two is because no one ever thought of killing people in masses using toxic gases. It never happened.

The orthodoxy's attempt to excise Gerstein's failing Diesel engine from the historical record and replace it with a gasoline engine is therefore not only arbitrary, it is also foolish.

Of course, Gerstein's narrative contains the implicit admission that Diesel engines were no good. According to Gerstein, his primary task was to replace the engines with something that worked faster. Specifically, he was to replace it with hydrogen cyanide, as it was presumably used at the Auschwitz Camp with great success, or so the Holocaust orthodoxy contends. Let's therefore examine closer Gerstein's assertions on this chemical.

Zyklon B versus Bottled Hydrogen Cyanide

As Henri Roques correctly observed, Kurt Gerstein never mentioned the term "Zyklon B" in any of his confessions or associated writings (see p. 220). On the other hand, Gerstein attached to his confession 12 invoices for Zyklon B he had personally ordered. So it is clear that he knew the product and what it was used for. How can we explain this discrepancy?

Zyklon B was liquid hydrogen cyanide (HCN) absorbed on a carrier material – most commonly gypsum pellets – and packaged in iron cans. It

[9] F.P. Berg goes into the details of this technology and its history in Chapter 9 of his paper on Diesel gas chambers in Rudolf, *Dissecting*, *op. cit.*

[10] Insects are not susceptible to carbon-monoxide poisoning. On the history of the Nocht-Giemsa method, see Jürgen Kalthoff, Martin Werner. *Die Händler des Zyklon B*, VSA-Verlag, Hamburg, 1998, pp. 31-36.

was one of the most-commonly used pesticides in the world until the large-scale introduction of DDT in the early to mid-1940s. It is still used to this day, albeit with only a niche market.

Zyklon B replaced other methods of releasing HCN for fumigations, among them most notably bottled liquid HCN. Releasing defined quantities of bottled HCN was difficult and, if not carefully monitored, could result in applying large overdoses. The problem with this is that mixtures of air with HCN are explosive on levels exceeding 5.6% of HCN. (See the illustrated case.) Moreover, liquid hydrogen in bottles or tanks can under certain circumstances undergo violent polymerization reactions, which can result in dangerous explosions of the transport containers. For that reason, liquid HCN was NOT filled in bottles for the end consumer anymore in Germany since the 1930s at the latest. Zyklon B had been invented *precisely* in order to circumvent these dangers.



"How to get rid of termites," Life *magazine, 22 December 1947, p. 31. A house in the U.S. wrapped up for disinfestation with hydrogen cyanide piped in from an industrial-size steel bottle.*



Same scene, a short while later: The concentration of hydrogen cyanide used was too high. One single spark, and the entire house blew up.

So how did Gerstein manage to get 45 bottles of liquid HCN, containing either 100 kg or 260 kg of the poison? (Depending on which version we are inclined to believe, if any.)

45 bottles of HCN with a total of 100 or 260 kg of HCN result in just (100÷45=) 2.2 or (260÷45) 5.8 kg of HCN per bottle. At room temperature, liquid HCN has a density of about 0.688 kg per liter,[11] which means the bottles Gerstein claims to have hauled each contained only some 3.2 or 8.4

[11] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydrogen_cyanide

liters, respectively. They would have been tiny. It can safely be excluded that such small bottles ever existed.

The Kolin factory near Prague where Gerstein claims to have picked up the bottles was one of the two factories that produced Zyklon B under a license of the DEGESCH Company. They filled liquid HCN into iron cans filled with gypsum pellets (this most-popular variant of Zyklon B was called "Erco"). They were *not* equipped – and probably not even allowed – to fill small steel bottles with that product.

In other words, Gerstein did NOT pick up 45 bottles at the Kolin factory; he did NOT haul them across Poland in a truck; he did NOT bury them near the Belzec Camp; and no one could hope to discover them there either.

Gerstein also claimed that the head of the DEGESCH Company, Dr. Gerhard Peters, had told him that they were filling liquid HCN in vials for the purpose of murdering people with this (see T I, p. 68; T II, p. 75). That never happened either.

So, did Gerstein simply pick up 45 cans of Zyklon B instead?

We know from the documentation of the Auschwitz Camp that the SS authorities in Oranienburg issued special permits to the camp to pick up by truck large quantities of Zyklon B directly from the manufacturer (in that case the *Dessauer Zuckerraffinerie GmbH*), rather than wait for the usually, time-consuming order and delivery procedure. These permits were granted on 29 July and 26 August 1942,[12] when the camp was being ravaged by a typhus epidemic causing hundreds of inmates to die every day. This pesticide was desperately needed to kill the lice, which transmit the typhus pathogen.

Gerstein claims to have picked up HCN at Kolin right between these two dates. Is that a coincidence? It stands to reason that he knew about the Auschwitz Camp's desperate attempts in those weeks to get a lot of Zyklon B very quickly, and that they were allowed to drive to the manufacturer to pick it up there directly. Gerstein's probable knowledge of these events becomes clear when we zoom out a little more and consider…

Gerstein's Wartime Role

Kurt Gerstein may have been only a (second) lieutenant, but he was no small fry when it comes to his involvement in the claimed mass extermination of the Jews.

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[12] See Carlo Mattogno, *The Real Auschwitz Chronicle*, Part 1, Castle Hill Publishers, Bargoed, UK, 2023, pp. 132, 144.

While Gerstein was no expert in mass killings, he was a recognized expert in the field of disinfection and disinfestation. In his confessions, he brags about how his colleagues considered him a genius due to his rapid successes (see T I, p. 61; T II, p. 69; T III, p. 77; T IV, p. 90). There is some truth to it, because he was indeed so well qualified in such matters that, in the foreword to the Waffen-SS Hygiene Institute's book on disinfection and disinfestation (*Entkeimung und Entwesung*), the author Walter Dötzer expressed his gratitude to Gerstein:[13]

> *"I should express my thanks to SS-Obersturmführer (F) Dipl.-Ing.* [graduate engineer] *Gerstein at this point for his advice in all technical questions."*

Hence, when planning and constructing disinfestation facilities in the SS-run camps of the Third Reich, Gerstein was one of the authorities to go to. Furthermore, as the Zyklon-B invoices prove that Gerstein attached to his "confession," he was also centrally involved in the procurement and distribution of disinfestation agents to these camps, among them first and foremost Zyklon B. His success in that field, as he put it himself, enabled him "to lower the [camp's] death toll considerably," hence save the lives of tens of thousands of inmates.

The problem with this is that the Allied victors turned that narrative upside down at war's end. They rebranded Zyklon-B disinfestation chambers as homicidal gas chambers (Majdanek, Stutthof, Sachsenhausen), and turned the proven life-saving pesticide Zyklon B into a murder weapon. Anyone involved in the installation and operation of these chambers as well as in the manufacture and distribution of Zyklon B was in the hot seat after the war.

How dangerous this was can be seen by the fate of those personalities at the top of this manufacturing and distribution chain:

– Dr. Gerhard Peters, manager of the DEGESCH Company holding the patent to Zyklon B and the Zyklon-B standard fumigation chambers sold alongside it, was put on trial in 1948/49 in Frankfurt for his role in selling Zyklon B to the SS-operated German wartime camps. The indictment was precisely based on Kurt Gerstein's "confessions" as well as the Zyklon-B invoices attached to it by Gerstein, as well as other similar documents. Sentenced initially to five years imprisonment, Dr. Peters was ultimately acquitted of all charges during his appeal in 1955, with the court ruling wisely "that Gerstein is knowingly untruthful in

[13] Walter Dötzer, "*Entkeimung, Entwesung*." in Joachim Mrugowsky (ed.), *Arbeitsanweisungen für Klinik und Laboratorium des Hygiene-Instituts der Waffen-SS*, 2nd ed., Urban & Schwarzenberg, Berlin/Vienna 1943, p. II.

many respects in this report." The verdict furthermore concluded that Gerstein had tried to minimize "his part in the implementation of the extermination program," and to make his alleged acts of sabotage appear very effective.[14]

– The top managers of the pest-control company Tesch & Stabenow that was in charge of all Zyklon-B deliveries to all German camps east of the Elbe River were put on trial by the British occupational authorities for their alleged complicity in the claimed Zyklon-B mass murders at Auschwitz. After a show trial in Hamburg in 1946 with false testimonies and misrepresented documents, the company's owner Bruno Tesch as well as his right-hand man Karl Weinbacher were sentenced to death and executed. Both insisted that they had been unaware of any homicide going on with their products, but they were not believed.[15]
– The Auschwitz garrison physician Dr. Eduard Wirths, who was in charge of all camp matters involving disinfection and disinfestation, hence was also responsible for the order and use of Zyklon B, was arrested after the war and accused of being responsible for the murder of four million inmates. He committed suicide shortly afterwards.[16]

Hence, had Gerstein fallen alive into British, Polish, Soviet or American hands, and had he not concocted a narrative portraying himself as a secret resister who tried to warn the world, his death sentence and execution would have been as certain as night follows day. Was Gerstein aware of this?

Allied propaganda on the alleged misuse of Zyklon B for mass-murderous purposes started in the summer of 1944 at the Majdanek Camp, and then expanded to the Auschwitz Camp in January/February of 1945. Gerstein wrote his narrative two months after that. Hence, it stands to reason that he knew he was going to be made a central villain of the Zyklon-B mass-murder narrative, because he *was* the central figure in the distribution of this poison to Germany's wartime camps. For the Allied propagandists, he would have been as central to that story as Adolf Eichmann was for the mass deportations to the alleged extermination camps.

Gerstein did the best he could to fudge the waters, distract from Zyklon B, Auschwitz and Majdanek, by never mentioning that product, by drawing

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[14] See Carlo Mattogno. *Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein*, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-126.

[15] See Chapter 1 and 3 in Carlo Mattogno, Friedrich Jansson, *The Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen Gas Chambers: With a Focus on British Investigations for the Tesch Trial*, 2nd ed., Armreg, London, 2024.

[16] See Part 3 on Dr. Wirths in: Carlo Mattogno, *Healthcare in Auschwitz: Medical Care and Special Treatment of Registered Inmates*, Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2016.

attention to what was presumably happening at Belzec and Treblinka precisely without the use of hydrogen cyanide, and by portraying himself as a saboteur and misunderstood martyr.

What really happened at Belzec, if he ever went there, can be gleaned from Gerstein's and Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel's actual field of expertise: hygiene. The second task Gerstein was told to tackle at Belzec had to do with clothes disinfestation. If he ever went there, that's why he and Pfannenstiel were sent there. Plain and simple.

Majdanek

In his various confessions, Gerstein lists four extermination camps, three of them already in operation, but one only under construction: Majdanek, near Lublin. He claims to have visited and "personally inspected thoroughly" this camp in addition to Belzec and Treblinka (T III, see p. 78).

The Majdanek Camp is a good object to measure the credibility of Gerstein's testimony.[17]

In the summer of 1942, the German concentration and prison-of-war camp Lublin was indeed under construction. However, it was never called Majdanek by the German authorities. This name is a diminutive of the Polish word Majdan, which is the first part of the name of a city district of Lublin, located right next to the camp: Majdan Tatarski. Hence, the local Polish population called the large camp "little Majdan – Majdanek."

Majdanek became the focus of Soviet wartime propaganda in July of 1944, after the Red Army had conquered the Lublin area. In a propaganda blitz of hitherto unparalleled proportion, the Soviets, speaking of "Majdanek," claimed that 2 million prisoners had been murder in that camp during the war, many of them in seven homicidal gas chambers using Zyklon B and bottled carbon monoxide. A Polish show trial later that year set the death toll at 1.7 million victims, and regurgitated the Soviet gas-chamber claims.

Since British and U.S. media outlets reported exhaustively in the summer of 1944 about the atrocities presumably committed at Majdanek, it stands to reason that German officials formerly involved in running this camp inevitably learned about these claims.

Over the years, the Majdanek Camp received large quantities of Zyklon B for disinfestation purposes in its various fumigation chambers. That Zyklon B was ordered via the SS sanitation headquarters in Berlin, mean-

[17] As source for subsequent statements on Majdanek, see Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek*, 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2016.

ing via Gerstein's office, just as was the case for Auschwitz. That Gerstein knew of the propaganda claims can be gleaned from the fact that he used the Polish nickname for this camp, as used by the Soviet propagandists, rather than the official German designation.

The problem with Majdanek is that its history has been drastically revised over the past eight decades. Its death toll has been reduced from 2 million down to 78,000, while the number of homicidal gas chambers claimed dropped from seven to merely two. More importantly, homicidal gassings are now claimed by the orthodoxy only as exceptional rather than common events, with at best a few thousand victims, and many of them not even Jews. Hence, the orthodoxy no longer claims that Majdanek was an extermination camp for the mass murder of Jews or anyone else.

If we look *critically* at the anecdotal, documental and material evidence, however, it turns out that there were no homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek at all, and that no massacres of any kind were perpetrated there.

Whether we take today's drastically revised orthodox narrative as a yardstick or the revisionist version of history, the result is the same: Gerstein had no objective justification to include this camp as one among the claimed German wartime extermination camps, on par level with Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka.

On the other hand, another location which the orthodoxy persistently includes in their litany of German wartime extermination camps on Polish soil is conspicuously missing in Gersteins "confessions": Chełmno. In contrast to all the others, that location had not played a significant role in Allied war propaganda as of the time Gerstein wrote his testimony. Investigation into that camp's history started only in June 1945.[18]

This all points to Gerstein's knowledge not stemming from his own experiences, but from Allied propaganda claims.

Gerstein's Fall from Grace

I already mentioned that the world's foremost orthodox expert on Belzec, M. Tregenza, basically ditched Gerstein's account in 2000 as unreliable. The once preeminent orthodox Holocaust scholar Raul Hilberg quoted Gerstein six times in his opus magnum, *The Destruction of European Jews*, the latest edition of which appeared in 2003. A year prior to this release, Hilberg published another book titled *Sources of Holocaust Research: An Analysis* (Ivan R. Dee, Chicago, 2002). The book discusses a wide range of

[18] For details on this camp, see Carlo Mattogno, *Chelmno: A German Camp in History and Propaganda*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2017.

crucial evidence on the Holocaust, and is even at times critical about some of it. However, the reader will search in vain for the name of Kurt Gerstein. As Henri Roques shows in Appendix VII on French historian Alain Decaux, Tregenza and Hilberg aren't the only mainstream scholars who have ditched Gerstein altogether. In his letter exchange with French mainstream historian Prof. Dr. François Furet, his German colleague Prof. Dr. Ernst Nolte observed in 1996 that Kurt Gerstein is "no longer included in the bibliography of orthodox researchers" (see p. 472).[19] Gerstein has been quietly erased from the roster of witnesses the orthodoxy relies on. Dr. Roques's thesis is the root cause for this.

The real dynamite of the present book is hidden in its very last Appendix, but it is rather understated, and it is not put in the context of a crucial statement in Gerstein's "confessions" that seems to have evaded everyone's attention. In all versions of his confessions, he describes how he ordered hydrogen cyanide from the DEGESCH Company in his own name, ostensibly in order to "be somewhat free about the disposition and to better make the toxic acid disappear" (T I, p. 68; similar in T II, III, V and VI). Right after this claim, he furthermore stated that he "never paid for the delivery" (*ibid*.). As a reason why he didn't pay, he claims in T II that he did this "to avoid reimbursement and to remind the SD of this stock" (see p. 75; similar in T III, see p. 85; T V, see p. 105; T VI, see p. 120).

The problem here is that, while the invoices were made out in his name, the invoice address was that of the Hygiene Institute of the Waffen SS in Berlin, and the delivery addresses were various concentration camps. Hence, DEGESCH knew well that Gerstein wasn't some private person who ordered large amounts of Zyklon B for himself (which wouldn't have been possible anyhow), but the Waffen-SS's main representative for the order of disinfestation devices and chemicals for the SS and Waffen-SS. As mentioned earlier, Gerstein was a well-recognized expert in his field, and most certainly known to Dr. Peters, the manager of DEGESCH. As Henri Roques explains in Appendix II, it took Dr. Peters almost three years to notice that Gerstein hadn't paid invoices totaling 17,000 Reichsmark (see. p. 383).

In that situation, not paying many invoices would have had the opposite effect of what Gerstein claims. Not only would DEGESCH have complained to Gerstein about these non-payments, but eventually also to his superiors and maybe even to judicial authorities. In other words, Gerstein risked attracting much more attention to the Zyklon-B orders in his name

[19] See p. 472; see also Ernst Nolte, François Furet, *Feindliche Nähe*, Herbig, Munich, 1998, pp. 74f.

by not paying for them, than by simply paying for them, and let these orders disappear in the large quantities of other Zyklon-B orders placed during the war.

17,000 Reichsmark doesn't sound like all that much, but it looks quite different when correcting it for inflation. At the outbreak of hostilities between the U.S. and Germany, the exchange rate between the two currencies was roughly 2.5 Reichsmark for a dollar.[20] If we use that rate, the 17,000 Reichsmarks equaled some 6,800 U.S. dollars. Corrected for inflation, this amounts to some 150,000 in 2025 U.S. dollars.[21]

So why did he not pay, if that could attract more attention rather than less?

That's where the revelations about Gerstein's behaviors during the war come into play. As Henri Roques explains in Appendix XI, Gerstein used the funds allocated to Zyklon-B purchases to buy rare food items for himself. In that context, he even sent a subordinate to Paris to obtain luxury food items. Gerstein also somehow managed to obtain a rather expensive painting by French expressionist artist Henri Matisse: *Le Mur Rose*, which is currently valued at about a quarter million U.S. dollars.

In other words: Gerstein embezzled large amounts of government funds for his private luxurious lifestyle.

Now we understand why he made out these invoices in his name: This way, they wouldn't end up in the Hygiene Institute's accounting department, but on his desk, where he could intercept them. Since the money allocated for these orders had already been paid out to him, but then misappropriated for his personal needs, he could not allow the invoices to be presented for payment again, because then he would have been found out.

Embezzling large amounts of government funds was not a minor issue during these days. In fact, Himmler had repeatedly threatened any member of the SS and Waffen-SS with the death penalty for this kind of corruption. SS-Obersturmführer Gerstein must have been aware of this.

In his "confessions," he transmogrified his criminal activities into acts of sabotage and resistance, disgracefully wrapping them into an invented story that catered to the propaganda narrative then pushed by Allied authorities and the mass media.

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[20] https://marcuse.faculty.history.ucsb.edu/projects/currency.htm

[21] https://www.in2013dollars.com/us/inflation/1940?amount=6800

Wilhelm Pfannenstiel

Later in this study, in the post-thesis Addendum to Appendix IV on Wilhelm Pfannenstiel (starting on p. 405), the reader will encounter a letter written by Dr. Pfannenstiel where he lays out his opinion why gassings with Diesel-engine exhaust gases would have been perfectly feasible within the time frame suggested by Gerstein in his "confessions."

Dr. Pfannenstiel was a physician. In his letter, he discusses engine mechanics and exhaust-gas toxicology.

Would you entrust your health assessment to your car mechanic?

If not, why would you trust a physician assessing your car's exhaust-gas features?

Pfannenstiel's "napkin" math on the ability to gas people with Diesel-engine exhaust gases is ludicrous for many reasons, the two most evident of which are:

1. The claim that the air inside the chamber "must contain at least 17% gas to become toxic" is nonsense, because Diesel-engine exhaust is not toxic enough for the claimed execution time (32 minutes) even at 100% exhaust gas.
2. The amount of engine exhaust produced within a certain period of time does not result from the engine's maximum power output, and only to some degree from its fuel consumption, which would have been unknown to Pfannenstiel to begin with. The actual volume of gas mainly depends on the engine's displacement volume (unknown in this case) and the speed it is run on (revolutions per minute), which is also unknown.

The issue here is not so much to show that Pfannenstiel is wrong, but to what length of nonsensical arguments he was ready to go in order to uphold his own belief that Gerstein's account had a true core: Diesel-exhaust gassings happened. Right after the war, Pfannenstiel denied any knowledge of gassings, but after five years of illegal imprisonment due to Gerstein's "confessions" – which qualifies as torture in and of itself – he finally caved in and "confirmed" the essentials of Gerstein's narrative, which evidently was the precondition for getting released, because released he was shortly afterwards. On many occasions in courtrooms and public appearances, he was later asked *ad nauseam* to repeat his confirming story. For the sake of being left in peace, he did as he was expected to do. Then, two decades into this charade, Paul Rassinier showed up and threatened to overturn the peace Pfannenstiel had made with the orthodox narrative. Had Pfannenstiel

reverted at that point to his initial stance, he would have faced renewed persecution and possibly prosecution for "denial."

Did Pfannenstiel end up believing in the core of Gerstein's story himself? Maybe. This wouldn't have been the first case of False-Memory Syndrome, and it most certainly wasn't the last.[22]

Supplement

By Yvonne Schleiter

A close collaborator of Professor Faurisson, who has followed the history of this Nantes thesis closely (having typed it, with its 12.50 m of tables, at a time when computers were not yet accessible), provides us with two pieces of information that do not appear in this book:

Genesis of the Thesis

Henri Roques was disgusted by the following incredible statement by 34 French historians, which appeared in *Le Monde* on 21 February 1979, and was largely based on the testimony of SS officer Kurt Gerstein:

> *"It is not necessary to ask oneself how, technically, such a mass murder was possible. It was technically possible because it took place. Such is the obligatory point of departure for all historic inquiry on the subject. It concerns us simply to recall this truth: there is not, there cannot be, any debate on the existence of the gas chambers."*

As a spontaneous reaction to this incredible statement, Henri Roques picked up the phone and (for the first time, it seems) called my brother Professor Dr. Robert Faurisson to tell him that he wanted to do something for him. It was then that the professor suggested to him to embark on a critical study of Gerstein's testimonies.

Defense of the Thesis

Henri Roques's thesis was largely finished by the end of 1983,[23] but Prof. Rougeot (1938-2021) could not bring himself to form a jury to defend it, having been dissuaded from doing so by his friend Joseph Rovan (1918-

[22] I have elaborated on the False-Memory Syndrome in the context of Holocaust witnesses in my *Lectures on the Holocaust*, 4th ed., Arnreg, London, 2024, pp. 363-374); see also Elisabeth Loftus, "Creating False Memories," *Scientific American*, Vol. 277, No. 3, 1997, pp. 70-75; *idem*, Katherine Ketcham, *The Myth of Repressed Memory*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1994; David F. Bjorklund (ed.), *False-Memory Creation in Children and Adults*, Lawrence Erlbaum Ass., Mahwah, N.J., 2000.

[23] Editor's remark: This explains why Roques did not cite F.P. Berg's 1984 study on Diesel-engine exhaust gas.

2004). But Prof. Rougeot didn't have the courage to tell Henri Roques that he wished to withdraw, and Henri Roques waited… and waited… An unbearable wait.

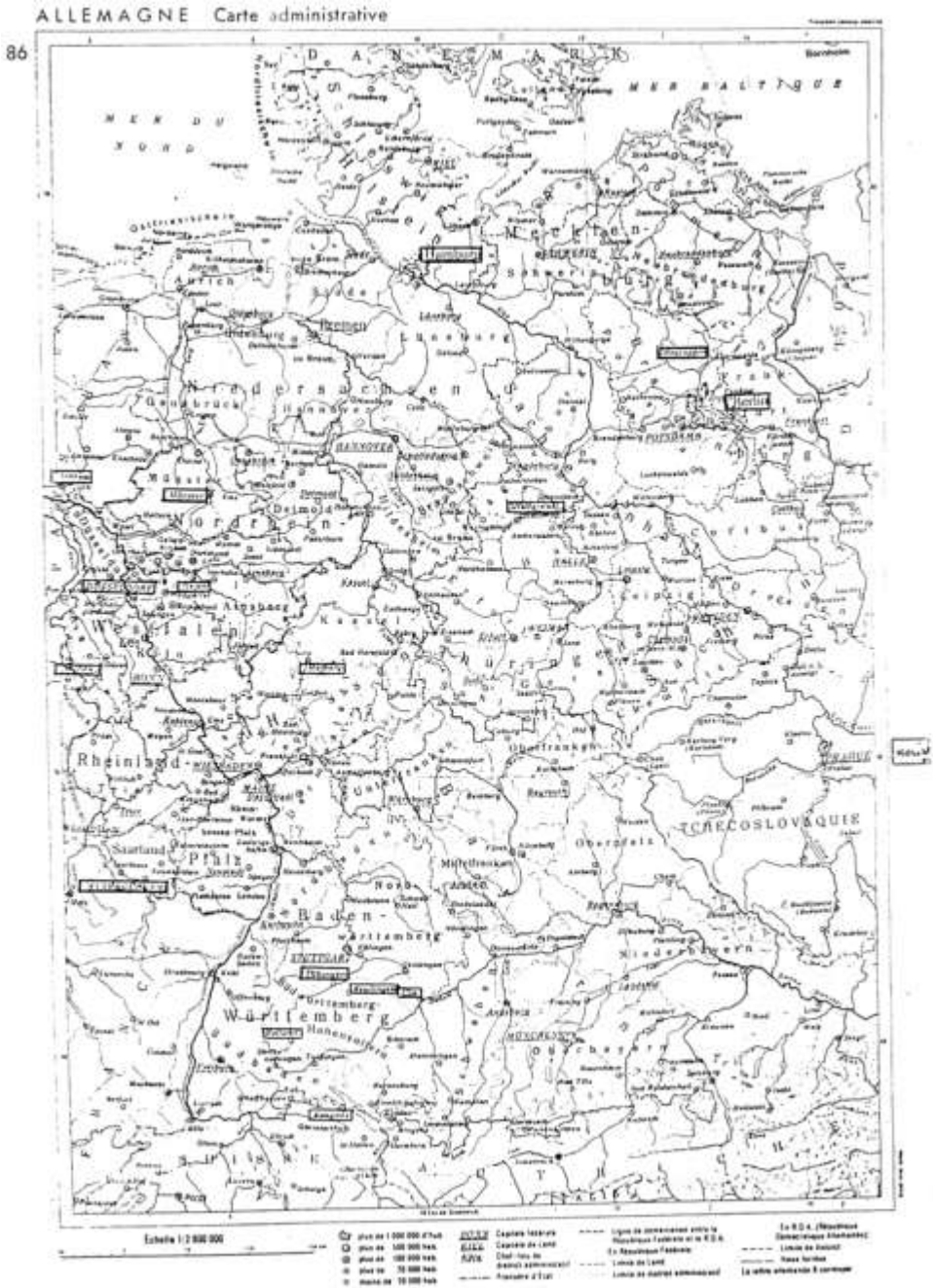
It was during a forum held at the Hotel Nikko in Paris at the end of 1984, where I had the opportunity to speak to Prof. Rougeot and Dominique Jamet, that I managed, with great difficulty, to corner Prof. Rougeot in the hotel's men's restroom (sic), and to get him to admit that he was no longer looking for a jury for this thesis and never would! I pointed out that he could have had the courage to say so earlier, and told him that Henri Roques had cancer. I remember the content of his despicable reply, which I'll summarize as follows: "Well, good for him!"

It was only then that Henri Roques realized that he couldn't wait any longer, and had the idea of turning to Prof. Rivière in Nantes, asking Rougeot to withdraw, much to the latter's relief.

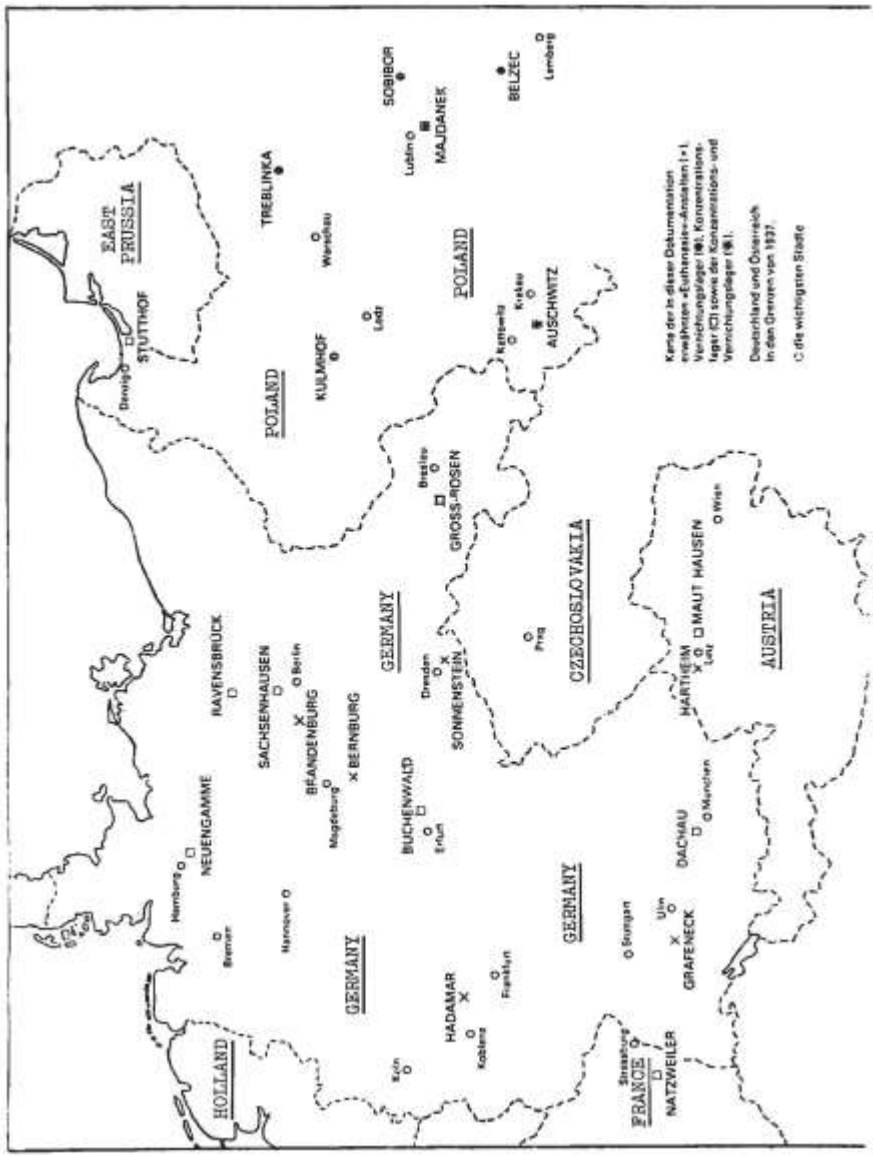
Appendices

Appendix I: Document Reproductions

Map of West and Central Germany, Relevant Towns Marked



Map of Germany (1937), Major Camps and Euthanasia Towns



Taken from Kogon, Langbein, Rückerl (German edition, 1983, p. 1)
Their legend: × euthanasia centers; • extermination camps; □ concentration camps; ◙ combined concentration and extermination camps
○ important cities

La politique hitlérienne d'extermination : une déclaration d'historiens

DEPUIS la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale, il est arrivé à maintes reprises que des publicistes, prenant parfois le titre d'historiens, aient mis en cause la véracité des témoignages sur la politique hitlérienne d'extermination. Ces témoignages avaient, en 1945, une évidence aveuglante. La grande majorité des déportés sont aujourd'hui morts. Il nous reste leurs textes et les archives du IIIe Reich, mais cette documentation n'empêche pas toujours des réflexes qui ne sont « critiques » qu'en apparence. Pour soutenir que le Zyklon B n'exterminait que les poux, il faut en réalité admettre en son for intérieur que les juifs, les Tziganes, au besoin les Slaves ou les hommes épuisés par leur travail n'étaient précisément que des poux.

Cela dit, il est naturel que la génération qui n'a pas reçu le choc de 1945 se pose aujourd'hui des questions. C'est à son usage, et non une réponse à qui que ce soit, que nous publions la présente déclaration. Nous le faisons en notre qualité d'historiens, qui ne nous donne aucun droit mais seulement un devoir, celui d'être, à travers les écoles de pensée auxquelles nous appartenons, les serviteurs de l'humble vérité, une seule mission, celle dont parlait déjà le « père de l'Histoire » : « *Empêcher que ce qu'ont fait les hommes, avec le temps, ne s'efface de la mémoire.* »

« Des animaux humains »

1. — On évalue généralement à 6 millions le nombre de juifs, à 200 000 le nombre des Tziganes, à 100 000 le nombre d'Allemands considérés comme héréditairement tarés, exterminés au cours de la guerre. Il faut y ajouter plusieurs millions de Polonais, de Russes et d'autres Slaves dont le nombre devait être artificiellement réduit, par la faim, la limitation des naissances ou l'extermination, en fonction des besoins de l'Etat SS, de son espace vital, et de son mépris pour les « sous-hommes », pour ceux que Himmler appelait les « *animaux humains* ».

A ces exterminations collectives s'ajoute l'assassinat individuel, par les méthodes les plus variées — y compris l'empoisonnement par gaz — de très nombreux déportés : Allemands antinazis, résistants des pays de l'Europe de l'Ouest — et singulièrement Français — voire prisonniers de droit commun. Certains de ces assassinats relevaient d'une décision « politique », d'autres achevaient des corps désormais incapables de travailler pour la machine de guerre nazie.

2. — La matérialité des faits est établie à la fois par le témoignage de milliers de déportés, par les documents administratifs émanant des archives du IIIe Reich et qui demeurent significatifs, même lorsqu'ils sont rédigés dans ce que Eichmann appelait l'« Amtsprache » (langage administratif), par les aveux circonstanciés des bourreaux enfin.

3. — Cette politique a connu plusieurs étapes. Dès le 1er septembre 1939, Hitler donnait l'ordre de supprimer les malades mentaux allemands qualifiés de bouches inutiles. Six centres d'extermination comprenant des chambres à gaz furent installés en Allemagne (Brandeburg, Grafeneck, Bernburg, Sonnenstein, Hartheim, Hadamar). Devant les protestations publiques du clergé allemand, Hitler fut cependant contraint en août 1941, de suspendre ce « programme d'euthanasie ».

18

En prévision de l'attaque contre l'Union soviétique, Hitler ordonnait l'extermination, dans les territoires à conquérir, des ennemis raciaux : les juifs, des adversaires idéologiques : les « commissaires » communistes, des éléments « asociaux » : les Tziganes. Cette extermination fut d'abord essentiellement le fait des détachements spéciaux, les « Einsatzgruppen ». Ils ont tué, principalement par fusillade, mais aussi à l'aide de camions comportant un dispositif permettant de gazer les occupants, un nombre difficile à évaluer d'êtres humains, peut-être deux millions. Ces méthodes entraînaient des difficultés psychologiques pour les autorités militaires et civiles, et ne furent pas appliquées en dehors du territoire soviétique, lieu par excellence de la guerre idéologique. Partout ailleurs, l'extermination fut pratiquée grâce à la création d'installations spéciales, principalement sur le territoire polonais. Au cours des premiers mois de 1942, cinq camps d'extermination, en dehors d'Auschwitz qui leur est antérieur et qui se trouvait alors sur le territoire du Reich, furent créés avec toutes les installations nécessaires, et notamment les chambres à gaz, Chelmno (1), Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka et Maidanek. Une mise en scène adéquate (camouflage des bâtiments en gare ordinaire, à l'aide d'affiches et d'inscriptions correspondantes) était destinée à donner le change aux victimes, pour prévenir les rébellions désespérées de dernière heure. Parmi tant et tant de témoignages, qui ne peuvent évidemment émaner de ceux qui ont été tués, faut-il rappeler celui du SS Gerstein qui tenta en vain d'alerter, dès 1942, les autorités civiles et religieuses sur ce qui se passait dans ces camps ? Ecrit par lui-même, le 26 avril 1945 pour les autorités françaises, dans un français hésitant, son récit, indiscutable sur l'essentiel, de ce qu'il a vu à Belzec, n'en est que plus saisissant :

« *Moi-même avec le hauptmann Wirth, police, nous nous trouvons avant les chambres de la mort. Totalement nus, les hommes, les femmes, les jeunes filles, les enfants, les bébés, les à une seule jambe, tous nus, passent. Au coin, un SS fort qui, à haute voix pastorale, dit aux pauvres : « Il » vous n'arrivera rien que vivement respirer, cela fait forts » les poumons, cette inhalation, » c'est nécessaire contre les maladies contagieuses, c'est une belle » désinfection ! » Demandé quel serait leur sort, il leur dit : « Vraiment, les hommes doivent travailler, bâtir des rues et des » maisons. Mais les femmes ne » sont pas obligées. Seulement si » elles veulent, elles peuvent aider » au ménage ou dans la cuisine. » Pour quelques de ces pauvres gens, petit espoir encore une fois, assez pour les faire marcher sans résistance aux chambres de la mort, la majorité sait tout, l'odeur leur indique le sort ! Alors ils montent le petit escalier et, voyant la vérité ! Mères, nourrices, les bébés à la poitrine, nues, beaucoup d'enfants de tout âge, nus ils hésitent, mais ils entrent dans les chambres de la mort, la plupart sans mot dire, pressés des autres derrière eux, agités par les cravaches des SS. Une juive, quarante ans environ, les yeux comme des flambeaux, cite le sang de leurs enfants sur leurs meurtriers. Recevant cinq coups de cravache au visage de la part de hauptmann de police Wirth lui-même, elle disparaît dans la chambre à gaz. Beaucoup font leurs prières, d'autres disent : « Qui est-ce qui » nous donne de l'eau pour la » mort ? » (rite israélitique ?).*

Dans les chambres, la SS presse les hommes. « Bien remplir », le hauptmann Wirth a ordonné. Les hommes nus sont debout aux pieds des autres. Sept cents à huit cents à 25 m2, à 45 m3 ; Les portes se ferment. »

Auschwitz

Exposant le 20 janvier 1942, devant une quinzaine de hauts fonctionnaires, ce qu'on appelait désormais « *la solution finale du problème juif* », le ministre de la police, Reinhard Heydrich, se contentait de dire qu'une grande partie des juifs déportés « *s'éliminera tout naturellement en raison de son état de déficience* ~~physique [illegible]~~ *subsisterait en fin de compte — et qu'il faut considérer comme la partie la plus résistante — devra être traité en conséquence* ». Il s'agissait là d'un double euphémisme : « *traiter en conséquence* » signifiait en réalité « *gazer* », et les éléments les moins résistants, les femmes, les enfants, les vieillards, furent traités en conséquence dès leur arrivée sur les lieux d'extermination.

C'est à Auschwitz que le plan nazi d'extermination fut porté à la perfection. Créé en été 1940, d'abord à l'intention des prisonniers politiques ou criminels polonais ou allemands, ce camp, ce complexe gigantesque plutôt, couvrant quelques dizaines de kilomètres carrés, devint tout à la fois un lieu d'extermination immédiate et un camp de travail aux conditions de travail spécialement inhumaines. L'espérance moyenne de vie des détenus était de six mois. C'est en juin 1941 qu'Himmler chargea Rudolf Hoess, commandant d'Auschwitz, d'y établir un camp d'extermination. Après des expériences préalables effectuées sur des prisonniers soviétiques, Hoess opta pour le gaz « Zyklon B », un produit insecticide dont se servait couramment l'armée allemande. A partir du printemps 1942 les convois de juifs de toutes nationalités, y compris les convois provenant de France, affluèrent à Auschwitz.

Dans chaque convoi, environ les trois quarts des déportés : les enfants, les vieillards, la majorité des femmes, prenaient aussitôt le chemin des chambres à gaz d'Auschwitz-Birkenau. Leurs cadavres étaient incinérés dans de vastes crématoires attenant aux installations d'asphyxie. C'est ~~également à Auschwitz~~ que furent exterminés, pendant l'été 1944, les Tziganes de nationalité allemande. C'est enfin encore à Auschwitz que furent pratiquées de nombreuses « expériences médicales » comportant la dissection in vivo d'êtres humains.

Ces pratiques se poursuivirent jusqu'au mois de novembre 1944. Sur l'ordre d'Himmler, les installations meurtrières, chambres à gaz, fours crématoires, furent alors détruites, comme avaient été détruits, un an auparavant, les équipements analogues des camps polonais — à la seule exception de Maidanek.

Le camp d'Auschwitz fut évacué devant l'avance soviétique au tout début de 1945. R. Hoess estimait le nombre des victimes à deux millions et demi de gazés, à un demi-million de morts dans le camp proprement dit ; ces chiffres sont certainement exagérés, mais il n'est pas possible d'en donner de sûrs : les SS ne comptabilisaient pas ceux qui étaient immédiatement conduits à la chambre à gaz.

(1) A Chelmno, camp créé en décembre 1941, il ne s'agit pas encore de chambres à gaz fixes, mais d'un garage abritant des « camions à gaz » semblables à ceux qui étaient utilisés en URSS par les Einsatzgruppen.

Les témoignages

4. — Un témoignage, un document, peuvent toujours être suspectés. La critique des textes est une des règles fondamentales de notre profession. Il n'est pourtant pas possible de suspecter un ensemble gigantesque de témoignages concordants, émanant de personnes de toutes les professions, de tous les niveaux d'instruction, témoignages qui, pour nombre d'entre eux, ont été produits en justice au cours de procès, où l'on a vu les magistrats, y compris les magistrats allemands, se faire de plus en plus exigeants quant à la qualité de la preuve, au fur et à mesure que l'impression d'horreur immédiate qui avait marqué la fin de la guerre s'éloignait. Faut-il préciser qu'ont témoigné tous ceux qui ont participé, à quelque niveau que ce soit, au processus d'extermination, depuis les membres du « Sonderkommando », chargés de conduire les victimes à la chambre à gaz et de dépouiller les cadavres, jusqu'au commandant d'Auschwitz en personne ?

5. — Un dernier mot pour finir. Chacun est libre d'interpréter un phénomène comme le génocide hitlérien selon la philosophie qui est la sienne. Chacun est libre de le confronter ou de ne pas le confronter avec d'autres entreprises de meurtres, antérieures, contemporaines, postérieures. Chacun est libre de se référer à tel ou tel type d'explication ; chacun est libre, à la limite, d'imaginer ou de rêver que ces faits monstrueux n'ont pas eu lieu. Ils ont malheureusement eu lieu et personne ne peut en nier l'existence sans outrager la vérité. Il ne faut pas se demander comment, *techniquement*, un tel meurtre de masse a été possible. Il a été possible techniquement puisqu'il a eu lieu. Tel est le point de départ obligé de toute enquête historique sur ce sujet. Cette vérité, il nous appartenait de la rappeler simplement : il n'y a pas, il ne peut y avoir de débat sur l'existence des chambres à gaz.

Ce texte a été signé par les historiens dont les noms suivent et qui travaillent ou enseignent au Collège de France, au C.N.R.S., dans les universités de Paris et de province, à l'Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, à l'Ecole pratique des hautes études : Philippe Ariès, Alain Besançon, Robert Bonnaud, Fernand Braudel, Pierre Chaunu, Monique Clavel-Lévêque, Marc Ferro, François Furet, Yvon Garlan, Jacques Julliard, Ernest Labrousse, Jacques Le Goff, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Pierre Lévêque, Nicole Loraux, Robert Mandrou, Claude Mossé, Roland Mousnier, Jacques Néré, Claude Nicolet, Valentin Nikiprowetsky, Evelyne Patlagean, Michelle Perrot, Léon Poliakov, Madeleine Rebérioux, Maxime Rodinson, Jean Rouge, Lilly Scherr, Pierre Sorlin, Lucette Valensi, Jean-Pierre Vernant, Paul Veyne, Pierre Vidal-Naquet, Edouard Will.

Le Monde,
21 February
1979, p. 23

Le Monde, 8 March 1979, p. 30



A propos du témoignage sur Kurt Gerstein

Des lecteurs du Monde se sont étonnés de lire, dans le rapport de Kurt Gerstein cité dans la « déclaration d'historiens » sur la « politique hitlérienne d'extermination » (le Monde, 21 février), que dans la chambre à gaz de Belzec sept à huit cents personnes s'entassaient sur 25 mètres carrés. Signataires de la déclaration, MM. Léon Poliakov et Pierre Vidal-Naquet nous adressent la mise au point suivante :

Nous avons écrit que le récit de Kurt Gerstein, qui, chrétien ardent et membre de la SS, avait, pour le compte de celle-ci, visité les camps d'extermination de Belzec et de Treblinka au mois d'août 1942, était « indiscutable sur l'essentiel ». Cela voulait dire, en bon français, que, comme pour la grande majorité des témoignages humains, on pouvait en discuter certains détails. Il est clair, en effet, que, dans une pièce de 25 mètres carrés, on ne peut guère entasser, en tenant compte du nombre des enfants, plus de trois cents personnes. Cela signifie tout simplement que Gerstein s'est trompé soit sur les dimensions de la pièce, soit sur le nombre des victimes. Cette erreur s'explique aisément : la précision en matière de chiffres n'était pas la qualité prédominante de Gerstein, et il avait vécu dramatiquement sa visite à Belzec.

Reste ce qui est précisément l'essentiel. Kurt Gerstein, lieutenant SS, ingénieur chimiste chargé par les autorités SS des problèmes de la désinfection, a-t-il, oui ou non, assisté, le 20 août 1942, à l'arrivée d'un train de déportés juifs à Belzec et a-t-il été le témoin de l'extermination à l'oxyde de carbone de ces hommes, de ces femmes et de ces enfants ? La réponse est : oui, sans le moindre doute. Kurt Gerstein, dans son rapport rédigé le 26 avril 1945, avait signalé qu'il avait été accompagné par le professeur Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, de l'université de Marburg. On celui-ci, déposant à Darmstadt le 6 juin 1950, tout en contestant certains détails du récit de Gerstein, qu'il s'agisse des chiffres avancés par celui-ci ou du rôle et des propos qui lui étaient prêtés, n'en déclara pas moins : « Après avoir coupé les cheveux » aux femmes, on conduisait tout » le chargement dans un bâti- » ment de six chambres. A ma » connaissance, quatre seulement » furent utilisées. On enferma » ces hommes dans les chambres » où furent introduits les gaz » d'échappement d'un moteur. » Gerstein constata qu'il fallait » environ dix-huit minutes pour » que le calme fût rétabli à l'in- » térieur de celles-ci. Lorsqu'on » y conduisit les juifs, elles étaient » éclairées à l'électricité et tout » se déroula dans le calme. Mais, » lorsque la lumière s'éteignit, » des hurlements se firent en- » tendre, puis s'apaisèrent peu à » peu (1). »

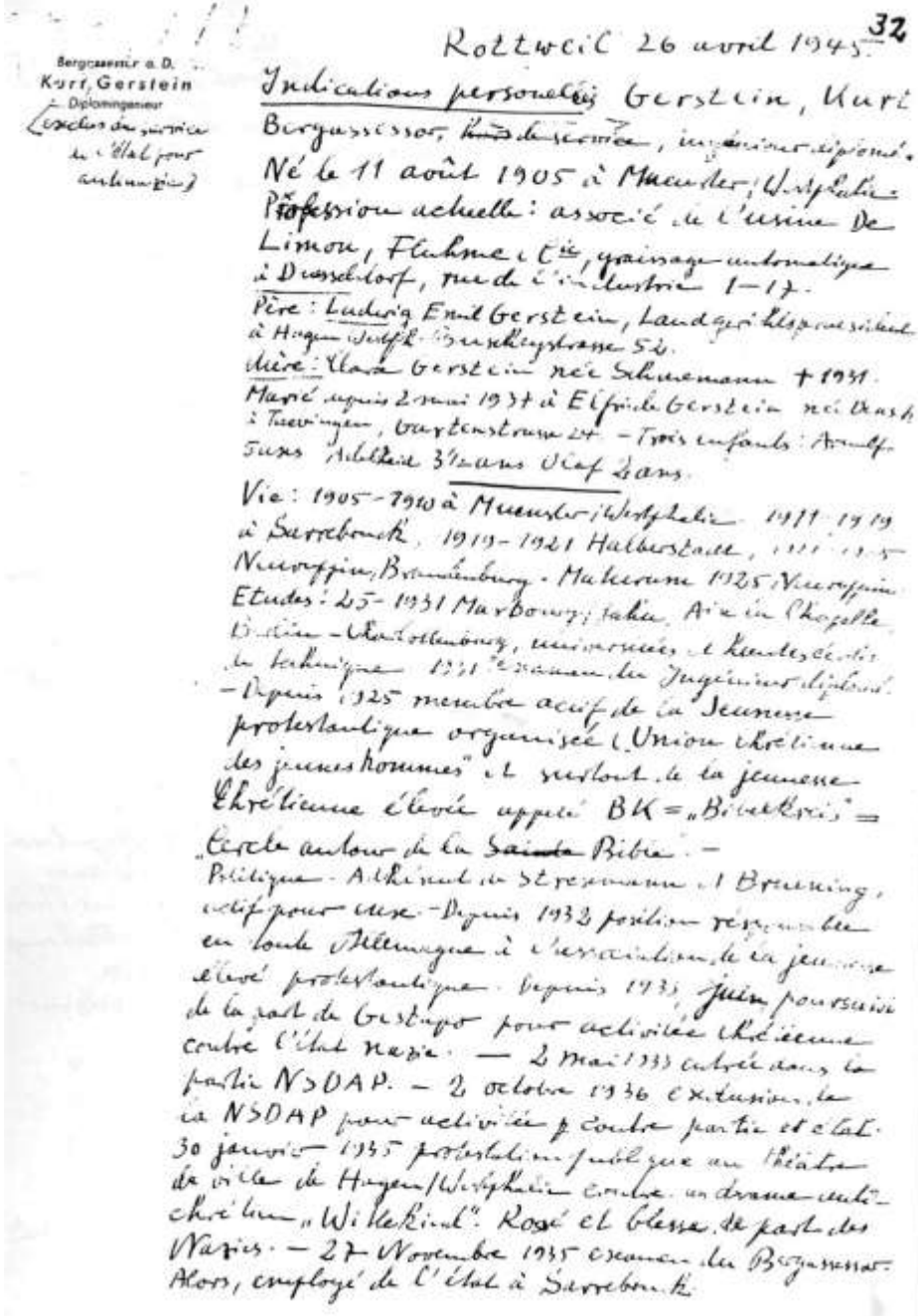
Par ailleurs, Gerstein, immédiatement après sa visite à Belzec et à Treblinka, s'était confié à un diplomate suédois, le baron von Otter, qui fit rapport à son gouvernement. Que celui-ci ait attendu le 7 août 1945 pour communiquer le récit de Gerstein aux alliés (2) met en cause le courage de ce gouvernement neutre, non la véracité du récit de Gerstein. Il serait possible de donner d'autres détails, mais on s'en voudrait d'insister.

(1) Saül Friedländer, *Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, Paris, Casterman, 1967, page 111.

(2) L. Poliakov et J. Wulf, *Le IIIe Reich et les juifs*, Paris, Gallimard, 1959, pp. 123-124.

Reproductions of the "Confessions" of Kurt Gerstein

Version of 26 April 1945: T I



Bergassessor a. D.
Kurt Gerstein
i. Diplomingenieur
(Chef des Hygiene-Dienstes der Waffen-SS)

Rottweil 26 avril 1945 32

Indications personnelles Gerstein, Kurt
Bergassessor, Ingénieur-diplômé.
Né le 11 août 1905 à Münster, Westphalie.
Profession actuelle: associé de l'usine de Limon, Fluhme & Cie, graissage automatique à Düsseldorf, rue de l'industrie 1–17.
Père: Ludwig Emil Gerstein, Landgerichtspräsident à Hagen (Westf.) Bismarckstrasse 52.
Mère: Klara Gerstein née Schünemann † 1931.
Marié depuis 2 mai 1937 à Elfriede Gerstein née Wasch à Tübingen, Gartenstrasse 24. – Trois enfants: Armgard 7 ans, Heinrich 3½ ans, Ulrich 2 ans.

Vie: 1905–1910 à Münster/Westphalie. 1911–1919 à Darmstadt. 1919–1921 Halberstadt, 1921–1925 Neuruppin, Brandenburg. Maturité 1925 Neuruppin.
Etudes: 25–1931 Marburg; Tübingen, Aix-la-Chapelle, Berlin-Charlottenburg, universités et hautes écoles techniques. 1931 1er examen des Ingénieurs diplômés. – Depuis 1925 membre actif de la Jeunesse protestante organisée (Union chrétienne des jeunes hommes) et surtout de la jeunesse chrétienne élevée appelé BK = „Bibelkreis" = „Cercle autour de la Sainte Bible". – Politique – Altkonservatif de Stresemann à Brüning, actif pour eux. – Depuis 1932 position responsable en toute Allemagne à l'association de la jeunesse élevé protestantique. Depuis 1933 juin poursuivi de la part de Gestapo pour activités chrétiennes contre l'état nazie. — 2 Mai 1933 entrée dans la partie NSDAP. – 2 octobre 1936 exclusion de la NSDAP pour activités & contre partie et état. 30 janvier 1937 protestation publique au théâtre de ville de Hagen/Westphalie contre un drame antichrétien „Wittekind": Rosé et blessé de part des Nazis. – 27 Novembre 1935 examen des Bergassessor. Alors, employé de l'état à Berlin.

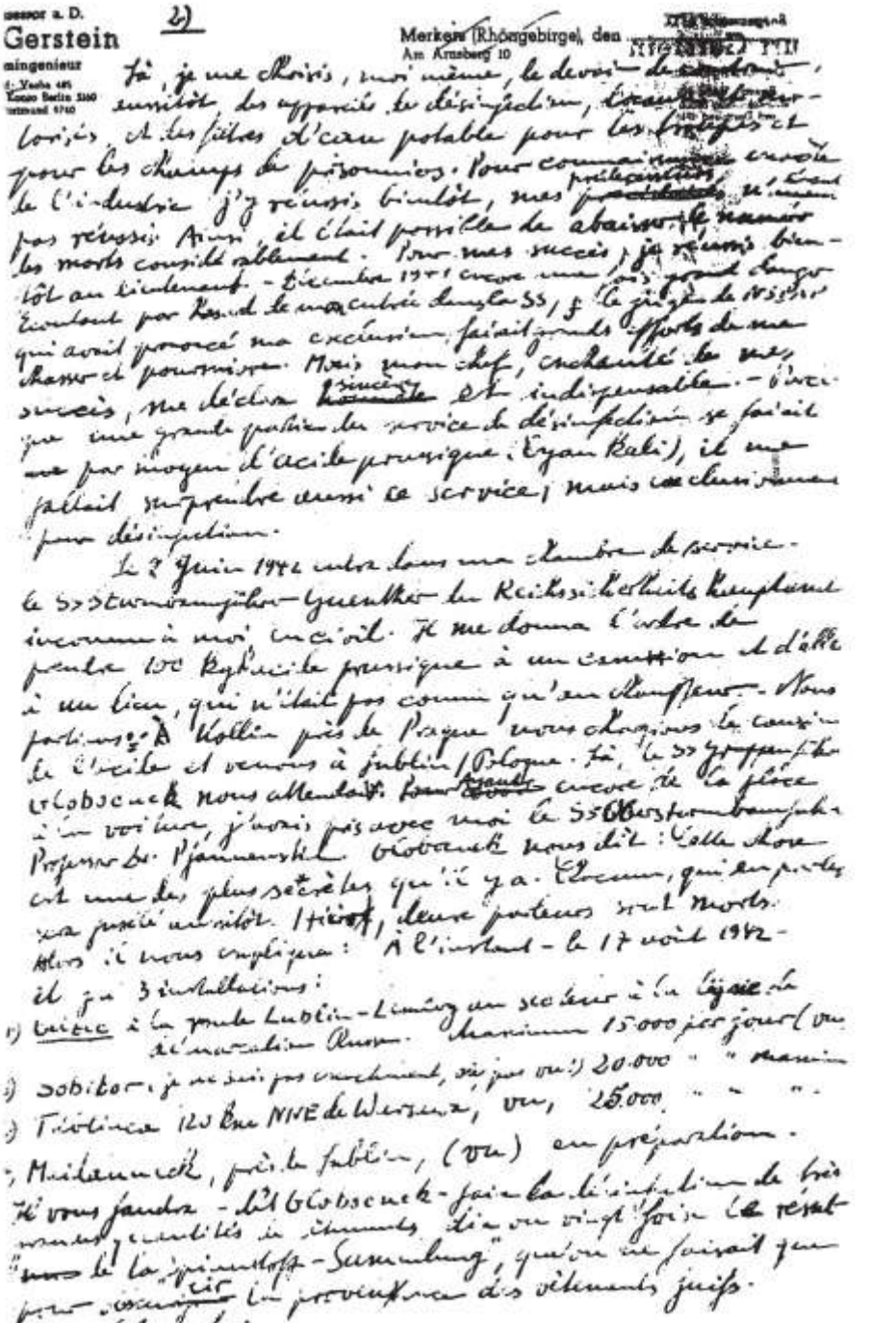
— 2 —

27 - IX. 1936 emprisonnement par la Gestapo pour „activité contre l'état" pour avoir envoyé 8.000 brochures antinazis aux hauts employés de l'état. En prison jusqu'à fin octobre 1936. Exclusion en dehors de service de l'état. — Décembre 1936 jusqu'au commencement de la guerre: études médicales à Tuebingen, institut pour mission protestantique médicale tropique.

Le tiers - environ - de mes revenues - cela faisait 1/3 de 18.000.— Reichsmark par an — j'ai donné, depuis 1931, pour mes buts idéales religieuse. J'ai fait imprimer et envoyés par poste à mes frais ca. 250.000 brochures religieuses antinazis. —

14 juillet - 28 août 1938 deuxième emprisonnement au champs de concentration Welzheim. — Ecroulement des massacres des imbécilles et aliénés, choqué et blessé dans mon intérieur, ayant tué cas dans ma famille, je n'avais qu'un seul désir: Voir, voir dans toute cette machinerie et alors: crier dans tout le peuple! — Muni de deux références des deux employés de Gestapo, ayant traités mon cas, il n'était pas difficile d'entrer dans la SS armée. — 10 mars — 2 juin 1941 instruction élémentaire du soldat à Hamburg - Langenhorn, Arnheim et Oranienburg avec 40 médecins. Pour mes doubles études — technique et médecine — je reçus l'ordre d'entrer au service médico-technique de SS Fuehrungs-Hauptamt — service sanitaire de la SS armée.

À ce lieu de service je me choisis moi-même le devoir de construire aussitôt



assessor a. D.
Gerstein
ingenieur

Merkers (Rhöngebirge), den
Am Arnsberg 10

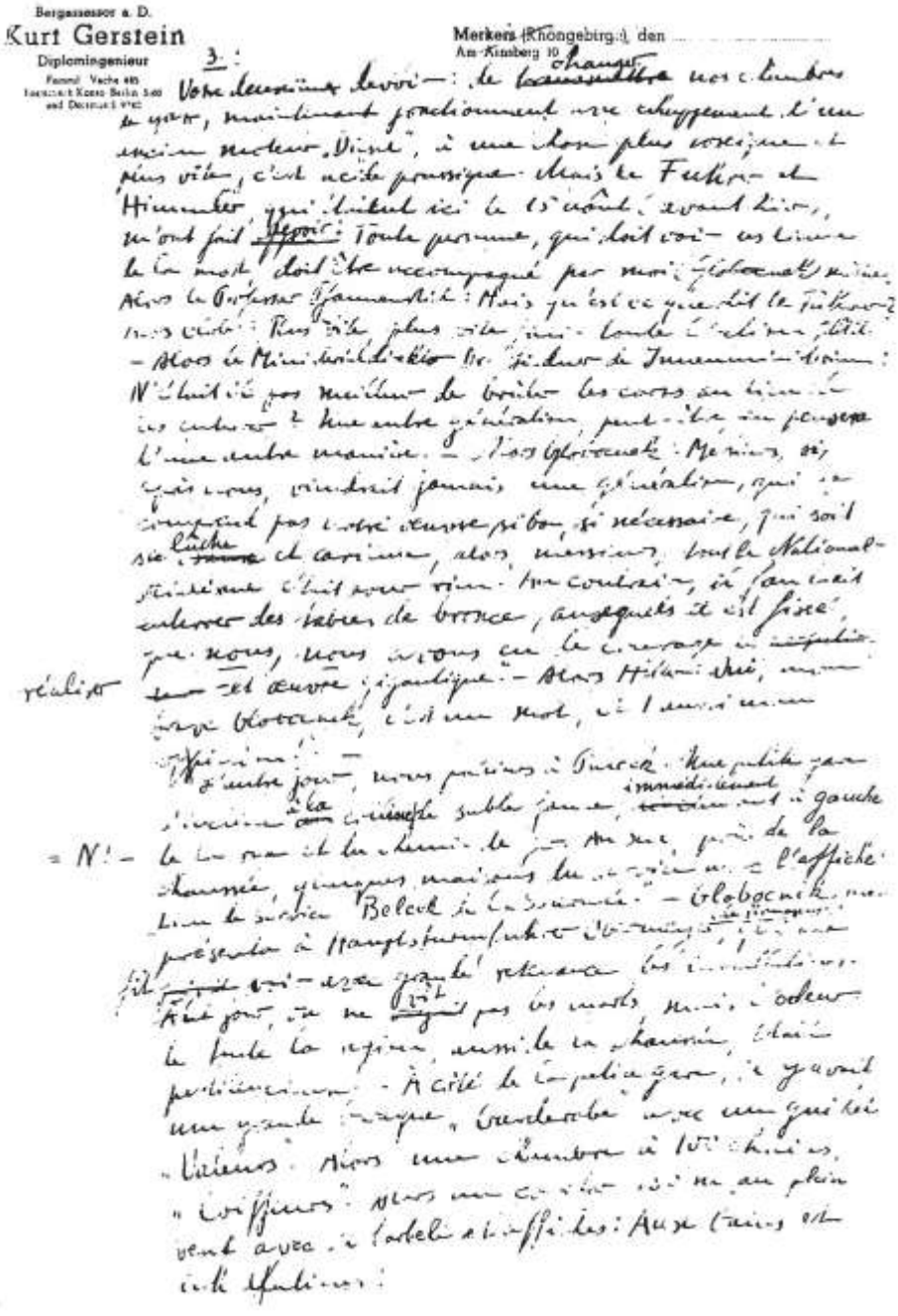
2)

Là, je me dois, moi-même, le devoir de [illegible], surtout des appareils de désinfection, d'examiner [illegible] laboratoires, et des filtres d'eau potable pour les troupes et pour les chenils de prisonniers. Pour commencer, envoie le l'i-Industrie j'y réussis bientôt, mes propositions n'étant pas révoqués. Aussi, il était possible de abaisser le nombre des morts considérablement. Pour mes succès, je reçus bientôt un licenciement. - Décembre 1941 encore une fois grand tonnerre éventuel par Kommando de macabre dans les SS, [illegible] le juge de SS et de police qui avait prononcé ma exclusion, faisait grands efforts de me chasser et poursuivre. Mais mon chef, enchanté de mes succès, me déclara [illegible] et indispensable. - Bien que une grande partie du service de désinfection se faisait ne par moyen d'acide prussique (Cyan Kali), il me fallait surprendre aussi ce service, mais ces chambres pour désinfection.

Le 2 juin 1942 entre dans ma chambre de service le SS-Sturmbannführer Guenther du Reichssicherheitshauptamt inconnu à moi encore. Il me donna l'ordre de prendre 100 kg d'acide prussique à un endroit et d'aller à un lieu, qui n'était pas connu à moi encore. Nous partîmes à Kollin près de Prague pour chercher le cyanure d'acide et revenus à Lublin (Pologne). Là, le SS-Gruppenführer Globocnik nous attendait [illegible] encore de la place à la voiture, j'avais pris avec moi le SS-Obersturmbannführer Professeur Dr. Pfannenstiel. Globocnik nous dit: Cette douche est une des plus secrètes qu'il y a. Personne, qui en parle sera puni sur-le-champ. Hitler, deux parents sont morts. Alors il nous explique: A l'intérieur - le 17 août 1942 - il y a 3 installations:

1) Belzec à la route Lublin-Lemberg au secteur à la frontière de la Russie. Maximum 15.000 par jour (ou)
2) Sobibor, je ne sais pas exactement, six jours ou) 20.000 " " maximum
3) Treblinca 120 Km NNE de Warszawa, ou, 25.000 " " "
4) Maidanek, près de Lublin, (ou) en préparation.

Il vous faudra - dit Globocnik - faire la désinfection de très grands entrepôts de vêtements. Ce sont des vingt fois la réserve "Aktion Reinhardt" - Sammlung", qu'on en faisait pour [illegible] la provenance des vêtements juifs.
Alors Globocnik:



Bergassessor a. D.
Kurt Gerstein
Diplomingenieur
Fernruf: Vache 485
Merkers (Rhongebirge), den
Am Kissberg 10

3.:

Votre deuxième devoir — : de changer nos chambres
de gaz, moyennant gracieusement une chargement d'une
ancien docteur, Viant", à une dose plus correcte et
plus vite, c'est acide prussique. Mais le Fuhrer et
Himmler, qui visitent ici le 15 août, avant hier,
m'ont fait l'honneur: Toute personne, qui doit voir les lieux
de la mort doit être accompagné par moi. Globocnik y assiste.
Alors le Professor Pfannmüller: Mais qu'est ce que fait le Fuhrer
ici à Lublin? Rien de plus simple. Lorsque l'ordre fut
- Alors le Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gerhard de Innenministerium:
N'était-ce pas meilleur de brûler les corps au lieu de
les enterrer? Une autre génération, peut-être, en pensera
l'une autre manière. - Alors Globocnik: Messieurs, si
quelqu'un viendrait jamais une génération, qui ne
comprend pas notre œuvre pieux, si nécessaire, qui soit
sic! faible de caractère, alors messieurs, toute le National-
Socialisme était pour rien. Au contraire, il faut
entrer des tables de bronze, auxquels il est fixé,
que nous, nous avions eu le courage de réaliser
cet œuvre grandiose. - Alors Hitler dit,
Globocnik, c'est un mot, c'est un
ordre:

D'autre jour, nous partons à Sobibor. Globocnik
à la
explique sublime, immédiatement à gauche
= N! - le bureau et la chambre de gaz au sous, près de la
chaussée, quelques maisons sur le côté de l'affiche
Lisez le sublime Beleuk de la Sainteté. - Globocnik me
présente à Hauptsturmführer Obersturmführer, et une
fil[illegible] voir - assez grande retenue les instructions.
Allons, ne me regardent pas les morts, mais l'odeur
de toute la région, surtout de la chaussée, était
perfide. - À côté de la petite gare, il y avait
une grande trappe, Grenzstraße avec une quelle
"Lieferung". Alors une chambre à 10 chaînes,
"Coiffeur". Alors une chambre à 10 chaînes, au plein
vent avec le tableau affiché: Aux bains et
inhalations:

—

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Kurt Gerstein
Diplomingenieur
Postscheck-Konto Berlin 3520
und Dortmund 9740

Merkenich (Rhöngebirge), den .....
Am Arnsberg 10

Autour nous une maison comme un chalet de
bois, à droite et à gauche grand port de bétons
avec grillages ou verrous, fleurs, bois sur - mesure,
un petit escalier, à droite et à gauche bois et bois,
chambres comme des garages, 4 × 5 m, 190 l'allée de
chaque côté, sortie de bois. Au bout à droite Direction
en ciment. Autour le bâtiment, inscription : Desinfektion Heil
de plus, l'après - midi, je n'ai pas vu. — Autour
matin, quelques minutes avant 7 heures, on m'appe
la : depuis 15 minutes, le train ! L'traitement, après
quelques minutes le premier train arrive de Lemberg
4 wagons, environ 6-700 personnes. 14 SS déjà sur
le mur avec des fusils mitrailleurs, grands bergers
des enfants, femmes, pleins de jeunes femmes, d'une
le train arrive : Les Ukrainiens, contrôlés
encerclent les portes de bois avec des chiens
ils chassent les hommes en dehors les, mis
Alors, un grand palan haut donne les instructions :
les plein air - quelques sous les ordres - enlève tout
le haut vêtement ; aussi parfois jusque chemise. Ils -
petit paquet, effet par un petit numéro de 3 - 4 cm,
joint ensemble les chaussures. Ouvre tout
valeur, tout argent aux guichets ouverts sans
bon, sans ticket. Alors, les femmes, les jeunes filles
aux coiffeurs - faire couper à une ou deux -
cheveux - ces cheveux, qui disparaissent dans des
grands sacs de jeunes de 3 mètres ; pour les jeunes
jeunes choses précieuses pour les sous marins et
épaisseurs fourrures chez, merci le SS Unterscharführer
service. — Alors la marche commence : à droite, le gaz
le fils barbelé, entre le train merveilleux deux cabines. Hommes
ines avec bajonets et des SS avec leur casaches de cuir
Guicide d'une jeune fille, extraordinairement belle



61 "Le Hauptsturm Wirth, ~~surveillant~~, prend sa cascade : 11, 12 coups au visage du Kerain, qui est au côté de Herkenhoff. – Après deux heures 45 minutes – le nombre stoppe à tout régime – le Diesel commence. Jusqu'à ce moment, les hommes dans les 4 chambres déjà remplis vivent, vivent, 4 fois 750 personnes à 4 fois 45 m cube !

De nouveau, 26 minutes passent : beaucoup, c'est ceux qui sont morts. On voit par la petite fenêtre, dans laquelle la lampe électrique fait voir, pour un moment, l'intérieur de la chambre. Après 28 minutes encore, peu survivent, après 32, enfin, tout est mort ! – De l'autre côté, les juifs travailleurs ouvrent les portes de bois. Ceux-ci ont pour leur service terrible, la liberté et quelques procents de la valeur. Comme des colonnes de basalte les morts sont encore debout, pas la moindre place de libre ou de s'incliner. Même morts, on connaît encore les familles, qui se tiennent encore les mains encore mortes. On a peine de les séparer, pour faire vides les chambres pour la prochaine charge. On jette les corps, bleus, humides de sueur et de l'urine, les jambes pleins de ~~sang~~ et de sang périodique. Parmi tous, les bébés, les corps des enfants. Mais on n'a pas de temps. Deux douzaines de travailleurs juifs arrachent aux cadavres les "crochets" soccupent de contrôler les bouches, qu'ils ouvrent avec des crochets "Ouvre à gauche, sans or à droite !" – Autres contrôleurs, qui cherchent pour monnaie, brillants, or. Les deux arrachent avec marteau les dents d'or, pont, couronnes. Parmi tous, le Hauptsturm Wirth. Il est à son élément, ses ~~gestes~~ prennent une grande boîte de conserve, remplie – d'extérieur il me dit: Epouses le poids de l'or, seulement d'hier et d'avant-hier ! Et vous ne croyez pas que nous trouvons par jour : les dollars, les brillants, l'or ! Nous voyez vous-mêmes : – Alors, j'ai une guide à un bijoutier juif, qui avait la responsabilité de tous ces valeurs. Un me fait encore voir un Chef de Kommando des Ostens, Berlin, qui avait des juifs tous un commando travail, et un petit homme de service. Le Chef de ce commando travailleurs juifs. C'est un capitaine de l'armée KK d'Autriche, chevalier de la croix de fer Allemand de première classe !

Alors, les corps cadavres nus jetés dans des grandes fosses de 100 x 20 x 12 mètres, situés auprès des chambres de gaz. Après quelques jours les corps se gonflaient et tout s'écroulait de 2 – 3 mètres – moyen pour le gaz, qui se formait dans les cadavres

Bergassessor a. D.
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Diplomingenieur

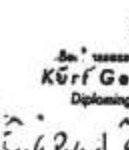
7. Après quelques jours, le gonflage fini, les corps pourrissant ensemble. Autre jour, les fosses furent remplis de nouveau et couvertes de 10 centimètres de sable.

Le Hauptmann Wirth me prie de lui proposer à Belzec quelques autres méthodes et de choisir tout, comme quelle était. Je maudis que l'acide prussique était déjà désignée pour la bonne cause et très dangereuse et d'être forcé de l'entendre [illegible] se fit aussitôt. — Autre jour, nous allions avec l'auto de Hauptmann Wirth à Treblinca, 80 km environ de Varsovie NNE. L'installation de cet Etablissement était presque la même comme à Belzec, mais plus grande encore. 10 chambres de gaz, et vrais montagnes de vêtements et de linge de 35–40 mètres d'altitude. Alors, à notre honneur on faisait un banquet avec tous les employés de la SS. Le Obersturmbannführer Professor Dr med Pfannenstiel fit une sermon: Votre œuvre, c'est un grand devoir et un devoir si nécessaire. Selon voit les corps des juifs, on comprend la grandeur de votre bon œuvre. — Le dîner lui même était simple, mais, selon l'ordre de Himmler lui même, les occupés de ce service reçoivent ce qu'ils veulent de boire, manger etc. — Au congé, on nous offre plusieurs litres de liqueur et grande nombre de bouteilles d'alcool. Moi, je fis le mensonge d'avoir assez de suite de notre forme. Pour cette raison, Pfannenstiel prit encore ma portion. — Nous allions avec l'auto à Wesser. Wegen lit déjà était parti, j'attendais l'autre train. Attendant maintenant un lit libre, je rencontrais le secrétaire de la légation Suède Baron von Otter. Tous les lits occupés nous passions la nuit au corridor sur wagon lit. Alors, sous la fraîche impression, j'ai tout raconté tout avec la prière de référer tout à son gouvernement et aux alliés. Il me demanda une référence de moi même. J'ai lui donné l'adresse de Generalsuperintendent D. Otto Dibelius, Berlin-Steglitz, Bismarckstr 2, ancien chef de l'église protestante prussienne contre le nazisme. Après quelques semaines, j'ai vu encore une fois Mr. le Comte Bernadotte à Berlin. Il me dit, qu'il avait fait son rapport au gouvernement Suède, un rapport épais, et ces mots, avait grande influence [illegible] Suède et une intervention du Saint-Père. N'avait pas grand succès

On me demanda si j'étais soûl après tout
membr a. D. Gerstein ingenieur
cet entretien. Alors, j'ai fait dire tout cela par Mr le docteur Winter, secrétaire de l'épiscopat catholique de Berlin. — En sortant de la légation de Saint-Siège à la Rauchstrasse à Berlin je me vis poursuivi par un agent de police, qui, après quelques minutes très désagréables de me suivre me quitta.

Dans mes appartements à Berlin W 15, Bundesdrogue 47 j'avais autour de moi un cercle d'antinazistes. Un des membres vint, quelque temps plus tard, avec le attaché de la presse de légation Suisse, Dr. Hochstrasser, auquel j'ai raconté, comme aux autres membres, tout ce que je savais. Autre membre de ce cercle était Mgr. le curé Buchholz, curé de prison Plötzensee, qui a accompagné au mort les officiers du 20 juillet 1944. Mgr. Buchholz et Mgr. Winnacker recevaient de mon poste (de temps à temps, régulièrement) le nombre de cigarettes et cigares et d'autres dotations d'amour. —

Il me faut encore ajouter que SS-Sturmbannführer Gunther demanda de moi de grandes fournitures d'acide prussique, (le commencement 1944) pour un dessein obscur. L'acide devait être journée à Oranienburg et Auschwitz — changé de camions. J'ai fait voyager l'acide loyalement comme décrété était, aussitôt après son arrivée, j'ai fait la disparaître pour désinfection. C'était quelquement dangereux pour moi, mais, si l'on m'avait demandé où se trouvait l'acide, j'aurais dit: elle était déjà en état de dissolution dangereuse, et c'est pour cela qu'il me fallait la consommer pour la désinfection. Je suis sûr, que Gunther, dans ses propres mots, avait l'ordre de la prendre pour, éventuellement, tuer beaucoup d'hommes. Les restes de cette fournitures ensemble 2.175 Kg, assez pour tuer quelques millions d'hommes, j'ai sur moi. Je les ai fait écrire à mon nom

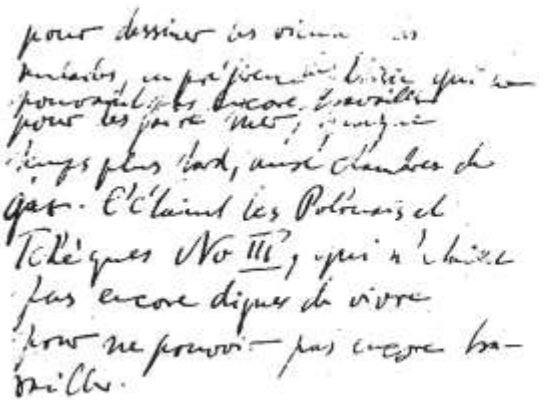


Je pour – comme j'ai dit – discrétion, en vérité pour être quelquement libre dans la disposition et pour mieux faire disparaître l'acide toxique.
Je n'ai jamais payé la livraison. Le directeur de la maison qui a fourni l'acide, m'a dit, qu'il a fourni – pour leur des Kommes – acide prussique en ampoules

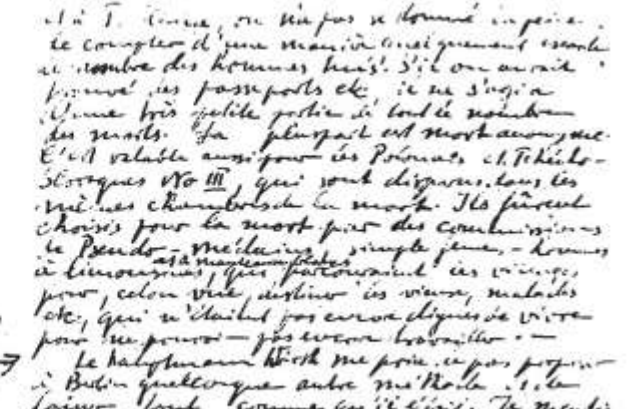
Le 22 avril 1945, j'avais attendue la prise de la ville Tübingen, Württemberg. J'avais donné le conseil aux citoyens et à la mairie de Tübingen de rendre la ville aux Français. Les habitants étaient prêts, on annonça des troupes allemandes pour venir Metzingen. Alors, j'ai passé les lignes Français et je me suis présenté, de moi même, volontaire à chez le commandant Français de la ville de Reutlingen. J'ai lui présenté mes papiers

c'est: 2 mandats d'arrêt de la Gestapo
exclusion de la partie NSDAP
référence spéciale du bureau des
docteur Martin Niemöller
papiers militaires.

Ayant éprouvés les papiers, chez le commandant de Reutlingen m'a donné un papier avec le texte suivant:
" Le titulaire n'est pas un vrai SS et ne doit pas être traité comme tel, mais, au contraire, avec tous ménagements."
C'était chez le Commandant de Reutlingen qui propose, selon mes désirs, que je serai présenté à un lieu de service qui s'intéressait de mes connaissances du nazisme et qui, peut-être, ferait usage de mon antinazisme. Malheureusement, les papiers (mandats d'arrêt de la Gestapo etc.) sont restés à Tübingen, Gartenstr. 24 un corridor de ma maison, où il me donnait était encore permis de prendre chemises, brosse à dents



pour dessiner les vieux ...
malades, ou prétendus tels, qui ne pouvaient plus encore travailler pour les forces Nat[ionales]. Quelques jours plus tard, mise à chambres de gaz. C'étaient les Polonais et Tchéques No III, qui n'étaient pas encore dignes de vivre pour ne pouvoir pas encore travailler.



et à T. Comme on n'a pas eu beaucoup de peine, le compteur d'une manière évidemment exacte le nombre des hommes tués. S'il on avait trouvé des passeports etc. il ne s'agissait que d'une très petite partie du total de nombreux morts. La plupart est mort anonyme. C'est valable aussi pour les Polonais et Tchéco-Slovaques No III, qui sont disparus dans les mêmes chambres de la mort. Ils furent choisis pour la mort par des commissions de pseudo-médecins, simple jeune, hommes à binoculaires, qui parcouraient les rangs, pour, selon vue, distinguer les vieux, malades etc, qui n'étaient pas encore dignes de vivre pour ne pouvoir pas encore travailler. —

Le Hauptsturmführer Wirth me prie, ce pas proposer à Belzec quelconque autre méthode. Il me laisse tout comme qu'il était. Je mendis — ce que j'aurais fait à tout cas! — que l'exécution prussique était bâclée [illegible] par le haut-personnel et devenue très dangereuse. Alors, je serai forcé d'enlever l'odeur — que ne soit possible. — Autre jour nous allions par l'auto du pauptsturmführer Wirth à Treblinka, 120 Km environ au Varsovie NNE. L'installation de ce lieu de mort était presque la même comme à Belzec, mais plus grande encore: 8 chambres de gaz et vrais Montagnes de vêtements et de linge de 35-40 mètres d'altitude. Alors, à notre honneur on fit un banquet avec tous les employés de la SS. Le Obersturmbannführer Dr. Pfannenstiel fit un sermon: Votre oeuvre c'est un grand devoir et un devoir si nécessaire ~~[illegible]~~ si on voit les corps des juifs. On comprend la grandeur de votre [illegible] oeuvre. J'ai moi seul, devais dit: C'est vraiment beaucoup de travail. C'est une chose très humaine etc ....)" — Hachtsturmführer même était simple. Mais, selon l'ordre de Himmler

Bericht K.G. v. 26.4.1945 (Rottweil) i.d. französischen Militärgouverneur in Französisch.
(Handschrift)

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Version of 26 April 1945: T II

Berg[illegible] Rottweil 26 avril 1945 p. 4

Kurt Gerstein.

Indications personnelles: G e r s t e i n ,Kurt,Bergassessor,exclus du service de l'état pour antinazie 1936, ingénieur diplomé. Né le 11 août 1905 à Muenster Westphalie.Associé de l'usine De Limon,Fluhme &Cie,Graissage automatique pour locomotives,frein Westinghouse,Knorr etc.,Duesseldorf, Industriestrasse 1-17. Père:Ludwig Gerstein,Landgerichtspraesident,Hagen Westf.hors de serv Mère: Clara Gerstein xxb.née Schmoumann morte 1931. Marié depuis 2 mai 1937 à Elfrie e née Bensch à Tuebingen Gartenstrasse 24 , 3 enfants Arnulf 5 ans Adelheid 3 1/2 ans Olaf 2 ans. Vie : 1905 -1911 Muenster . 1911-1919 Sarrebruck.19-21 Halberstadt 21-25 Neuruppin près de Berlin,maturum 1925.-Etudes: 1925-31 Marbourg/Lahn,Aix La Chapelle,Berlin-Charlottenburg,universités et hautes écoles de technique.1931 examen Ingénieur diplomé.-Depuis 1925 membre actif de la jeunesse protestantique organisée Union Chrétienne des jeunes hommes " et surtout de la jeunesse Chrétienne élevée appelé Bi= BibelKreis = Cercle autour de la Bible."

Politique : Adhérent de Stresemann et Bruening, actif pour eux.- Depuis 1933,juin,poursuivi de la part de Gestapo pour activités Chrétienne contre l'état nazie.— 2 mai 1933 entrée dans la NSDAP.- 2 octobre 1936 exclusion de la NSDAP pour activités contre partie et état. 30 janvier 1935 protestation publique au théatre de ville de Hagen/Westphalie contre le drame antichrétien "Wittekind - Rossé et blessé de part des Nazies.- 27 Novembre 1935 examen du bergassessor.Alors ,employé de l'état à Sarrebruck.- 27 septembre 1936 empriconnement par la gestapo pour activités contre l'état.- pour avoir envoyé 8.500 brochures antinazies aux hautes employés de l'état. En prison jusqu'à fin octobre 1936. Exclusion en dehors du service de l'état. Entre Décembre 1936 jusqu'au commencement de la guerre:études médicales à Tuebingen ,institut pour mission protestantique médicale tropique.- Le tiers -environ- de mes revenues,cela faisait 1/3 de 18.000 Reichsmark par an, j'ai donné ,depuis 1931,pour mes buts idéales réligieux. J'ai fait imprimer et envoyés par poste à mes frais ces.250.000 brochures réligieuses antinazies.

14 juillet -28 août 1938 deuxième emprisonnement au champs de concentration Welzheim. Rencontré des massacres ,des imbéciles et aliénés à Grafeneck,Hadamar etc., choqué et blessé dans mon intérieur , ayant tel une dame ma famille, je n'avais qu'un seul désir: V o i r , v o i r dans toute cette machinerie et alors crier dans tout le peuple !— Muni de deux références des deux envoyés de gestapo,ayant traité mon cas, il n'était pas difficile d'entrer dans la SS armée. 10 mars à 2 juin 1941 instruction élémentaire du soldat à Hamburg-Langenhoorn ,Arnhem et Oranienburg avec 40 médecins. Pour mes doubles études - technique et médecine- je reçus l'ordre d'entrer au service médico-technique de SS-Fuehrungshauptamt-service sanitaire de la SS armée - Amtsgruppe D,Hygiene.- A ce lieu de service , je me choisis moi même le devoir de construir aussitôt des appareils de déinfection et des filtres d'eau potable pour les troupes et pour les champs de prisonniers et de concentration.. Pour connaissance exacte de l'industrie j'y réussis bientôt- mes prédécesseurs n'étant pas réussis. Ainsi, il fût possible d'abaisser le nombre des prisonniers morts considérablement.— Pour mes succès, bientôt je reçus le Lieutenant.— Décembre 1941, le tribunal qui avait ordonné ma exclusion dehors NSDAP reçut connaissance de ma entrée dans la SS armée. On faisait grandes efforts de me chasser et de me poursuivre.Mais pour mes succès on me déclara sincère et indispensable.- Janvier 1942 je fus le chef du service technique de déinfection ,contenant aussi le service des gaz extrêmement toxiques pour déinfection .— Le 8 juin 1942 il entra dans ma chambre de service le SS-Sturmbannführer Günther du Reichs-Sicher-

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Kurt Gerstein, 26 avril 1945.

ReichsSicherheitsHauptamt, en civil, inconnu à moi. Il me donna l'ordre de procurer 100 kg d'acide prussique et d'aller avec lui à un lieu qui n'était pas connu qu'au chauffeur du camion. Nous partions à l'usine de potasse près de Collin (Prague). Le camion chargé nous partons à Lublin-Pologne. Nous prenions avec nous le professeur Dr. méd. Pfannenstiel, ordinarius d'hygiène de l'université Marbourg/Lahn. -A Loublin, le SS-Gruppenführer Globocnek nous attends. Il nous dit : C'est une des plus secrètes choses qu'il y a, et même la p l u s s é c r è t e. Chacun, qui en parle, sera fusilé aussitôt. Hier, deux parleurs sont morts. Alors il nous explique : A l'instant, -17 août 1942- il y a 3 installations :
1.) B e l z e c , à la route Loublin-Lemberg, au secteur à la ligne de démarcation Russe. Maximum par jour 15.000 personnes. (vu !)
2.) Sobibor, je ne sais pas exactement, où pas vu. 20.000 pers. p. jour.
3.) Treblinca, 120 km NNE de Varsovie. 25.000 par jour. vu !
4.) Maidanek, près de Loublin, vu en préparation.—
—Globocnek dit: Il vous faudra faire la désinfection de très grand quantitées de vêtements , dix ou vingt fois le résultat de la "Spinnstoffsammlung", (collection des vêtements et textils), qu'on ne fait que pour obscurcir la provenance des vêtements juifs, Polonais, Tchèques etc. - Votre autre devoir sera: de changer le service de nos chambres de gaz, maintenant fonctionant par échappement d'un ancien moteur "Diesel", à une chose plus toxique et fonctionnant plus vite, c'est acide prussique. Mais le Fuehrer et Himler, qui étaient ici le 15 août- c'est avant-hier— m'ont obligés d'accompagner moi même tous ceux qui doivent voir les installations.- Alor professeur Pfannenstiel: Mais qu'est ce que dit le Fuehrer ?-Alors Globocnek, maintenant Chef de Police et ss rivière Adriatique à Triest : Plus vite, plus vite, réaliser toute l'action!-dit il. lors le directeur du ministère Dr. Herbert Lindne-, ministère Interieur: N-'était il pas meilleur de brûler les corps au lieu de les enterrer? Une autre génération, peut être-, on penserait d'une autre manière."..-Alors Globocnek : Mais messieurs, si jamais, après nous une génération si lâche, si carieuse, qu'elle ne comprenne pas notre oeuvre si bon, si nécessaire, alors- messieurs- tout le Nationalsocialisme était pour rien .-Mais, au contraire, il faudrait enterrer des tables de bronce, auxquels il est inscrit, que c'étions n o u s , n o u s , qui avions eu le courage de réaliser cet oeuvre gigantique! "— Alors Hitler : Oui, mon brave Globocnek, c'est un mot, c'est aussi mon oppinion ! —"—L'autre jour, nous partions à Belzek Une petite gare spéciale de deux quais s'incline à la colline de sable jaune, immédiatement au Nord de la rue et du chemin de fer Lublin-Lemberg. Au Sud, près de la chaussée, quelques maisons du service avec l'affiche: " Lieu de service Belzec de la SS armée". Globocnek me présenta à SS-Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer de Pirmasens, qui me fit voir avec grande retenance les installations. Cet jour, on ne vit pas les morts, mais l'odeur de toute la région, aussi de la grande chaussée, était pestillent. A coté de la petite gare, il y avait une grande baraque "Garderobe" avec un guichet "Valeurs". Alors, une chambre à 100 chaises "Coiffeurs". Alors un corridor de 150 mètres au plein vent, fils barbelé de deux cotés, et affiches: Aux bains et inhalations !—Avant nous une maison comme institut de bain, à droite et à gauche grand pot de beton avec geranium ou autr fleurs. Après avoir monté un petit escalier, à droite et à gauche, trois et trois chambres comme de garages, 4 x 5 mètres, 1,90 mètre d'altitude. Au retour, pas visibles, portes de bois. Au toit, l'étoile D a v i d en cuivre . Avant le Bâtiment, inscription : "Fondation Heckenholt ".-De plus- cet après-midi- je n'ai aperçu . —Autre matin, quelques minutes avant 7 heures, on m'annonça:

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) Kurt Gerstein 26 avril 1945.

Après dix minutes le premier train arrivera!—Vraiement,après quelques minutes le premier train arriva de Lemberg. 45 vagons, contennants 6.700 personnes, 1450 déjà morts à leur arrivée.Derrière les petites lucarnes aux fils barbelés des enfants, jeunes, pleins de peur,femmes hommes. Le train arrive: 200 Ucrains, contraints à ce service,arrachent les portes et,avec cerouches de cuir, ils chassent les personnes en dehors des voitures. Alors un grand parleur -haut donne les instructions : Au plein vent, quelques dans la baraque, se déshabiller de tout vêtement, aussi prothèse et lunettes.Avec petit morceau de ficelle, offert par un petit garçon juif de 4 ans, joindre ensemble les chaussures.Rendre tout valeur,tout argent au guichet .Valeurs sans bon , sans reçu . Alors les femmes, les jeunes filles au coiffeur-faire couper à un ou deux coups les cheveux,qui disparaîtent dans des grands sacs de pomme de terre " pour en faire quelques choses spéciales pour les sous-marins,étaisseurs etc".— me dit le SS-Unterscharführer du service.- Alors,le marche commence : A droite ,à gauche le fil barbelé , en derrière deux douzaines Ucrains avec fusil-, Guidé d' une jeune fille extraordinairement belle, ils s-'approchent. Moi même avec le Hauptmann Wirth, police , nous nous trouvons avant les chambres de la mort. Totalement nus, les hommes , les femmes,les jeunes filles,les enfants,les bébés, les à une seule jambe , tous nus,passent.Au coin,un SS fort,qui à haute voix pastorale dit aux pauvres: Il vous n'arrivera ni le moindre! Il ne vous faudra rien que vivement respirer,cela fait forts les poumons,cette inhalation,c'est nécesseaire contre les maladies contagieuses,c'est une belle désinfection !— Demandé, quelle serait leur sort il leur dit: Vraiement,les hommes doivent travailler,bâtir des rues et des maisons.Mais les femmes ne sont pas obligées.Seulement si elles veulent elles peuvent aider au ménage ou dans la cuisine.—Pour quelques de ces pauvres gens petit espoir encore une fois,assez pour les faire marcher sans résistence aux chambres de la mort,— la majorité sait tout, l'odeur leur indique le sort !- Alors ils entent le petit escalier et—voyent la vérité! Mères, nourrices,les bébés à la poitrine,nues,beaucoup d'enfants de tout âge - nus- ils hésitent, mais ils entrent dans les chambres de la mort, ,la dernier sans mot dire,poussés des autres derrière eux, agités par les cerouches de SS.- Une juife,40 ans environ , les yeux comme des flambeaux,crie le sang de leur enfants sur leurs meurtriers. Recevant 5 coups de cerouche au visage de part de hauptmann de police Wirth lui même,elle disparait dans la chambre de gas. Beaucoup font leurs prières,d'autres disent: Qui est ce qui nous donne de l'eau pour la mort?(Hite israélitique?)- Dans les chambres ,la SS presse les hommes. "Bien remplir"- le hauptmann Wirth a ordoné. Les hommes nus sont debout aux pieds des autres,700-800 à 25 mètres quarrés, à 45 m cube!- Les portes se ferment.Cependant ,le reste du train,nus, attendent. On me dit : aussi en hiver nus!-Mais ils ne peuvent emporter la mort !— C'est pour cela,donc,qu'ils sont ici !-était la reponse!- Comme à la synagogue"-dit le SS-Sturmbannführer Professor Dr.Pfannestiel,ordinarius de l'hygiène de l'université de Marbourg/Lahn, l'ordre à la porte de bois. Le Hauptmann Wirth ,furieux,fait 11,12 coups de cerouche au visage de l'Ucrain,qui est en aide de Heckenholt.- Après deux heures 49 minutes- le montre stop a tout régistré— le Diesel commence. jusqu'à ce moment les hommes dans les 4 chambres déjà remplies vivent, vivent, 4 fois 750 personnes à 4 fois 45 mètre cube !—De nouveau

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4. Kurt Gerstein 26 avril 1945.

25 minutes passent:Beaucoup,c'est vrai,sont morts.C'est ce qu'on voit par la petite fenêtre , par laquelle la lampe électrique fait voir pour un moment l'intérieur de la chambre. Après 28 minutes,encore peu qui survivent.Après 32 minutes,enfin-,tout est mort!- De l'autre coté, des travailleurs juifs ouvrent les portes de bois.On leur a promis - pour leur service terrible— la liberté et quelques procents du résultat des valeurs et de l'argent trouvé. Comme les colonnes de Basalte les morts sont encore debout,étant pas la moindre place de tomber ou de s'incliner. Même morts,on connait encore les familles, qui se serrent encore les mains.On a peine de les séparer,pour faire vides les chambres pour prochaine charge. On jête les corps,bleus, humides de soudre et de l'urin, les jambes pleins de crotte et de sang périodiques.Parmi tous,les bébés,les cadavres des enfants.-Mais on n'a pas de temps! Deux douzaines de travailleurs s'occupent de contrôler les bouches,qu'ils ouvrent par moyen des crochets de fer."Or à gauche, sans or à droite!"—D'autres contrôlent anus et génitaux pour monnaie, brillants, or etc.-Des dentistes arrachent par moyen de martels les dents d'or,ponts,couronnes.Parmi tous, le hauptsann Wirth. Il est à son élément,se prétent une grande boîte de conserves,remplie de dents, il se dit: Eprouves vous même le poids de l'or ! C'est seulement hier et d'avant-hier!-Et vous ne croyez pas ce que nous trouvons par jour !:Les dollars, les brillants, l'or !!-Mais voyez vous même:-Alors il se guida à un bijoutier,qui avait xx la réponsabilité de tous ces valeurs.- On me fit voir encore un des xxx xxx chefs du grand magasin de l'ouest,Berlin,Kaufhaus des Westens et un petit homme ,qu'on faisait jouer le violon,chefs du commando travailleurs juifs. " C-est un capitaine de l'armée K etK Autriche ,chevalier du Croix de fer Allemand I Klasse- me dit le Hauptsturmfuehrer Obermayer. —Alors ces corps nus furent jetés dans des grandes fossées de 100 x 20 x12 mètres environ,situés auprès des chambres de la mort.-Après quelques jours ,les corps se gonflaient et le tout s'élevait de 2-3 mètres par moyen de gaz ,qui se formait dans les cadavres.Après quelques jours, le gonflement fini, les corps tombaient ensemble.Autre jour les fossées furent remplies de nouveau et couvertes de 10 cm de sable.- Quelque temps plus tard- j'ai écouté- on a fait des grilles de rail de chemin de fer et a brulé les cadavres par moyen de l'huille Diesel et de l'essences, pour faire disparaître les cadavres. A Belzek et à Treblinca,on n'est pas se donné la peine de compter d'une manière quelquement exacte le nombre des hommes tués. Les nombres ,faits connu par Britisch Broadcasting Co -Radio sans fil sont pas justes, en vérité il s'agira ces ensemble de 25.000000 hommes! Pas juifs,seulement,mais en préférence des Polonais et Tchèque biologiquement sans valeurs selon oppinion des Nazies. La plupart et morts anonyme, Des commissions de Pseudo-médecins ,simples jeunes SS à manteaux blancs et limousines,parcouraient les villages et ville de Pologne et Tchecheslovaqie pour désigner les vieux, phtisistes, malades pour quelque temps plus tard,les faire disparaître aux chambres de gaz. C'étaient les Polonais,les Tchèques de la NO. III,qui n'étaient pas encore dignes de vivre pour ne pouvoir pas encore travailler.———Le hauptmann de police Wirth me pria de pas proposer à Berlin quelquonque autre méthode des chambres de gaz et de laisser tout comme qu'il était. -Je mentis - ce que j'avais fait à tout ce-que l'acide prussique était déjà détruite par le transport et devenue très dangereuse.Alors je serai forcé de l'enterrer- que ce fit aussitot —Autre jour nous allions à par l'auto de hauptmann Wirth à Tréblinca; 120 km environ NNE de Varsovie. L'institution de ce lieu de la mort était presque le même comme à Belzec,mais plus grande encore. 8 chambres de gaz et vrais montagnes de vêtements et de linge, 35 -40 m environ d'altitude. Alors,à notre "honneur" on fit un banquet avec tous les employés del'institut. Le oberstursbannfuehrer professor Dr.méd.Pfannenstiel,ordinarius d'hygiène de l'université de Marbourg Lahn, fit un sermon: Votre oeuvre c-'est un grand devoir et un devoir si util et si

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5.Kurt Gerstein (26 avril 1945.

nécessaire.En moi seul il parlait de cet institut comme de "beauté du travail, et d'une chose humaine. A tous: Si-l-on voit les corps des juifs on comprend la grandeur de votre bon oeuvre !- Le dîner lui même était simple, mais,selon l'ordre de Himmler, les occupés de ce service recevaient ce qu'ils voulaient de beurre,viande alcool etc. -Au congé, on nous offra plusieurs kilos de beurre, et grande nombre de bouteilles de Liqueur. J'avais peine de mentir d'avoir assez de tout de notre ferme.Pour cette raison ,Pfannenstiel prit encore ma portion.-Nous allions par l'auto à Varsovie. Attendant en vain un lit libre, je rencontrais le secrétaire de la légation Suède,Mgr.le baron de Otter. Tous les lits occupés nous passions la nuit au corridor du waggon lit, là, sous l'impression récente j'ai lui raconté tout avec la prière de référer tout à son gouvernement et aux tous alliés. Il me demanda une référence de moi. J-'ai lui donné comme télle l'adresse de Mgr.le Generalsuperintendent D.Otto Dibelius,Berlin-Lichterfelde West, Bruederweg 2 , ami de Martin Niemoeller et chef de la résistance protestantique contre le nazisme. Après quelques semaines j'ai vu encore deux fois le baron de Otter.Il me dit qu'il avait fait son rapport au gouvernement Suède , un rapport,qui, selon ses mots, a eu grande influence aux rélations de Suède et d'Allemagne. La tentative de référer tout cela au chef de la légation du Saint-Père, n'a pas eu grand succès. On me demanda si j'étais soûlot.Alors on me réfusa tout entretien.Alors j-ai fait un réferat détaillé au secretaire de l'episcopat de Berlin Mgr.le Dr. Winter pour référer tout cela à son episcope de Berlin et ainsi à la légation du Saint-Père.-Sortant de la légation du Saint-Père à la Pauckstrasse à Berlin, j'avais un rencontre dangereux à un agent de police, qui me poursuivait ,mais, après quelques minutes très désagréables, me fit échapper.

Il me faut encore ajouter que le SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Guenther du Reichssicherheitshauptamt demanda de moi, le commencement 1944, de très grandes fournitures d'acide prussique pour un destin obscur. L'acide devait être fournie à Berlin,Kurfuerstenstrasse à son lieu de service. Je réussis à lui faire croyable que cela n'était pas possible pour les grands dangers. Il s'agit de plusieurs waggons d'acide toxique, assez pour tuer beaucoup d'hommes, des millions! Il m'avait dit qu'il n'était pas sur, si à quand, pour quel cercle de personnes, de quelle manière, où on aurait besoin de ce poison. Je ne sais pas exactement quelque ait été l'intention de Reichssicherheitshauptamt et du S D. Mais j'ai, plus tard, pensé aux mots de Goebbels de " fermer les portes derrière eux ", si le nazisme ne réussirait jamais. Peut être qu'ils voulaient tuer une grande partie du peuple Allemand, peut être les travailleurs étrangers, peut être les prisonniers de guerre. - Je ne sais pas! A tout cas, j'ai fait disparaître l'acide aussitôt après son arrivée pour devoirs de désinfection.C'était quelquement dangereux pour moi, mais si-l-on m'avait demandé où se trouvait l'acide toxique, j'aurais répondu : Elle était déjà en état de dissolution dangereux, et c'est pour cela qu'il fallait le consommer pour la désinfection !- Je suis sur,que Guenther , le fils du-Lassen-Guenther- selon ses propres mots, avait l'ordre de procurer l'acide pour- eventuellement- tuer millions d'hommes, peut -être aussi dans les champs de concentration. J'ai sur moi les notes de 2.175 kg, mais en vérité il s'agit de ces 8.500 kgs, assez pour tuer 8millions d'hommes. J-'ai fait écrire à mon nom les notes pour- comme j'ai dit- discrétion, en vérité pour être quelquement libre dans les dispositions et pour mieux faire disparaître l'acide toxique. Je n'ai jamais payé ces livraisons pour éviter le remboursement.

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6. Kurt Gerstein. 26. avril 1945. 7

ment et de rappeler le SD à cet stock. Le directeur de la Degesch, qui avait fait cette fourniture, m'a dit qu'il a fourni pour tuer des hommes acide prussique en ampoules.— Une autre fois, Guenther me consulta s'il était possible de tuer grande nombre des juifs au plein vent des fossées de fortification de Maria-Theresienstadt. Pour empêcher ce conseil diabolique je déclarais impossible cette méthode. Quelque temps plus tard j'ai écouté que le S D s'était procuré d'une autre manière l'acide prussique pour tuer ces pauvres hommes à Theresienstadt. — Les champs de concentration les plus détestables, n'étaient pas Oranienburg ni Dachau ni Belzec — mais Auschwitz (Oswiêc) et Mauthausen-Gusen on près de Linz/ Donau. C'est là que sont disparus des millions d'hommes aux chambres de gaz, à des suites comme cobayes gaz. La méthode de tuer les enfants était de leur tenir sous le nez un tampon à l'acide prussique.

J'ai vu - moi-même- des expériments continuées jusqu'à la mort avec personnes vivantes aux champs de concentration. Ainsi, le SS-Hauptsturmführer Gundlach, Dr.med, a fait tels expériments au champs de concentration pour femmes à Ravensbrück près de Fuerstenberg-Mecklenburg. J'ai la beaucoup de réferats — à son lieu de service— de tels expériments à Buchenwald, par exemple expériments jusqu'à 100 tablettes de P e r v i t i n e par jour. D'autres expériments - toute fois ces 100-200 personnes sont faits jusqu'à la mort avec sérum, lymphe etc. Himler lui même s'avait réservé la permission de tels expériments.

Un jour, à Oranienbourg, champs de concentration, j'ai vu disparaître, un seul jour, tous les prisonniers, étant le pour etre pervertis (homosexuels.)

J'ai évité de visiter souvent les champs de concentration, parcequ'il était usuel - en préférence à Mauthausen Gusen-près de Linz-de pendre à l'honneur des visiteurs un ou deux prisonniers. A Mauthausen, il était usuel de faire travailler les juifs à une carrière de grande altitude-. Après quelque temps les SS du service disent : attention, après quelques minutes il y-aura quelque malheur! Vraiement, une ou deux minutes plus tard, quelques juifs furent précipités de la carrière, tombants morts à nos pieds. "Accidents de travail"-on régistrait aux papiers des tués.-Le Dr.Fritz Krantz, entrainé, SS-Hauptsturm fuehrer m'a souvent raconté de telles choses, qu'il connaissait vivement et publiait comment.—

Les crimes découverts à Belzec, Oranienbourg etc sont pas considérables en comparaison des autres, qui sont faits à Auschwitz et à Mauthausen.

J'ai le dessein d'écrire un livre contenant mes aventures avec les nazies.

Je suis prêt de prêter un serment que tous mes déclarations sont totalement vrais.

Kurt Gerstein

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Kurt Gerstein. Supplement.

A mes appartements à Berlin W 35, Buelowstrasse 47 I gauche j'ay autour de moi un cercle d'antinazies .Voilà quelques noms des membres :

Major Lutz R e i s ,maintenant Hambourg, Fa. Glasurit-Werke.
Dr.Felix Buss, Juntitiar en chef de Telefunken,Berlin SW 11, Hallesches Ufer 30.
Direktor Alex Menne, Hambourg,Glasurit-Werke
Mgr.le curé Buchholz, curé de prison Moabitergasse, qui a accompagné à la mort les officiers du 20 Juillet 1944 à Plötzensee . Ces officiers comme le curé Martin Niemöller, mon ami cordial,fumaient les cigarettes et les cigarres que moi leur ai fourni à leur prison.
Mgr.le curé Mochalski, remplaçant Mgr.le curé Martin Niemöller à Dahlem,Annen-Kirche.
Dorothea Schulz, sécrétaire de mgr.le Curé Martin Niemöller
Mme Arndt , Sécrétaire de Mgr . le curé Martin Niemoeller de Dahlem
Emil Mieuenhuisen et son ami Hendrik, de Philippe -Nynhoven, déportés, que j'avais rencontré à l'église et qui étaient, depuis longtemps, deux ou trois fois par semaine mes hôtes pour manger et écouter t.s.f.
Direkteur Heusinen,Berlin NW 7. Mittelstrasse, Imprimerie Franck
Herbert Scharbowsky, rédacteur, Scherl-Presse
Hauptmann Mebelthau et son mari,Berlin, maintenant à Kirchentellinsfurt-Wurttemberg
Dr.Hermann Ehlers, Syndicus de l'église Niemoeller de résistence antinazie
Dr.Ebbo Blos, même comme Dr.Ehlers.

Autres références : Generalsuperintendent D.Otto Dibelius,Chef de la résistence de l'église contre le nacisme.
Mgr. le curé Rehling, Hagen Westphalie, résistence de l'église de Westphalie, activiste.
Praeses Dr.Koch, Bad Oeynhausen, de même.
Baron von Huene, Professor de l'université de Tuebingen, antinazi
Bernhard J.Goedecker,Fabrikant, München,Ticianstrasse.Antinazie
Directeur Franz Bäuerle, München, Siemensstrasse 17. antinazie.
Mgr.le curé catolique Volpertz, Hagen Westphalie.
Mgr.le curé Otto Mehr, Sarrebruck
Mgr.les curés Schlaeger et Bittkau, Neuruppin pre de Berlin.
August Franz et toute famille, grande antinazies,Sarrebruck,maintenant à Talheim-Wurttemberg.
Mgr.le Docteur Straub,Metzingen-Wurttemberg et famille.

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Version of 4 May 1945: T III

z.Zt. Rottweil, den 4.Mai 1945.

Zur Person : Kurt Gerstein, Bergassessor ausser Dienst, Diplomingenieur.
am 27.September 1936 wegen staatsfeindlicher Betätigung aus dem
Höheren Preussischen Berg-Dienst entfernt.
geboren am 11.August 1905 zu Münster/Westfalen. -Teilhaber der Masch
nenfabrik Do Limon Pluhne &Co zu Düsseldorf, Industriestrasse 1-17
E inlfabrik für automatische Schmieranlagen für Lokomotiven, Knor
und Westinghouse-Bremsen.
Vater: Landgerichtspräsident Ludwig E. Gerstein, Landgerichtspräsid
in Hagen/Westf. ausser Diensten.
Mutter: Clara Gerstein geb. Schaemann, gestorben 1931.
Verheiratet seit 1937 mit Elfriede B o n s e l in Tuebingen, Gerb
strasse 24. Drei Kinder : Arnulf 5 Jahre, Adelheid 3 1/2 Jahre Olaf
2 Jahre.

2.)Lebenslauf: 1905-1910 in Münster Westf. 1910-1919 in Saarbrücken.
1919-1921 Halberstadt, 1921-1925 Neuruppin bei Berlin. Dort 1925 Abi-
tur am humanistischen Gymnasium. Studien: Universität Marburg Lahn 192
-1927, Berlin 1927-1931, Technische Hochschule. Aachen 1927. Diplom-
ingenieur-Examen 1931 in Berlin-Charlottenburg.-Seit 1925 aktives
Mitglied der organisierten evangelischen Jugend (CVJM,=YMCA und der
Bibelkreise an Höheren Schulen.- Politische Betätigung : Aktiver
Anhänger von Bruening und Stresemann.- Seit Juni 1933 von der Gesta
verfolgt wegen christlicher Betätigung gegen den Nazie-Staat.- Am
2.Mai 1933 Eintritt in die NSDAP, am 2.Oktober 1936 Ausschluss
aus der NSDAP wegen staatsfeindlicher (religiöser) Betätigung
für die Bekenntnis-Kirche .Gleichzeitig Ausschluss als Beamter aus
dem Staatsdienst.- Am 30.Januar 1935 wegen -Störung einer Partei-
Weihefeier im Stadttheater Hagen Westfalen- Aufführung des Dramas
Wittekind - öffentlich verprügelt und verletzt.- Am 27.Oktober
1935 Bergassessor-Examen vor dem Wirtschaftsministerium in Berlin,
sämtliche Examen mit Prädikat. Bis zur Verhaftung am 27.September 3
Staatsbeamter der Saargruben-Verwaltung in Saarbrücken. Diese erste
Verhaftung erfolgte wegen Versendung von 8500 staats(nazi e-)feind-
licher Broschüren an sämtliche Ministerialdirektoren und hohen

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3.) Justizbeamten in Deutschland. – Einem Lieblingswunsch entsprechend studierte ich alsdann in Tuebingen am Deutschen Institut für Ärztliche Mission Medizin. Dies wurde mir durch meine wirtschaftliche Unabhängigkeit ermöglicht. Als Teilhaber der Firma De Limon Fluhme & Co. in Düsseldorf bezog ich ein durchschnittliches Einkommen von jährlich 18.000.-Reichsmark. Etwa ein Drittel dieses Einkommens pflegte ich für meine religiösen Ideale auszugeben. Insbesondere habe ich rund 230.000 religiöse und antistaatfeindliche Broschüren drucken lassen und dieselben auf meine Kosten an Interessenten versandt.
Am 14. Juli 1938 erfolgte meine zweite Verhaftung und Einlieferung in das Konzentrationslager Welzheim wegen staatsfeindlicher Betätigung. Ich wurde vorher häufig von der Gestapo verwarnt und verhört und bin mit einem Redeverbot für das ganze Reichsgebiet belegt worden.
Als ich von der beginnenden Umbringung der Geisteskranken in Grafeneck und Hadamar und andernorts hörte, beschloss ich auf jeden Fall den Versuch zu machen, in diese Öfen und Kammern hineinzuschauen um zu wissen, was dort geschieht. Dies um so mehr, als

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4.) als eine angeheiratete Schwägerin-Berthe Ebeling- in Hadamar xxx zwangsgetötet wurde. Mit zwei Referenzen der Gestapobeamten, die meine Sachen bearbeiteten, gelang es mir unschwer, in die SS einzutreten. Die Herren waren der Ansicht, dass mein Idealismus, den sie wohl bewunderten, der Nazie-Sache zugutekommen müsste.-
Am 10. März 1941 trat ich in die SS ein. Ich erhielt meine Grundausbildung in Hamburg-Langenhoorn, in Arnhem -Holland und in Oranienburg. In Holland nahm ich sofort die Fühlung mit der holländischen Widerstandsbewegung auf (Diplomingenieur Ubbink, Doesburg). Wegen meines Doppelstudiums wurde ich bald in den technisch-ärztlichen Dienst übernommen und dem SS-Führungshauptamt, Amtsgruppe D-Sanitätswesen der Waffen-SS, Abteilung Hygiene, zugeteilt. Die Ausbildung machte ich mit einem Ärzte-Kursus von 40 Ärzten.- Beim Hygiene-Dienst konnte ich mir meine Tätigkeit selbst bestimmen. Ich konstruierte fahrbare und ortsfeste Desinfektionsanlagen für die Truppe, für Gefangenenlager und Konzentrationslager. Hiermit hatte ich unverdientermassen grosse Erfolge und wurde von da ab für eine Art technisches Genie gehalten. In der Tat gelang es wenigstens, die schreckliche Fleckfieberwelle von 1941 in den Lagern einige-

5.) mussen einzudringen. Wegen meiner Erfolge wurde ich bald 446
Leutnant und Oberleutnant.- Weihnachten 1941 erhielt das Gericht, das meinen Ausschluss aus der NSDAP verfügt hatte, Kenntnis von meinem Eintritt in die SS an führender Stelle. Es folgte ein starkes Kesseltreiben gegen mich. Aber wegen meiner grossen Erfolge und wegen meiner Persönlichkeit wurde ich von meiner Dienststelle geschützt und gehalten. Im Januar 1942 wurde ich Abteilungsleiter der Abteilung Gesundheitstechnik und gleichzeitig in Doppelstellung für den gleichen Sektor vom Reichsarzt SS und Polizei übernommen. Ich übernahm in dieser Eigenschaft den ganzen technischen Desinfektionsdienst einschliesslich der Desinfektion mit hochgiftigen Gasen.

In dieser Eigenschaft erhielt ich am 8. Juni 1942 Besuch von dem mir bis dahin unbekannten SS-Sturmbannführer G ü n t h e r vom Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Berlin W, Kurfürstenstrasse. Günther kam in Zivil. Er gab mir den Auftrag, sofort für einen äusserst geheimen Reichs-Auftrag 100 kg Blausäure zu beschaffen und mit dieser mit einem Auto zu einem unbekannten Ort zu fahren, der nur dem Fahrer des Wagens bekannt sei. Wir fuhren alsdann einige Wochen

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6.) später nach Prag. Ich konnte mir ungefähr die Art des Auftrages denken, übernahm ihn aber, weil mir hier durch Zufall sich eine von mir seit langem ersehnte Gelegenheit ergab, in diese Dinge hineinzuschauen. Auch war ich als Sachverständiger für Blausäure so autoritär und kompetent, dass es mir auf jeden Fall ein Leichtes sein musste, die Blausäure unter irgend einem Vorwand als untauglich- weil zersetzt oder dergl.- zu bezeichnen und ihre Anwendung für den eigentlichen Tötungszweck zu verhindern. Mit uns fuhr noch -mehr zufällig- der Professor Dr.med. Pfannenstiel, SS-Obersturmbannführer, Ordinarius der Hygiene an der Universität Marburg-Lahn. Wir fuhren alsdann mit dem Wagen nach Lublin, wo uns der SS-Gruppenführer Globocnek erwartete. In der Fabrik in Colli hatte ich absichtlich durchblicken lassen, dass die Säure für die Tötung von Menschen bestimmt sei. Prompt erschien daraufhin nachmittags ein Mensch, der sich sehr stark für das Fahrzeug interessierte und, als er bemerkt wurde, in rasender Fahrt floh. -Globocnek sagte : Diese ganze Angelegenheit ist eine der geheimsten Sachen, die es zurzeit überhaupt gibt, man kann sagen die geheimste. Wer darüber spricht, wird auf der Stelle erschossen.

7.) Erst gestern seien zwei Hohnützer erschossen worden..-Dann erklärte er uns : Im Augenblick- das war am 17.August 1942- haben wir drei Anstalten in Betrieb, nämlich :

1.) Belzec, an der Chaussee und Bahnstrecke Lublin-Lemberg an der Schnittlinie mit der Demarkationslinie mit Russland.Höchstleistung pro Tag 15.000 Personen.

2.) Sobibor. Auch in Polen,ich weiss nicht genau wo. 20000 Personen Höchstleistung pro Tag.

3.)Treblinca, 120 km nordnordöstlich von Warschau.Höchstleistung 25.000 Personen pro Tag.

4.)-Damals in Vorbereitung- Maidanek bei Lublin.

Belzec, Treblinka und Maidanek habe ich persönlich eingehend mit dem Leiter dieser Anstalten, dem Polizeihauptmann Wirth zusammen besichtigt.

Globocnek wendete sich ausschliesslich an mich und sagte: Es ist Ihre Aufgabe, insbesondere die Desinfektion des sehr umfangreichen Textilgutes durchzuführen.Die ganze Spinnstoffsammlung ist doch nur durchgeführt worden, um die Herkunft des Bekleidungsmaterials für die Ostarbeiter usw. zu erklären und als ein Ergebnis des Opfers des Deutschen Volkes darzustellen. In Wirklichkeit ist das Aufkommen unserer Anstalten das 10-20 fache der ganzen Spinnstoffsammlung.

7.) [illegible] mit den leidensfähigen Haaren)
Ich habe ebenfalls die Möglichkeit, solche Feststellungen, es handelt sich allein um einen aufgelesenen Vorrat von etwa 40 Millionen Kg in den vorhandenen Wäschereien und Desinfektionsanstalten zu desinfizieren, durchgeführt. Es war aber völlig unmöglich, so grosse Stoffmengen unterzubringen. Ich benutzte alle diese Verhandlungen, um die Tatsache der Judenlösung in geschickter Weise bekannt zu machen oder durchblicken zu lassen. Es genügte Globocnik allein, dass der ganze Zug mit diesen Leichen überfüllt wurde; damit es weiterhin nicht beunruhigend wirken. Das ist klar und verständlich.

8.) -Ihre andere - noch weit wichtigere Aufgabe ist die Umstellung unserer Gaskammern, die jetzt mit Dieselauspuffgasen arbeiten, auf eine bessere und schnellere Sache.Ich denke da vor allem an Binasüü ro. Vorgestern waren der Fuehrer und Himmler hier. Auf ihre Anweisung muss ich Sie persönlich dorthin bringen, ich soll niemand schriftliche Bescheinigungen und Einlasskarten ausstellen.-Darauf fragte Pfannenstiel: Was hat denn der Führer gesagt ?-- Glob.: Schneller, schneller die ganze Aktion durchführen.Sein Begleiter, der Ministerialrat Dr.Herbert Lindner hat dann gefragt : Herr Globocnec, halten Sie es für gut und richtig, die ganzen Leichen zu vergraben, anstatt sie zu verbrennen? Nach uns könnte eine Generation kommen, die das ganze nicht versteht!- Darauf Glb.: Meine Herren, wenn je nach uns eine Generation kommen sollte, die so schlapp und so knochenweich ist, dass sie unsere grosse Aufgabe nicht verteht, dann allerdings ist der ganze Nationalsozialismus umsonst gewesen. Ich bin im Gegen teil der Ansicht, dass man Bronzetafeln versenken sollte, auf denen festgehalten ist, dass wir, wir den Mut gehabt haben, dieses grosse und so notwendige Werk durchzuführen.- Darauf der Führer : Gut, Globocnek, das ist allerdings auch meine Ansicht!— Später hat sich

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9.) die andere Ansicht durchgesetzt. Die Leichen sind dann auf grossen Rosten, die aus Eisenbahnschienen improvisiert wurden, verbrannt worden unter Zuhilfenahme von Benzin und Dieselöl. Am anderen Tage fuhren wir nach Belzec. Ein kleiner Spezialbahnhof xxxxx war zu diesem Zweck an einem Hügel hart nördlich der Chaussee Lublin-Lemberg im linken Winkel der Demarkationslinie geschaffen worden.Südlich der Chaussee einige Häuser mit der Inschrift " Sonderkommando Belzec der Waffen-SS ". Da der eigentliche Chef der gesamten Tötungsanlagen,der Polizeihauptmann Wirth, noch nicht da war, stellte Globocnec mich dem SS-Hauptsturmführer Oberreyer (aus Pirmasens) vor. Dieser liess mich an jenem Nachmittag nur das sehen, was er mir eben zeigen musste.Ich sah an diesem Tage keine Toten, nur der Geruch der ganzen Gegend im heissen August war pestilenzartig, und Millionen von Fliegen waren überall zugegegn.- Dicht bei dem kleinen 2-gleisigen Bahnhof war eine grosse Baracke, die sogenannte Garderobe , mit einem grossen Wertsachen-Schalter.Dann folgte ein Zimmer mit etwa 100 Stühlen, der Friseurraum. Dann eine kleine Allee im Freien unter Birken, rechts und links von doppeltem Stacheldraht umzäunt, mit Inschriften : Zu den Inhalier-und Baderäumen !—

10.) 11. 7/1

Vor uns eine Art Badehaus,rechts und links davor grosse Betonbe
fe mit Geranien,dann ein Treppchen, und dann rechts und links
je 3 Räume 5 x5 Meter , 1,90 m hoch, mit Holztüren wie Gara-
gen. An der Rückwand , in der Dunkelheit nicht recht sichtbar,
grosse hölzerne Rampentüren.Auf dem Dach als "sinniger kleine
Scherz" der Davidsstern!!- Vor dem Bauwerk eine Inschrift : Hoch
Holt -Stiftung !-Mehr habe ich an jenem Nachmittag nicht sehen
können.- Am anderen Morgen um kurz vor sieben Uhr kündigt man
an: In zehn Minuten kommt der erste Transport !- Tatsächlich k
nach einigen Minuten der erste Zug von Lemberg aus an. 45 Waggon
mit 6.700 Menschen,von denen 1450 schon tot waren bei ihrer Ank
kunft.Hinter den vergitterten Luken schauten, entsetzlich bleich
und ängstlich, Kinder durch,die Augen voll Todesangst, ferner
Männer und Frauen.Der Zug führt ein: 200 Ukrainer reissen die
Türen auf und peitschen die Leute mit ihren Lederpeitschen aus
den Waggons heraus. Ein grosser Lautsprecher gibt die weiteren
Anweisungen: Sich ganz ausziehen, auch Prothesen,Brillen usw.
Die Wertsachen am Schalter abgeben, ohne Bons oder Quittung. Die
Schuhe sorgfältig zusammenbinden (wegen der Spinnstoffsammlung.)

11.) denn in dem Haufen von reichlich 25 Meter Höhe hätte sonst niemand die zugehörigen Schuhe wieder zusammenfinden können. Dann die Frauen und jungen Mädchen zum Friseur,der mit zwei, drei Scherenschlägen die ganzen Haare abschneidet und sie in Kartoffelsäcken verschwinden lässt!Das ist für irgendwelche Spezialzwecke für die Uboote bestimmt, für Dichtungen oder dergleichen !- sagt mir der SS-Unterscharführer, der dort Dienst tut.—Dann setzt sich der Zug der Menschen in Bewegung. Voran ein bildhübsches jungee Mädchen,so gehen sie die Allee entlang, alle nackt,Männer,Frauen,Kinder, ohne Prothesen. Ich selbst stehe mit dem Hauptmann Wirth oben auf der Rampe zwischen den Kammern.Mütter mit ihren Säuglingen an der Brust, sie kommen herauf, zögern,treten ein in die Todeskammern!—An der Ecke steht ein starker SS-Mann, der mit pastoraler Stimme zu den Armen sagt : Es passiert euch nicht das geringste! Ihr müsst nur in den Kammern tief Atem holen, das weitet die Lungen, diese Inhalation ist notwendig wegen der Krankheiten und Seuchen. Auf die Frage was mit ihnen geschehen würde,antwortet er :Ja natürlich, die Männer müssen arbeiten, Häuser und Chausseen bauen, aber die Frauen brauchen nicht zu arbeiten. Nur wenn sie wollen, können sie im Haushalt oder in der Küche mithelfen. —Für einige von diesen Armen ein klei-

12.) ner Hoffnungsschimmer,der ausreicht, dass sie ohne Widerstand die paar Schritte zu den Kammern gehen- die Mehrzahl weiss Bescheid, der Geruch kündet ihnen ihr los ! -So steigen sie die kleine Treppe herauf- und dannsehen sie alles. Mütter mit Kindern an der Brust, kleine, nackte Kinder,Erwachsene, Männer und Frauen, alle nackt- sie zögern- aber sie treten in die Todeskammern, von den anderen hinter ihnen vorgetrieben oder von den Lederpeitschen der SS getrieben.Die Mehrzahl, ohne ein Wort zu sagen. Eine Jüdin von etwa 40 Jahren mit flammenden Augen ruft das Blut, das hier vergossen wird, über die Mörder.Sie erhält 5 oder 6 Schläge mit der Reitpeitsche in's Gesicht, vom Hauptmann Wirth persönlich,-dann verschwindet auch sie in der Kammer.- Viele Menschen beten. Ich bete mit ihnen, ich drücke mich in eine Ecke und schreie laut zu meinem und ihrem Gott.Wie gern wäre ich mit ihnen in die Kammern gegangen, wie gern wäre ich ihren Tod mitgestorben.Sie hätten dann einen uniformierten SS-Offizier in ihren Kammern gefunden- die Sache wäre als Unglücksfall aufgefasst und behandelt worden und sang-und klanglos verschollen. Noch also darf ich nicht, ich muss noch zuvor künden, was ich hier erlebe!- Die Kammern füllen sich. Gut vollpacken, - so hat es der Hauptmann Wirth befohlen. Die Men-

13.) Menschen stehen einander auf den Füssen, 700-800 auf 25 Quadratmetern, in 45 Kubikmetern! Die SS zwängt sie physisch zusammen, soweit es überhaupt geht.-Die Türen schliessen sich.Währenddessen warten die anderen draussen im Freien, nackt. Man sagt mir: auch im Winter genau so!- Ja , aber sie können sich ja den Tod holen! sage ich .— Ja grad for das sinn se ja doh!- sagt mir ein SS-Mann darauf in seinem Platt.— Jetzt endlich verstehe ich auch, warum die ganze Einrichtung " Heckenholt-Stiftung" heisst. Heckenholt ist der Chauffeur des Dieselmotors, ein kleiner Techniker, gleichzeitig der Erbauer der Anlage. Mit den Dieselauspuffgasen sollen die Menschen zu Tode gebracht werden. Aber der Diesel funktioniert nicht!Der Hauptmann Wirth kommt.Man sieht, es ist ihm peinlich, dass ihm gerade heute passieren muss , wo ich hier bin. Jawohl , ich sehe alles! und ich warte. Meine Stoppuhr hat alles brav registriert.50 Minuten 70 Minuten- der Diesel springt nicht an!Die Menschen warten in ihren Gaskammern.Vergeblich. Man hört sie weinen,schluchzen."Wie in der Synagoge" bemerkt der Professor Pfannenstiel,das Ohr an der Holztür. Der Hauptmann Wirth schlägt mit seiner Reitpeitsche dem Ukrainer, der dem Unterscharführer Heckenholt beim Diesel helfen soll, 12, 13 mal in's Gesicht. Nach 2 Stunden 49 Minuten- die Stoppuhr hat alles wohl registriert!- springt der Diesel an. Die zu diesem Augenblick leben

14.) leben die Menschen in diesen 4 Kammern, 4 mal 750 Menschen in 4 mal 45 Kubikmetern!- Von neuem verstreichen 25 Minuten.Richtig, viele sind jetzt tot.Man sieht das durch das kleine Fensterchen, in dem das elektrische Licht die Kammer einen Augenblick beleuchtet. Nach 28 Minuten leben nur noch wenige.Endlich, nach 32 Minuten ist alles tot !- Von der anderen Seite öffnen Männer vom Arbeitskommando die Holztüren. Man hat ihnen- selbst Juden- die Freiheit versprochen und einen gewissen Promillesatz von allen gefundenen Werten für ihren schrecklichen Dienst. Wie Basaltsäulen stehen die Toten aufrecht aneinandergepresst in den Kammern.Es wäre auch kein Platz, hinzufallen oder auch nur sich vornüber zu neigen.Selbst im Tode noch kennt man die Familien. Sie drücken sich, im Tode verkrampft, noch die Hände, so dass- man Mühe hat, sie auseinander zu reissen, um die Kammern fürdie nächste Charge freizumachen. Man wirft die Leichen- aus von Schweiss und Urin, kotbeschmutzt , Konstruktionsblut an den Beinen, heraus.Kinderleichen fliegen durch die Luft.Man hat keine Zeit, die Reitpeitschen der Ukrainer sausen auf die Arbeitskommandos. Zwei Dutzend Zahnärzte öffnen mit Haken den Mund und sehen nach Gold, Gold links, ohne Gold rechts. Andere Zahnärzte brechen mit Zangen und Hämmern die Goldzähne und Kronen aus den Kiefern.

15.) Unter allen springt der Hauptmann Wirth herum. Er ist in seinem Element.-Einige Arbeiter kontrollieren Genitalien und After nach Gold,Brillanten und Wertsachen.-Wirth ruft mich heran: Heben sie ma diese Konservenbüchse mit Goldzähnen, das ist nur von gestern und vorgestern! In einer unglaublich gewöhnlichen und falschemmen Sprechweise sagt er zu mir : Sie glauben garnicht, was wir jeden Tag finden an Gold und Brillanten- er sprach es mit 2 L - und Dolldr . Aber schauen Sie selbst.- Und nun führte er mich zu einem Juwelier, der alle diese Schätze zu verwalten hatte und liess mich dies alles sehen. - Man zeigte mir dann noch einen frühren Chef des Kaufhaus des Westens in Berlin und einen Geiger: Das ist ein Hauptmann von der alten KöiserlichKöniglich Österreichischen Armmee, Ritter des Eisernen Kreuzes I.Klasse, der jetzt Lager-Ältester beim jüdischen Arbeitskommando ist!—Die nackten Leichen wurden auf Holztragen nur wenige Meter weit in Gruben von 100 x 20 x 12 Meter geschleppt.Nach einigen Tagen türmten die Leichen hoch und fielen alsdann kurze Zeit später stark zusammen, so dass man eine neue Schicht auf dieselben draufwerfen konnte. Dann wurde 10 cm Sand darüber gestreut, so dass nur noch vereinzelte Köpfe und Arme herausragten. Ich sah an einer solchen Stelle Juden in den

16.) Gräbern auf den Leichen herumklettern und arbeiten. Man sagte mir, dass vermutlich die tot Angekommenen eines Transportes nicht entkleidet worden seien. Diese müsse natürlich wegen der Spinnstoffe und Wertsachen, die sie sonst mit in's Grab nähmen, nachgeholt werden.-Weder in Belzec noch in Treblinka hat man sich irgendeine Mühe gegeben, die Getöteten zu registrieren oder zu zählen. Die Zahlen waren nur Schätzungen nach dem Waggoninhalt.- Ausserdem Juden aus aller europäischen Herren Ländern wurden insbesondere Tschechen und Polen Nr.III in den Gaskammern getötet. Kommissionen von SS-Männern- teils nicht einmal mit kompletter Volksschulbildung- fuhren mit feinen Limusinen und ärztlichem Gerät in weissen Mänteln von Dorf zu Dorf , liessen die Bevölkerung vorbeidefilieren, taten, als wenn sie sie ärztlich untersuchten und bezeichneten diejenigen, die biologisch wertlos und darum zu töten seien, in der Hauptsache Alte,Schwindelsüchtige und Kranke.--Ja, sagte mir ein SS-Sturmbannführer, ohne diese Massnahmen wäre das übervölkerte Polen für uns völlig wertlos. Wir holen nur nach , was die Natur überall im Tier-und Pflanzenreich von selbst besorgt und beim Menschen leider versäumt.-Der Hauptmann Wirth bat mich, in Berlin keine Änderungen seiner Anlagen

17.) vorzuschlagen und alles so zu lassen, wie es wäre und sich bestens eingespielt und bewährt habe.- Die Blausäure habe ich unter meiner Aufsicht vergraben lassen, da sie angeblich in Zersetzung geraten sei.-Am anderen Tage -den 19.August 1942.-fuhren wir mit dem Auto des Hauptmann Wirth nach Treblinka 120 km NNO von Warschau.Die Einrichtung war etwa dieselbe, nur viel grösser als in Belzec. 8 Gaskammern und wahre Gebirge von Koffern, Textilien und Wäsche.Zu unseren Ehren wurde im Gemeinschafts-Saal in typisch himmler-schen Altdeutschen Stiel ein Bankett ~~zu unseren Ehren~~ gegeben. Das Essen war einfach, aber es stand alles in jeder Menge zur Verfügung. Himmler hatte selbst angeordnete, dass die Männer dieser Kommandos soviel Fleisch,Butter und sonstiges erhielten, insbesondere Alkohol, wie sie wollten. Professor Pfannenstiel hielt eine Rede, in der er den Männern die Nützlichkeit ihrer Aufgabe und die Wichtigkeit ihrer grossen Mission klar machte. Zu mir selbst sprach er von " sehr humanen Methoden und von Schönheit der Arbeit!" Ich verbürge mich dafür, dass er dies unglaubliche wirklich gesagt hat !- Den Mannschaften sagte er insbesondere : Wenn man diese Judenkörper sieht, dann wird einem erst recht klar, wie dankenswert eure Aufgabe ist.

18.)Beim Abschied wurden uns noch mehrere Kilogramm Butter und vie
Likör zum Mitnehmen angeboten. Ich hatte Mühe, glaubhaft zu mache
dass ich von meinem - angeblichen - Gut genug von alledem hätte,
rauf Pfannenstiel beglückt auch noch meine Portionen einstrich.
Wir fuhren dann mit dem Auto nach Warschau.Dort traf ich, als ich
vergeblich ein Schlafwagenbett zu erhalten versuchte, im Zuge de
Sekretär der Schwedischen Gesandtschaft in Berlin, Baron von Otte
Ich habe noch unter dem frischen Eindruck der entsetzlichen Erle
nisse diesem alles erzählt mit der Bitte, dies seiner Regierung
und den Alliierten sofort zu berichten, da jeder Tag Verzögerung
weiteren Tausenden und 10Tausenden das Leben kosten müsse. Er bat
mich um eine Referenz, als welche ich ihm Herrn Generalsuperinte
denten D.Otto Dibelius, Berlin, Brüderweg 2,Lichterfelde West,er
einen vertrauten Freund des Pfarrers Martin Niemöller und Mitgli
der kirchlichen Widerstandsbewegung gegen den Nazismus.Ich traf
Herrn v.Otter noch 2 mal in der schwedischen Gesandtschaft. Er h
inzwischen nach Stockholm berichtet und teilte mir mit, dass die
Bericht erheblichen Einfluss auf die Schwedisch-Deutschen Beziehu
gehabt habe. Ich versuchte in gleicher Sache dem Päpstlichen Nun
in Berlin Bericht zu erstatten. Dort wurde ich gefragt, ob ich St
dat sei.Daraufhin wurde jede weitere Unterhaltung mit mir abgele

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19.)und ich zum Verlassen der Botschaft Seiner Heiligkeit aufgef
dert. Beim Verlassen der Päpstlichen Botschaft wurde ich von ein
Polizisten mit dem Rade verfolgt, der kurz an mir vorbeifuhr, ab
stieg, mich dannaber völlig unbegreiflicher Weise laufen liess.
Ich habe dann alles dies hunderten von Persönlichkeiten berich
tet, unter anderem dem Syndikus des katholischen Bischofs von
Berlin, Herrn Dr.Winter, mit der ausdrücklichen Bitte um Weiterg
an den päpstlichen Stuhl.- Ich muss noch hinzufügen, dass der SS
Sturmbannführer Günther vom Reichssicherheitshauptamt- ich glaub
er ist der Sohn des Rassen-Günthers— Anfang 1944 nochmals sehr
grosse Mengen Blausäure von mir verlangte für einen sehr dunkle
Zweck. Er zeigte mir in der Kurfürstenstrasse in Berlin einen Sch
pen, in dem er die Blausäure zu lagern gedacht. Ich erklärte ihm
darauf, dass ich dafür ausgeschlossenerweise die Verantwortung
übernehmen könne.Es handelte sich um mehrere Waggons, genug, um
viele Millionen Menschen damit umzubringen.Er sagte mir, dass er
selbst noch nicht wisse, ob das Gift gebraucht würde, wann, für
wen, auf welche Weise usw.Aber es müsse stündig verfügbar gehalt
werden.Ich habe später oft an die Worte von Goebbels denken müss

Volkes töten wollten, sicher einschliesslich der Pfarrerschaft oder der missliebigen Offiziere.Das sollte in einer Art Lazesillen oder Klubräumen geschehen, soviel entnahm ich den Fragen der technischen Durchführung, die Günther an mich richtete.Es kann auch sein, dass er die Fremdarbeiter umbringen sollte, oder Kriegsgefangene- ich weiß es nicht.Auf jeden Fall richtete ich es so ein, dass die Blausäure sofort nach ihrer Ankunft in den beiden Konzentrationslagern Oranienburg und Auschwitz für irgendwelche Zwecke der Desinfektion verschwand.Das war etwas gefährlich für mich, aber ich hätte einfach sagen können, dass das Gift sich bereits in einer gefährlichen Zersetzung befunden habe.Ich bin sicher, dass Günther das Gift beschaffen wollte, um Millionen Menschen eventuell umzubringen.Es reichte für ca.8 Millionen Menschen, 8500 kg. Über 2.175 kg habe ich die Rechnungen eingereicht.Die Rechnungen liess ich stets auf meinen Namen ausstellen, angeblich wegen der Diskretion, in Wahrheit um in meiner Verfügung freier zu sein und um das Gift verschwinden lassen zu können.Vor allem vermied ich es, durch Vorlage von Rechnungen die Sache immer wieder in Erinnerung zu bringen, sondern liess die Rechnungen lieber völlig unbezahlt,unter Vertröstung der Firma.

21.)Der Direktor Dr.Peters der Degesch,Frankfurt a.M.und Friedberg, der diese Lieferung ausgeführt hat, hat mir erzählt, dass er Blausäure in Ampullen zum Töten von Menschen geliefert hat.— Ein anderes Mal fragte mich Günther, ob es möglich sei, in den Festungsgräben von Maria-Theresienstadt Juden, die dort spazieren gehen durften, im Freien mit Blausäure zu töten. Um diesen schrecklichen Plan zu vereiteln, erklärte ich dies für unmöglich. Ich habe dann später erfahren, dass das SD-Kommando Maria-Theresienstadt sich auf andere Weise doch Blausäure verschafft und die Juden umgebracht hat.— Die scheusslichsten Konzentrationslager waren übrigens nicht Oranienburg oder Belsen oder Dachau, sondern Auschwitz, wo Millionen Menschen umgebracht worden sind, teils in Gaskammern, teils in sogenannten Tötungsautos, und Mauthausen-Gusen bei Linz. In Auschwitz war es üblich, Kinder dadurch umzubringen, dass man ihnen Tupfer mit Blausäure unter die Nase hielt.— Ich habe im übrigen selbst im Lager Ravensbrück bei Fürstenberg in Mecklenburg, dem Frauenkonzentrationslager- Versuche an Lebenden gesehen.Diese wurden auf Veranlassung von SS-Gruppenführer Dr-.Gebhardt-Hohenlychen durch SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr.Gundlach durchgeführt.Auch in Buchenwald wurden derartige Versuche an lebenden Menschen z.b.mit bis zu 100 Tabletten Pervitin

22.) durchgeführt, bis unter Umständen zum tödlichen Ausgang. Für diese Experimente hatte sich Himmler selbst die Zustimmung vorbehalten. Insbesondere wurde Fleckfieberimpfstoff und Lymphe sowie andere Sera dort ausprobiert. Die Versuche umfassten bis zu 100 oder 200 Menschen im Einzelfall, und zwar von der Lagerleitung z. S.D. zum Tode Verurteilte .— Ich wunderte mich in Oranienburg, dass innerhalb Tagen alle Homosexuellen.- viele hunderte- verschwand und zwar in den Öfen.— Ich habe es im übrigen vermieden, allzu oft in Konzentrationslagern zu erscheinen, denn es war manchmal nötig, zu Ehren der Besucher Leute aufzuhängen oder Exekutionen vorzunehmen. Der SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Fritz Krantz, der solche Dinge in grosser Zahl erlebt hat, erzählte mir oft hiervon mit tiefer Entrüstung. Z.B. wurden in Gusen-Mauthausen fast täglich zahlreiche Juden , die in einem grossen Steinbruch arbeiten sollten, die steile Wand heruntergestossen und unten als tödliche Unglücksfälle registriert . In Auschwitz sind derartige Gemeinheiten ebenfalls in viel grösserer Zahl begangen worden, als in Belzec.— Ich hatte das Glück, in meiner Dienststelle einige radikale Antinazies zu treffen, so den SS-Hauptsturmführer und Stabsscharführer Heinrich Hollländer, einen guten Katholiken, und den

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23.) eben genannten Dr. Fritz Krantz. Hollländer gab mir alle interessanten Sachen zur Kenntnis. Seine Frau hat einmal bei einem Essen den Reichsarzt SS und Polizei, SS-Obergruppenführer Dr. Grawitz, Berlin, gleichzeitig Präsident des Deutschen Roten Kreuzes, heftige Vorwürfe wegen der Judentötung gemacht. Sie erhielt daraufhin einen erheblichen Rüffel und es wurde ihr verboten, diese Sache je wieder anzurühren-.

Alle meine Angaben sind wörtlich wahr. Ich bin mir der ausserordentlichen Tragweite dieser meiner Aufzeichnungen vor Gott und der gesamten Menschheit voll bewüsst und nehme es auf meinen Eid, dass nichts vom allem, was ich registriert habe, erdichtet oder erfunden ist, sondern alles sich genau so verhält.

24.) Als Referenzen über meine Person gebe ich an :

Frau Pfarrer Martin Niemöller, z.Zt. Leoni am Steraberger See
Generalsuperintendent D.Dibelius (Otto),Berlin-Lichterfelde.

Pfarrer Dr.Martin Niemöller, Dachau ?????

Pfarrer Rehling, Hagen, Westfalen,Lutherkirche

Dorothea Schulz,Sekretärin von Pfarrer Niemöllerm Leoni bei München

Dr.Felix Buse, Justitiar von Telefunken, Berlin SW 11.

Direktor Alexander Menne,Direktor der Glasurit-Werke, bis 1939 in Eng
land in der Farbindustrie tätig, von Juli 44- Februar 45 in SD-Gefäng
nis.

Praeses Dr.Koch, Westf.Bekenntniskirche,Bad Oeynhausen

Pfarrer Buchholz,Anstaltspfarrer von Berlin-Gefängnis Ploetzensee.Er
begleitete die Offiziere des 20.Juli 44 zum Schaffot.

Ergänzungen 1 In Belzec hatte ich den Eindruck, dass alle wirklich tot waren, obschl mir Hauptmann Wirth erzählte, dass sie die abenteuerlichsten Dinge erlebt hätten, z.B. ein unter lebenden Mist vorgrus in einer über Nach unausgeladen stehen gebliebenen Wagen vorgefunden hätten. Namentlich sagte Wirth hätten sie bei den Geisteskranken die merkwürdigsten Dinge und die unterschiedlichsten Empfindlichkeiten festgestellt. Die Erprobung der verschiedenen Tötungsarten wird sich nicht auf grosse Zahlen erstreckt haben. Aber versucht wurde manches. Z.B.- wohl auch in grösserer Zahl- Tötung mit Frischluft in alten Dampfkammeln, in die diese mit Kompressoren eingepresst wurde, wie diese zum Asphaltaufreissen üblich sind.- In Treblinka hatte ich den Eindruck, dass manche noch lebten. Fast alle hatten die Augen offen und daher entsetzlich aus. Bewegungen habe ich jedoch nicht mehr gesehen, obwohl ich darauf genau aufgepasst habe.- Von einem gerade dem heroischen Sterben erzählte mir mit tiefster Ergriffenheit der SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr.med Villing aus Dortmund. Es betraf tausende polnischer Geistlicher, die sich selbst Gruben ausheben mussten und dann ausgezogen vor den Gruben erschossen wurden.

Ergänzungen Blatt 2.

Auf die höhnischen Fragen, ob sie nun noch immer an Christus und Maria glaubten, antworteten sie mit einem festen Bekenntnis zu Christus unter Anrufung der Heiligen Mutter Gottes von Tschenstochau. Dies Sterben sei ergreifend und überzeugend gewesen, sagte mir der Dr.Villing.- Auch andere Intellektuelle in Polen - namentlich Lehrerinnen und Lehrer- sind auf eine ähnlich vorbildliche Art zu hunderttausenden gestorben.

Eine mir verbürgt erzählte Todesart war, die Leute die Treppe zu einem Hochofen heraufsteigen zu lassen, sie dort immerhin mit einem Pistolenschuss zu töten und dann im Ofen verschwinden zu lassen.Auch in Ziegeleirundöfen sollen viele Menschen getötet und verbrannt worden sein.Diese meine Quelle ist jedoch nicht genügend zuverlässig.-

Ein hoher Polizeichef von Bromberg, SS-Obersturmbannführer Heller,erzählte mir und den Ärzten des SS-Kursus, dass vor seinem Eintreffen in Bromberg es dort üblich war, Judenkinder in den Wohnungen gleich mit dem Kopf an die Wand zu klatschen.Er habe diesen Unfug abgestellt und für Erschiessung gesorgt.Be-

L e s e a b s c h r i f t

Ergänzungen: In Belcec hatte ich den Eindruck, daß alle wirklich tot waren, obwohl mir Hauptmann Wirth erzählte, daß sie die absonderlichsten Dinge erlebt hätten, z.B. ein munter lebendes Kind morgens in einer über Nacht unausgeladen stehen gebliebenen Kammer vorgefunden hätten. Namentlich sagte Wirth hätten sie bei den Geisteskranken die merkwürdigsten Dinge und die unterschiedlichsten Empfindlichkeiten festgestellt. Die Erprobung der verschiedenen Tötungsarten wird sich nicht auf große Zahlen erstreckt haben. Aber versucht wurde manches. Z.B. - wohl auch in größerer Zahl - Tötungen mit Pressluft in alten Dampfkesseln, in die diese mit Kompressoren eingepreßt wurde, wie diese zum Asphaltaufreissen üblich sind. In Treblinka hatte ich den Eindruck, daß manche noch lebten. Fast alle hatten die Augen offen und sahen daher entsetzlich aus. Bewegungen habe ich jedoch nicht mehr gesehen, obwohl ich darauf genau aufgepaßt habe. Von einem geradezu heroischen Sterben erzählte mir mit tiefster Ergriffenheit der SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. med. Villing aus Dortmund. Es betraf tausende polnischer Geistlicher, die sich selbst Gruben ausheben mußten und dann ausgezogen vor den Gruben erschossen wurden.

5.Ergänzungen.

Besonders tragisch sei ihm in Erinnerung, wie zwei kleine Mädchen vor ihnen niedergekniet seien und gebetet hätten- 5 und 8 Jahre alte--und wie sie dann doch erschossen werden "mussten"!!- Hall sagte ferner: Bei den Massenhinrichtungen der Polen mussten diese sich lange Gräben ausheben und sich dann auf dem Bauch in diese hineinlegen. Sie wurden alsdann von oben mit Maschinenpistolen erschossen.Die Nächsten mussten sich dann auf die noch warmen Leichen draufliegen und wurden gleichfalls erschossen. Viele seien noch gar nicht tot gewesen und mussten dann beim Versuch, aus den 5-6 Lagen herauszukriechen, am Grabenrand erschossen werden.-

Ein hohes Mitglied der deutschen Regierung in Krakau erzählte mir, während er die Pute tranchierte, von einem besonders glücklichen Fang, den die gemacht hätten.Sie hätten ein führendes Mitglied der polnischen Widerstandsbewegung gefasst, einen Juden. Dieser hätte sich beim Verhör in Schweigen gehüllt. Darauf habe man ihm die Handgelenke gebrochen.Auch da noch habe er geschwiegen.Darauf hätte man ihn mit dem Hintern auf eine glühende Herdplatte gesetzt: Sie hätten mal sehen sollen, wie der Kerl gesprächig wurde !!!--

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Ergänzungen Blatt 4.

Bei einem Besuch bei der örtlichen Bauleitung der Waffen-SS in Lublin am 18.August 1942 erzählten uns die beiden Bausonderführer von einer am Vormittag stattgehabten Besichtigung der Leichenhalle eines SS-Kriegsgefangenenlagers bei Lublin. Dort seien die Leichen zu tausenden aufgetürmt gewesen.Während sie wegen des Umbaus Messungen durchgeführt hätten, hätten sich plötzlich 2 Menschen bewegt. Der begleitende SS-Rottenführer habe darauf nur gefragt : Wo denn??-- Dann habe er ein herumliegendes Stück Rundeisen genommen und den beiden den Schädel eingeschlagen. --Nicht die Tatsache, meinten die Bauführer- habe sie überrascht sondern die Selbstverständlichkeit , mit der das geschah!--

--Am Tage meiner Besichtigung in Belzec passierte es, dass eine Jüdin mit einem verborgen gehaltenen Rasiermesser einigen Juden des Arbeitskommandos einige Schnitte in den Hals beibrachte.Wirth bedauerte lebhaft,dass die Frau schon tot sei, sie hätte exemplarisch bestraft worden müssen.- Die verletzten Arbeitsjuden liess er sorgfältig pflegen und ärztlich betreuen.

Ergänzungen Blatt 5., ude
wie er sagte, um den Glauben nach zu halten, dass sie angesiedelt, belohnt und am Leben erhalten werden sollten. Er-Wirth-konnte sich selbst nicht genug darüber wundern und amüsieren, dass die das glaubten.....Und das Glauben die Kerle, das glauben die Ka Kerle!!!- rief er vor sich hin !!
-- In Belzec wurden nach dem Öffnen der Waggons und dem Entkleiden die Männer und Jungen durch den Lautsprecher aufgefordert, die überall herumliegenden Kleidungsstücke sofort zu den Waggond zu bringen, mit denen sie in einen grossen Lager verschwanden. "Wer am besten schafft , kann beim Arbeitskommando bleiben ?!- Nun begann ein Wettlauf auf Leben und Tod dieser nackten Menschen beim Aufräumen, unter dem Hohngelächter der Mannschaften. Natürlich verschwanden sie alle nachher in den Gaskammern.- Lediglich einige ganz alte und schwache Personen wurden seitwärts getragen und dann erschossen.-Ich denke an einige für mich tief ergreifende Bilddr : An das 3-4-jährige Judenbübchen,dem man ein Bündel Bindfäden in die Hand drückte zum Zusammenbinden der Schuhe, wie es verschonnen die Bindfädchen an die Leute austeilte. Oder an ein kleines Korallenkettchen, das ein kleines Mädchen einen Meter

Ergänzungen, Blatt 6.

kleines Mädchen einen Meter vor der Gaskammer verlor: Wie sich ein Bübchen von vielleicht 3 Jahren danach bückte , um es aufzuheben, wie es seine Freude daran hat - und dann in die Kammer geschossen, nein, in diesem Fall nackte hineingedrückt wird!-- SS-Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer erzählte mir : Ich habe in einem Dorf hier in der Gegend einen Juden nebst Frau aus meiner Heimatstadt Pirmasens angetroffen.Der Mann war im Weltkrieg Wachtmeister und ist ein sehr ordentlicher Kerl.Als Kind hat er mich vor dem Tode des Überfahrenwerdens gerettet.Ich werde jetzt die Leute mitnehmen und in das Arbeitskommand o eingliedern.-Auf meine Frage, was weiter aus den beiden würde, sagte Obermeyer: Nachher genau wie die andern, da darf man sich nichts von annehmen, da gibt's nur eins ! Ich werde sie immerhin erschiessen lassen !— Ich habe auch innerhalb der SS eine grössere Anzahl von Leuten angetroffen, die diese Methoden schärfstens verurteilten und die darüber zur Ablehnung oder gar zu einem glühenden Hass gegen den Nationalsozialismus gelangten. Ich nenne- auch wieder in letzter Verantwortung- hier einige Namen :

SS-Sturmbannführer Dr,med.Pocht aus Hagen i.Westf.Chef der

Ergänzungen Blatt 7.

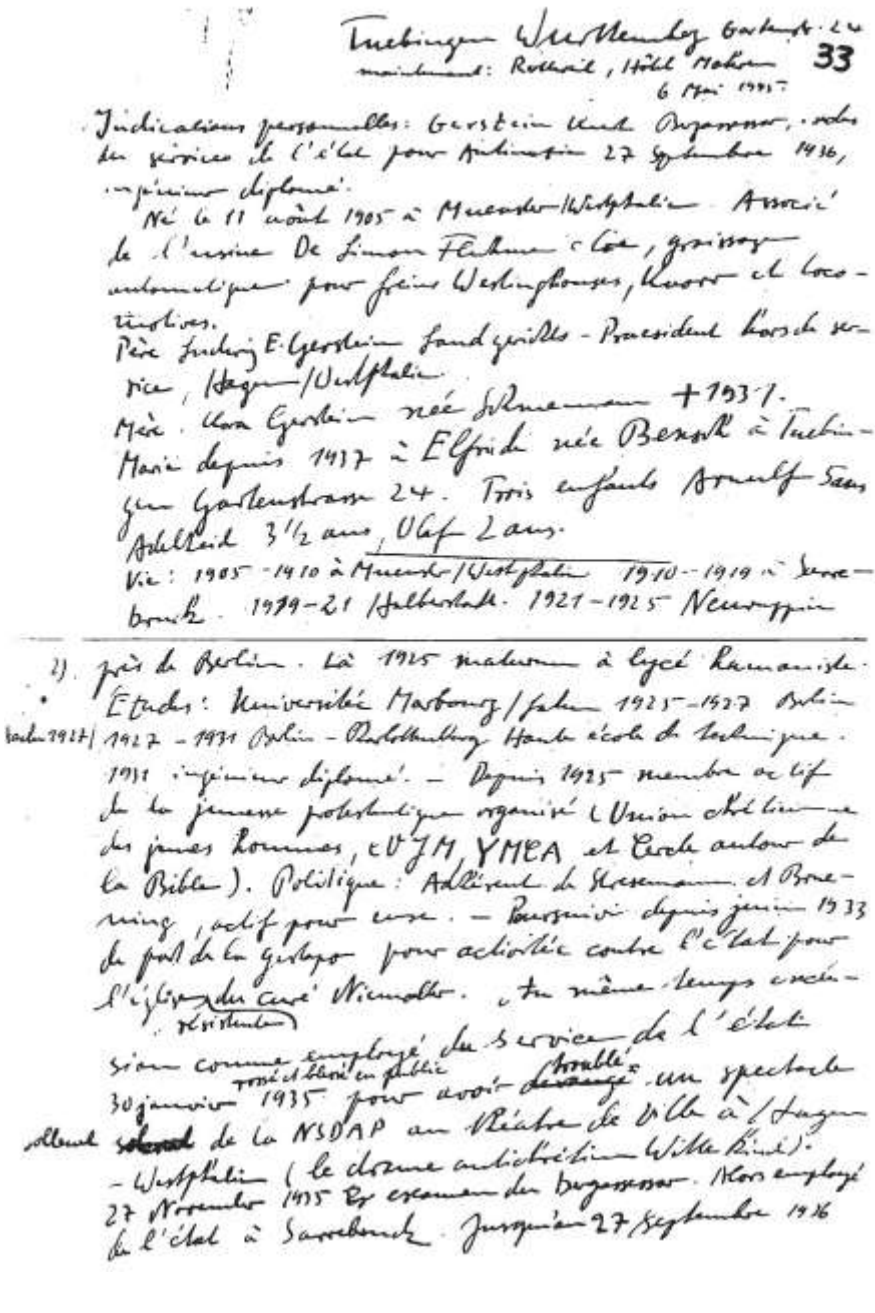
Inneren Abteilung des SS-Lazaretts Berlin-.
SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr.med.Nissen, Itzehoe.
SS-Obersturmführer Dr.med. Sorge aus Jena,
SS-Hauptscharführer, Stabsscharführer beim Reichsarzt SS Heinrich Hollünder,antinazi-Aktivist und glühender Hasser des Nazis
Hauptsturmführer Dr.Fritz Krantz, beim Reichsarzt SS Abteilung
SS-Gruppenführer Dr.pharm.Blumenreuther, Obersteter Sanitätszeug
ster beim Reichsarzt SS und Polizei,
Dr.Rudolphi,SS-Sturmbannführer ,ebendort
Dr.Behmenburg, ebendort.Rudolphi trat Oktober 44 das Hitlerbild den Flammen.
Überhaupt ist es weit gefehlt,die SS auch nur einigermassen als einen einheitlichen Haufen anzusehen. Ich weiss, wie schwer es ist da Unterschiede zu machen in der Beurteilung und Behandlung. Ich verstehe, dass man sich an irgend eine Formation besonders halten möchte und kenne die von der SS begangenen Greuel wohl am be
Aber dabei ist nicht zu übersehen, dass z.B. mindestens 2/3 der holländischen SS gezwungen zur SS durch Lug und Betrug durch genannte Sportkurse gepresst wurde. Ebenso ging es vielen Deutsch

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Ergänzungen Blatt 8.

Deutschen, namentlich aus der Hitlerjugend, die schamlos überrumpelt und übertölpelt wurden. Ferner den vielen, die von der Luftwaffe oder Marine auf Himmlers Veranlassung einfach in die SS gepresst wurden. Das muss um der Wahrheit und Gerechtigkeit willen berücksichtigt werden!

Version of 6 May 1945: T IV



Tuebingen Wilhelmstr. Garbenst. 24
33
6 Mai 1945

Indications personnelles: Gerstein Kurt Ingenieur, chef des services de l'état pour substances 27 Septembre 1936, ingénieur diplômé.
Né le 11 août 1905 à Münster-Westphalie. Associé de l'usine De Limon Fluhme & Cie, graissage automatique pour freins Westinghouse, Knorr et locomotives.
Père Ludwig E. Gerstein Landgerichts-Präsident hors de service, Hagen/Westphalie.
Mère Thea Gerstein née Schmeman † 1931.
Marié depuis 1917 à Elfride née Bensch à Tuebingen Gartenstrasse 24. Trois enfants Bruno Sans Adelheid 3½ ans, Ulef 2 ans.
Vie: 1905-1910 à Münster/Westphalie 1910-1919 à Lemgo-Brake. 1919-21 Halberstadt. 1921-1925 Neuruppin

2) près de Berlin. Là 1925 maturum à lycée Humanistique.
Études: Universités Marburg/Lahn 1925-1927 Berlin (mariage 1917) 1927-1931 Berlin - Charlottenburg Haute école de technique. 1931 ingénieur diplômé. - Depuis 1925 membre actif de la jeunesse protestantique organisé (Union chrétienne des jeunes hommes, CVJM YMCA et Cercle autour de la Bible). Politique: Adhérent de Stresemann et Brüning, actif pour eux. - Poursuivi depuis janvier 1933 du fait de la Gestapo pour activités contre l'état pour l'église du Curé Niemöller. (Hirtenbrief) Dans même temps exclusion comme employé du service de l'état 30 janvier 1935 pour avoir dérangé (troublé) un spectacle (allumé) de la NSDAP au Théâtre de Ville à Hagen - Westphalie (le drame antichrétien Wilde Kind). 27 Novembre 1935 Re-examen des Ingenieur. Hors employé de l'état à Sarrebruck. Jusqu'au 27 Septembre 1936

3) employé de l'État (haute administration des mines de la Sarre à Sarrebruck) Cet premier emprisonnement se fit pour ~~avoir~~ avoir envoyé 8.500 brochures antinazies à tous les conseils de ministres et tribunaux employés de la justice en Allemagne. — Alors en dix-huitième, alors, je faisais des études médicales à l'institut protestant pour mission tropicale médicale à Tuebingen. Associé de la maison De Simon Fleckner et Cie, indépendant j'étais libre et indépendant dans mes résolutions, recevant environ 18.000.— Reichsmark par an. Dont je pouvais, depuis 1931, consacrer une très forte partie pour mes idéaux religieux. En particulier j'ai fait imprimer environ 230.000 brochures antinazies religieuses et antinazies à mes frais, pour les ~~faire~~ envoyer par la poste. (à mes frais)

14 juillet 1938 deuxième emprisonnement au camp de concentration de Welzheim pour agitation antinazie

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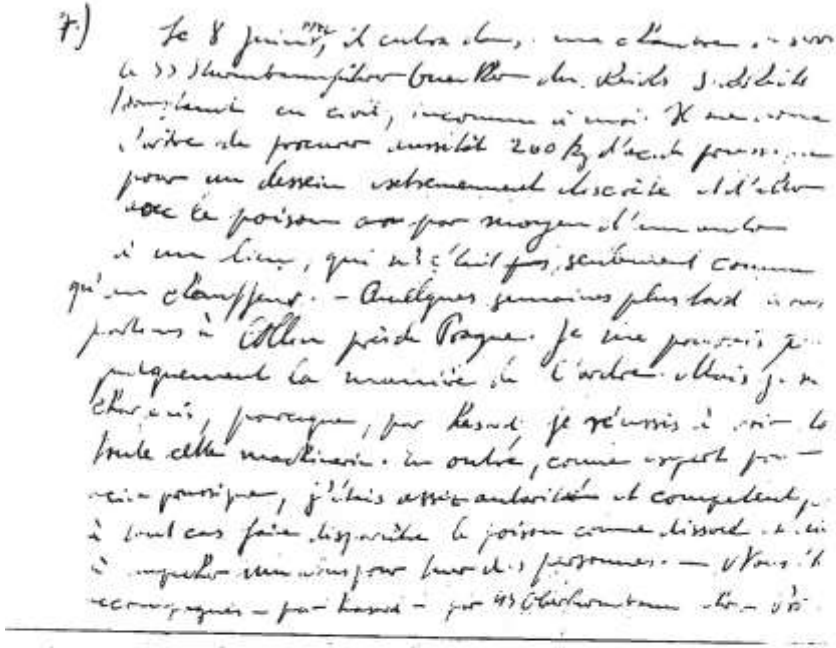
4) Souvent, j'étais fouillé et arrêté par la gestapo. Pendant toutes les années depuis 1936 - 1941 il m'était défendu de parler publiquement en Allemagne. —

Écoutant des massacres des israélites et des aliénés à Grafeneck, Hadamar etc, choqué et bouleversé dans mon et intérieur, je le savais que moi seul. Voir, voir dans toute cette machinerie et abomination dans tout le peuple! Je le savais à cette entreprise des grands scrupules s'étant emparé de moi à deux fois la victime des agents du SD (Sicherheitsdienst) qui s'étaient glissés au plus secret conseil des Frères de l'église résistante confessionnelle (Niemoeller) et même dans l'association faisant des prières. En outre, une belle-~~soeur~~ sœur — mme Bella Ebeling — était assassinée à Hadamar. Muni de deux références des employés

de gerbage, ayant traité mon cas, il m'échappa de [illegible]
l'entrer dans la SS armée. ~~[illegible]~~ Les employés d'un bureau de
l'Office que mon ministère, qui s'occupait,
devait rangé au profil du nazisme. – Le 10 mars
1941 j'entrais dans la SS. J'instruction d'environ sept
avec 40 hygiénistes
à Hamburg – Jungborn, à Arnhem / Hollande et à
Nuremberg. A l'Hollande, aussitôt je fais contact
avec la résistance nationale Hollandaise (Ingénieur
diplômé Ubbink de Doesburg). – ~~Pour~~ Pour mes
études doubles, bientôt je réussis au service médico-tech-
nique de SS Führungshauptamt – Groupe D – service
sanitaire de la SS armée, secteur d'hygiène. A cet
service, il était à moi de me choisir – moi même
mes devoirs avec toute largesse. Je construis des camions
et installations de désinfection et des filtres d'eau potable
pour bunker, camps de prisonniers et camps de concentration.

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6) Pour connaissance exacte de cette industrie j'y réussis
bientôt, mes prédécesseurs n'étant pas réussis. En Ainsi, il fut
possible de abaisser le nombre des prisonniers morts considé-
rablement. Joyeusement bientôt j'avais grands succès
et on me ~~reconnaissait~~ nommait pour grand génie technique. "Ainsi,
souvent je fus consulté de part de ministère inférieur et ministère
est." ~~Ainsi~~ Par moins, je réussis à abaisser quelquement
~~la fièvre~~ la grande vogue de fièvre jaune de 1941 aux
camps de prisonniers etc. Pour mes succès, bientôt je fus
Obersturmbannführer. Décembre 1941, le tribunal qui avait ordonné ma
radiation dans NSDAP reçut communication de mon entrée
dans la SS armée. Cela fait grands effets pour moi chez
et de à ma parenté. Mais pour mes grands succès et pour mon
caractère honorable je fus tenu et protégé par mon chef.
Janvier 1942 je fus nommé chef du service technique – sa-
nitaire ~~Arinsi~~, combinant aussi le service de hygiène
général lorsque pour désinfection.



7.) Le 8 juin[1942], il entra dans ma chambre, avec le SS Sturmbannführer Günther des Waffen SS, dont j'ai déjà parlé, accompagné d'un civil, inconnu à moi. Il me remit l'ordre de prendre aussitôt 260 kg d'acide prussique pour un dessein extrêmement discret et d'effectuer avec le poison ainsi que par moyen d'une machine à une date, qui m'était fixé, seulement comme qu'un camion. - Quelques semaines plus tard je me trouvais à Cottbus près de Prague. Je me présentais [illegible] la munition de l'ordre. Alors je me chargeais, lorsque, par hasard je réussis à voir la toute cette machinerie. Un ouvrier, comme expert professionnel, j'étais assez ancien et compétent, à tout cas faire disparaître le poison comme dissout. Je fus à emporter mes vues pour leur des personnes. — Vous [illegible] accompagnés — par hasard — par 45 Obersturmbann [illegible]

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7. Le mardi 8 [illegible], ordonnance de l'Reichsführer de l'ensemble Marburg/Lahn. — Nous partions ensemble par l'auto à Joublin. Je vous A Coltin j'avais fait entendre que l'acide était destiné pour tuer des personnes. Pour cela, l'appareil de la victime fut observé avec attention. —

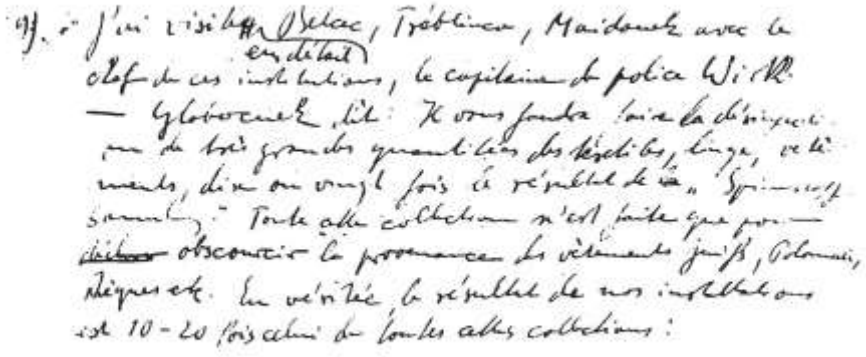
A Joublin nous fûmes reçus par SS Gruppenführer Globocnik, qui nous dit: Toute cette affaire est une des plus secrètes choses, qu'il y a, et même la plus secrète. Gerstein, qui en parle, sera fusillé aussitôt. Hier, deux parleurs sont morts. Alors il nous expliqua: A Belzec - 17 août 1942 - il y a 3 installations:

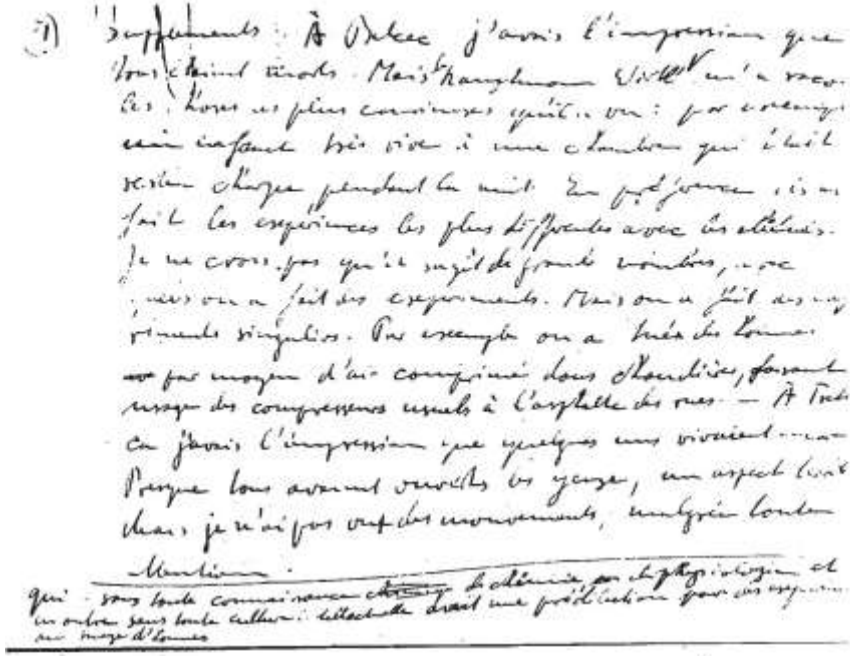
1) Belzec, à la frontière Joublin - Lemberg au secteur de la Ligne de démarcation Russe. Maximum par jour 15 personnes.

2) Sobibor - (en Pologne; je ne sais pas exactement, on) 20 000 par jour vu!

3) Treblinca, 120 Km NNE de Warsovie. 25 000 par jour vu

4) Maidanek (près Joublin) vu en préparation.

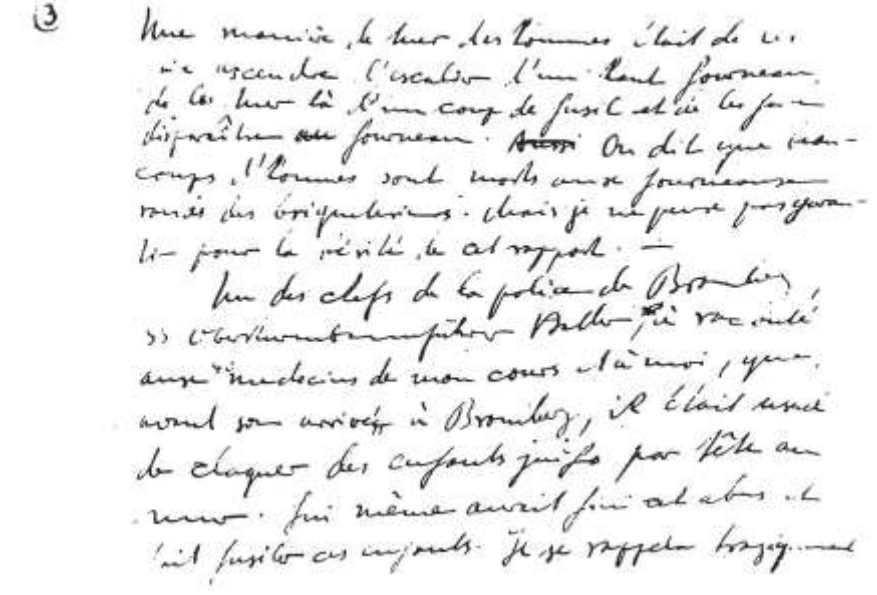




1) Supplément : À Orléans j'avais l'impression que vous étiez tenaillé. Mais Langlois Villey m'a raconté, dans une plus confidence qu'il vous a faite, très vite à une chambre qui était restée chaude pendant la nuit. En fait, on a fait les expériences les plus différentes avec des détenus. Je ne crois pas qu'il soit fondé [illegible], mais on a fait des expériences singulières. Par exemple on a tué des hommes par moyen d'air comprimé dans des douches, faisant usage des compresseurs usuels à l'asphalte des rues. — À Tchenstochau j'avais l'impression que quelques uns vivaient encore. Presque tous avaient ouverts les yeux, un aspect vivant, je n'ai pas vu de mouvements, malgré [illegible] Monsieur.

qui — sous toute conscience chrétienne de détenir un chef politique et un ordre sans toute culture intellectuelle devait une protection pour ses [illegible] au nom d'hommes

2) Sa manière de mourir la plus [illegible] m'a raconté, bouleversé et saisi de tout son cœur, [illegible] Langlois entre les Villey de Tchenstochau je croisais de plusieurs milliers des curés et de prêtres polonais, forcés à creuser eux-mêmes des fosses et qui, devant ces fosses, sont fusillés tout de suite. Demandés avec ironie s'ils croyaient encore en Jésus-Christ et en Dieu ils répondaient avec une force confession en Jésus Christ et par un appel à Sainte Vierge de Tchenstochau. Cette manière de mourir — me dit le docteur Villey — était émouvante et [illegible]. Aussi des autres intellectuels polonais etc, sont [illegible] maîtres et maîtresses sont morts d'une manière [illegible] d'une grande beauté extraordinairement humble et émouvante.



(3) Une manière de tuer des hommes était de les
faire descendre l'escalier l'un après l'autre, jusqu'au four-
neau. Là on leur tirait un coup de fusil et ils tombaient
dans le fourneau. ~~Après~~ On dit à cause des nom-
breux coups, l'hommes sont morts avec beaucoup moins
de convulsions. Mais je ne puis pas garan-
tir pour la véracité de cet rapport. —

Un des chefs de la police de Bromberg,
SS Obersturmbannführer Dr Pfannenstiel m'a raconté
avec 2 médecins de mon cours à Marburg, que,
avant son arrivée à Bromberg, il était assis
de claquer des cinquante juifs par tête au
mur. Lui même aurait fini par alors il
fait fusiller ces cinquante. Je me rappelle toujours

(4) de deux petites filles de 5 et 8 ans, qui étaient tombées
à ses genoux pour faire leurs prières — et qui avaient
devaient être fusillées. — Pfannenstiel nous raconta.
Avec massacres des Polonais: ils furent forcés de
= creuser les grandes fosses et de se poser à côté
au ventre. Ensuite ils furent mitraillés par moyen
des pistolets mécaniques. Les prochains furent engagés
de se poser avec cadavres encore chauds pour être fusillés
aussitôt. Beaucoup ne étaient pas tués et furent fusillés, jusqu'à
tentative de glisser ~~pour~~ les 5-6 couches d'hommes.

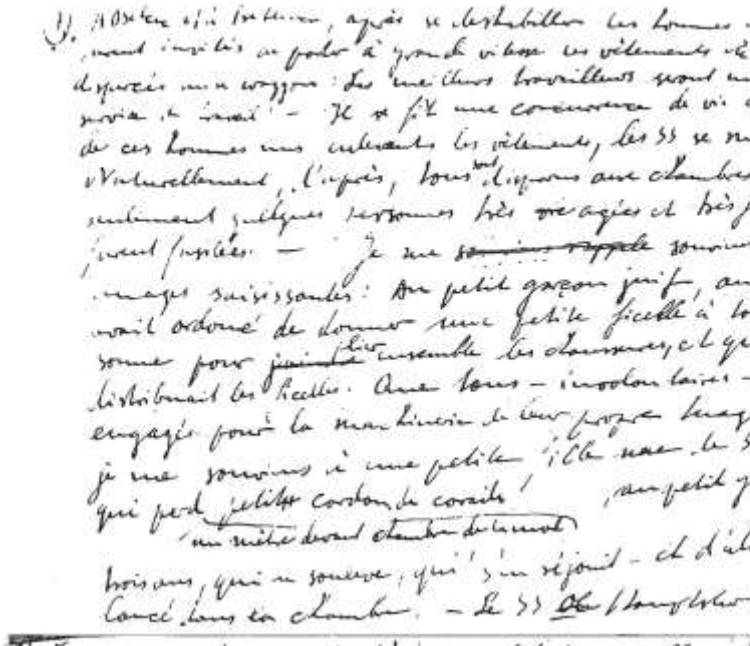
Un des chefs du gouvernement Allemand
à Krakovie m'a raconté, traduisant la
~~chose~~ chose, d'un coup ce barbarisme avait
~~heureux~~ fortune! Ils avaient saisi un des
chefs de la résistance polonaise un juif. Mal-
gré la torture il ~~garda~~ garda silence. Alors on lui a

(5) cassé des poignets.
Mais encore il garda silence. Alors on l'a mis avec le derrière au plaque du foyer ardent. Alors, il était prêt de parler ! —

Par l'occasion d'une visite à l'administration des mesures de conservation ss le 33 janvier, le 18 août 1942, ces deux officiers architectes nous racontaient, lors visite guidée du dépôt mortuaire d'une chambre de prisonniers près de publicum. Les cadavres étaient ici massés par quelques milliers. Etant occupés de leurs travaux, ils ~~étaient~~ ~~étaient tout~~ voyaient ainsi à coup les voyaient quelques uns qui s'agitaient. Le SS Rottenführer leur dit en —

(6) ne demanda que : Où ? ... Alors il y a trois cents pièce de fer rond était déjà à disposition et pour leur briser les crânes. — Ce n'était pas le point — me dirent les architectes — qui les inquiétait, mais qu'ils s'entendaient tous ces bien avec

Par occasion de une visite à Belzec, une juive à Lemberg blessé avec une rasoir quelques heures de commandos de travail. Wirth regretta qu'elle était déjà morte, pour ne pouvoir pas donner punition par exemple. Les juifs blessés il y a soigner et par médecins avec exactitude, pour leur faire croire qu'ils seraient épargnés et récompensés par Allemands. Mais il s'aperçoit qu'ils comprirent qu'ils étaient, qu'ils reconnaissaient leurs sorts, leurs pour ces ne vois les vois réussi il connaît ? —



Dr. Pfannenstiel, Professor, Hygiene-Institut der Universität Marburg/Lahn, Robert Koch-Straße 4, Fernsprecher 2066

Marburg/Lahn, den 26. Juni 1947

Herrn
Pastor Niemöller
Wiesbaden
Rathaus

Sehr geehrter Herr Pastor!

Ich bin gebeten worden, Ihnen über den Tod des SS-Obersturmführers Gerstein zu berichten, soweit ich dazu imstande bin. Ich will das gern tun, obwohl ich nicht viel Neues sagen kann.

Gerstein war mir seit 1936 bekannt. Er hatte damals eine Assistentenstelle in der Abteilung für Hygiene des Heeres, die ich in Berlin leitete. Er war ein Mann von ungewöhnlicher Begabung, ein Idealist, ein Mann, der sich für alles, was er tat, restlos einsetzte. Er war ein Mann von großer Tatkraft, der sich durch Hindernisse nicht aufhalten ließ. Er war ein Mann von großer Offenheit, der seine Meinung auch dann sagte, wenn sie unbequem war. Er war ein Mann von großer Hilfsbereitschaft, der jedem, der ihn brauchte, half. Er war ein Mann von großer Tapferkeit, der sich für seine Überzeugung einsetzte, auch wenn es ihn das Leben kostete.

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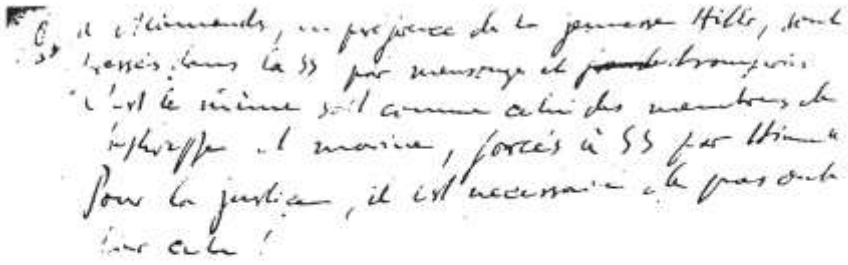
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Version of 6 May 1945: T Vb

RAPPORT du Dr. GERSTEIN de Tübingen
du 6 Mai 1945

RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR L'AUTEUR DU RAPPORT

Kurt GERSTEIN, ingenieur diplomé, adjoint du service des mines, hors service, éloigné du service de l'Etat pour activité anti-nationale-socialiste au profit de l'Eglise Reformée (pasteur NIEMOELLER, le 27.9.36). Je suis co-propriétaire de la firme de LINOX FLUMME et Cie., fabrique de machines pour graissage automatique des locomotives.

Mon pere Ludwig K. GERSTEIN, président de la Cour de Justice en retrait de Hagen (Westphalie)
Ma mère Clara GERSTEIN, née SCHEUMANN, décédée en 1931.

Je suis marié depuis le XI Aout 1937 avec Elfriede née HENSCH, domiciliée a Tubingen, Gartenstrasse 24. Nous avons trois enfants, Arnulf agé de 5 ans, Adelheid, 3 ans 1/2, Olaf 2 ans.

CURRICULUM VITAE

de 1905 à 1910 à Munster (Westphalie)
de 1910 à 1919 à Sarrebrueck
en 1921 à Halberstadt
de 1922 à 1925 à Neuruppin, près de Berlin, où j'ai passé en 1925 mon bachot au lycée.
de 1925 à 1930, travail pratique dans des mines alternativement avec des études a Marburg, Aachen et Berlin.
en 1931, examen d'ingénieur diplomé.

Depuis 1925, membre actif de la jeunesse protestante particulièrement dans les cercles bibliques des instituts pédagogiques supérieurs.

ACTIVITE POLITIQUE

partisan actif de BRUENING et de STRESEMANN.
Depuis 1933, constamment poursuivi par la Gestapo pour activité anti-nationale au profit de l'église de la résistance chrétienne (pasteur Martin NIEMOELLER, Berlin-Dahle-Dahlem) et pour continuation des réunions interdites des jeunesses protestantes.

Le 30 Janvier 1935, j'ai été malmené et blessé pour avoir protesté contre la représentation de la pièce anti-chrétienne "Kittelkind", au théatre d'Etat de Hagen (Westphalie)

Le 27 Novembre 1935, inspecteur-adjoint du service des Mines; ensuite, fonctionnaire de l'Administration des Mines de la Sarre à Sarrebrueck.

Le 27 Septembre 1936, arrêté par la Gestapo, dans mon bureau, pour avoir envoyé 8.500 brochures anti-nazies à tous les hauts fonctionnaires de l'Etat; motif: est mis en état d'arrestation de "protection" pour obtre livré à une activité néfaste pour l'Etat, malgré de nombreux avertissements, en organisant

une attaque systématique, concentrique et organisée dans le domaine littéra
contre l'Etat national-socialiste.

Ayant quitté le service de l'Etat, je pus réaliser un de mes désirs pr
férés, étudier la médecine tropicale à Tubingen à l'Institut Protestant alle
pour mission médicales. Les 18.000 marks annuels que me procurait la maison
LINCK FLAMME & Cie, me rendaient indépendant et économiquement libre; 1/3 d
mes revenus était dépensé par moi, depuis 1931, pour mes idéaux religieux. C
est à mes frais que j'ai fait imprimer 250.000 brochures religieuses et anti-
narias et ai assuré leur diffusion.

Le 14.7.38 eut lieu ma deuxième arrestation par la Gestapo et le S.D.
Stuttgart. J'ai d'abord passé quelques semaines dans diverses prisons du Ei
et fus conduit ensuite au camp de concentration de Welzheim. Auparavant, j'
été interrogé et averti, deux douzaines de fois, par des agents de la Gestapo
du S.D. Défense me fut donnée de prendre la parole sur tout le territoire
du Reich et ceci a été maintenu jusqu'à la fin du système nazi.

Lorsque j'appris l'assassinat massif des aliénés à Hadamar, Grafeneck
et ailleurs, je n'eus plus qu'un désir, voir jusqu'au fond de cette marmite
de sorciers et communiquer au peuple ce que j'y verrai, serait-ce au risque
de ma vie. Je n'avais pas à avoir de scrupules, ayant été moi-même, à deux f
la victime des agents du R.S.H. qui s'étaient eux-mêmes infiltrés dans les
milieux les plus fermés de l'Eglise protestante et qui avaient prié coste-à-
cote avec moi.

Je pensais: "Ce que vous êtes capables de faire, je le peux mieux
que vous", et je me constituais volontaire pour entrer dans les S.S. J'ai
pris cette décision d'autant plus facilement que ma propre belle-sœur,
Bertha EHRLICH avait été assassinée à Hadamar.

A l'aide de deux recommandations d'agents de la Gestapo qui avaient été
chargés de mon cas, il me fut facile d'être accepté dans les Waffen SS; un de
ces Messieurs m'avait dit: "Avec votre dose d'idéalisme, vous devriez être
enfoncé jusqu'au cou dans le parti". C'est ainsi qu'ils me montrèrent eux-
mêmes le chemin à prendre. Ma formation de base me fut donnée à Hamburg,
Langenhoorn, dans un stage que je suivis avec 60 médecins. Ensuite à Arnhem
en Hollande, et à Oranienburg. A Arnhem, je fus mis immédiatement en rela-
tions avec la résistance hollandaise par mon ami d'études le fabriquant
Ubbink DOESBURG.

Mes études doubles, en tant que médecin et technicien me conduisaient
bientôt à l'H.W. des S.S., section D, Hygiène. Il faut avouer que cette
section était d'une largeur de conception remarquable parfaitement consciente.
Le choix de mon occupation m'est laissé entièrement et librement. Je me
mets à construire des installations de désinfection locales et mobiles pour
camps de prisonniers, camps de concentration, troupes au combat en grande
quantité pour subvenir à un besoin pressant. Sans avoir de mérite personnel
à cela, j'obtiens de gros succès et à partir de ce moment, on me considère, à
tort, comme un génie technique. Je dispose tout simplement d'un solide bon
sens et d'une grande sureté d'instinct. A partir de ce moment, je suis
fortement utilisé pour des projets du Ministère du Travail et du Ministère
de l'Intérieur. Je dois me charger de remettre dans le bon chemin le système de
EST et

désinfection très insuffisant du O.K.H. Ce système était déjà tellement saboté qu'il n'y a pas grand chose à améliorer. Toutefois je réussis à stopper la terrible vague de typhus de 1941 qui sévissait quotidiennement plusieurs dizaines de milliers de morts dans les camps de prisonniers et de concentration. Bientôt je devins sous-lieutenant, puis lieutenant.

En décembre 1941, je suis à nouveau en grand danger. Le Tribunal du parti qui avait décidé mon exécution ayant appris que je m'étais infiltré dans un K.K. de S.S. Grâce à mes réussites et à l'estime générale dont je jouis, je suis protégé par mes chefs et maintenu.

En février 1942, je suis nommé chef de la section technique sanitaire qui comprend, en même temps, tout le système de l'eau potable et toute la désinfection technique, même à l'aide de gaz très toxiques.

Le 8 Juin 1942, le S.S. Sturmbannführer GUNTHER du R.S.H.A. de la Kurfuerstenstrasse vient dans mon bureau. Il est en civil. Je ne l'ai jamais vu. Avec beaucoup d'allusions mystérieuses, il me donne l'ordre de lui procurer 260 kgs d'acide prussique et de me rendre avec ce poison, avec une voiture du R.S.H.A. dans un endroit connu seulement du conducteur.

Quelque temps après, je me rends, avec cette voiture, à Kellin, près de Prague. Je pouvais m'imaginer, approximativement le genre de mission dont il s'agissait. Je l'accepte toutefois, car aujourd'hui encore il me semble qu'un hasard ressemblant étrangement au destin, me mit en situation de jeter un coup d'oeil exactement là où je voulais voir clair de toutes les fibres de mon coeur. Parmi des milliers de postes possibles, on m'avait confié, parmi les centaines d'autres, juste le poste qui m'approchait le plus de cette sorte de chose et qui me chargeait, moi parmi tant d'autres d'y travailler. Si j'y pense, cela me semble incroyable et cela d'autant plus si l'on tient compte de mon passé qui m'a conduit plusieurs fois dans les prisons de la Gestapo et du S.D. pour activité anti-nationales et, il n'y a pas si longtemps, dans un camp de concentration, ceci étant connu largement de mes chefs, par suite de la dénonciation du Parti. Vraiment le K.K. et mon patron le R.S.H.A. ont magnifiquement dormi dans ce cas et ont rendu d'une façon exemplaire le bois jardinier.

Toutefois en exécution d'un ordre reçu, je garde le secret absolu sur cette mission même dans le bureau et ne parle à personne de cette chose. Aucun doute n'est possible, si dans ma situation je me livre à une indiscrétion, je suis tué après des tortures effroyables et ma famille sera exécutée en même temps que moi.

Je n'ai pas le moindre scrupule d'accepter cette mission, car tout autre l'aurait menée à bien dans l'esprit du S.S., tandis que moi, considéré comme autorité dans le domaine de l'acide prussique et des gaz très toxiques, je peux très facilement faire disparaître tout le chargement sous prétexte que la matière est abîmée ou décomposée. C'est ainsi seulement que l'emploi d'acide prussique pour l'exécution d'êtres humains peut être empêchée. En tout cas je fais le nécessaire, à partir de ce moment, pour avoir au bassin sur moi, pour mon usage personnel, toujours du poison sur moi, ainsi qu'un pistolet bien chargé qui ne me quittent ni de jour ni de nuit.

Une place restant libre dans la voiture en question je suis accompagné par le S.S. Obersturmbannführer Professeur Docteur HUNTERHEIM, tenant la chaire d'hygiène à l'Université de Marburg (Lahn)

A Lublin dans la fabrique d'acide prussique, j'avais fait comprendre volontairement au personnel, par de maladroites gestions techniques, que l'acide prussique était destiné à tuer des êtres humains. J'ai pratiqué ainsi à chaque fois, ceci étant la meilleure façon de lancer des rumeurs dans le peuple. Le véhicule fut surveillé très étroitement à Lublin.

A Lublin nous sommes reçus par le SS Gruppenfuehrer GLOBOCNIK Général de la Waffen SS. Celui-ci dit: "Ce secret d'Etat est actuellement un des plus importants, on peut dire tranquillement le plus important, chaque homme qui en parle sera immédiatement fusillé; hier fut justement, nous avons fait faire deux buvards. Actuellement (nous sommes le 17 Aout 1942) nous avons 3 installations:

1. Belzec, situé sur la route Lublin-Lemberg, dans l'angle nord juste à l'endroit où la ligne de démarcation russe coupe la route.
   Rendement quotidien: environ 15.000 exécutions.
   Utilisation moyenne: jusqu'à par depuis Avril 42: 11.000 par jour.

2. Sobibor, près de Lublin en Pologne, je ne sais pas exactement où, 20.000 exécutions par jour depuis environ Juin 42.

3. Treblinka, en Pologne, 120 kms nord-nord-est de Varsovie. 25.000 exécutions par jour, depuis ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ Mai 42.

4. Maidanneck, près de Lublin, encore en préparation.

Accompagné du chef de toutes ces fabriques de morts, le Capitaine de Police WIRTH, j'ai visité à fond tous ces endroits à l'exception de Maidanneck. WIRTH est celui-là même chargé par HITLER et HIMMLER de mission, qui a supprimé les aliénés à Hadamar, Grafeneck et ailleurs.

Se tournant vers moi, ~~xxxxxx~~ GLOBOCNIK dit: "Votre devoir est celui de désinfecter les immenses quantités de lainages, linges, vêtements et souliers que produisent nos usines. Si tous les ans nous collectons des vêtements parmi le peuple danois, cela n'est fait que pour camoufler, vis-à-vis du peuple, et des ouvriers étrangers, la provenance de ces immenses quantités de friperies. Un autre aspect beaucoup plus important de votre mission est de modifier le fonctionnement même de nos instituts de mort. Actuellement cela se fait, grâce aux échappements de gaz d'un vieux moteur Diesel russe. Ceci doit se modifier et aller beaucoup plus vite. Je pense surtout à l'acide prussique. Avant-hier (le 15 Aout 42), le Fuehrer et HIMMLER étaient ici. J'ai reçu l'ordre de ne pas donner de permis aux gens qui sont obligés de visiter ces installations: pour des raisons de service indispensables, mais de les accompagner personnellement en vue de la conservation du secret.

PFANNENSTIEL demande alors: "Qu'est ce que le Fuehrer a dit de tout cela?" Réponse de GLOBOCNIK": Toute l'action doit être menée en plus vite. Il était accompagné du Conseiller ministérial, Dr; Herbert LINDEN, du ministère de l'Intérieur qui était responsable, comme médecin, de l'exécution des aliénés. Celui-ci émit l'idée de brûler les cadavres plutôt que de les enterrer. Il est possible qu'une génération nous succède qui ne nous comprendra pas trop bien". Là-dessus GLOBOCNIK aurait répondu Messieurs, si jamais une génération doit nous succéder qui ne comprendrait pas notre grand devoir si nécessaire, il faut vraiment croire que tout notre national-socialisme a été inutile. Je suis au contraire d'avis qu'il faudrait enterrer en même temps que les cadavres des tablettes de bronze sur lesquelles il serait inscrit que c'est Nous qui avons

ce le courage de mener à bien cette oeuvre si importante et si indispensable". HITLER répondit: "Oui, GLOBOCNIK, ceci est également mon opinion".

Néanmoins, quelque temps après, c'est l'avis du Dr. LINDEN qui domina. Même les cadavres déjà enterrés furent brulés sur des grilles fabriquées avec des rails à l'aide d'essence et d'huiles lourdes.

Les bureaux de ces usines étaient à Lublin dans ce qu'on appelle la "Caserne JULIUSSCHREEK".

On me présente aux messieurs qui s'y trouvent le jour suivant. Nous allons avec la voiture du Cne WIRTH à Belzec; une petite gare spéciale est aménagée tout près de la route, à proximité d'une colline de sable jaune. Au sud de la route se trouvent quelques batiments avec l'inscription "Kommando spécial" des Waffen SS de Belzec".

GLOBOCNIK me met en rapport avec le remplaçant de WIRTH, le SS Hauptsturmführer OBERHEYER de Pirmasens.

Avec une discrétion remarquable, celui-ci me fit faire le tour du propriétaire.

Derrières d'épaisses remparts de fil de fer barbelé, tout de suite après la gare, se trouve d'abord une grande baraque avec l'inscription "Vestiaire". A l'intérieur, il y a un grand guichet sur lequel il est marqué: "Dépot d'or et d'objets de valeur". Vient ensuite une chambre avec environ 100 cheveux, le "salon de coiffure". Ensuite, une allée bordée d'arbres d'environ 150 m. bordée à droite et à gauche de fil de fer barbelé double avec une inscription "Vers les locaux d'inhalation et de bains". Nous nous trouvons alors devant un batiment ressemblant comme une maison de bains avec un petit escalier devant en fer forgé. Sur le batiment, une grande pancarte avec l'inscription: "fondation HEERENHOLT". Je n'ai pas vu davantage est après-midi. Seulement les chambres à gaz viennent à droite du couloir se trouvant dans la "maison de bains". A droite et à gauche trois chambres comme des garages 5m sur 5 et 1,9o m. de haut. Je ne vois pas de mort est après-midi mais partout, mais sur la route règne une puanteur irrespirable, pestilentielle, indescriptible de cadavre. Des millions de mouches volaient en l'air.

Le lendemain quelques minutes avant 7 heures, je suis prévenus "Tout de suite, le premier transport doit arriver". Effectivement, à 7 heures frappantes, un train avec 45 wagons vient de Lemberg derrière les orifices garnis de fil de fer barbelé, on aperçoit des enfants d'une pâleur effroyable, aussi quelques hommes et quelques femmes avec les traits déformés par la frayeur.

200 Ukrainiens arrachent les portes et avec leurs fouets en cuir, fouettent les gens hors des wagons. 6.700 personnes, dont 1.450 sont déjà mortes à leur arrivée. Un haut parleur donne les instructions: "Se déshabiller complètement, se débarasser également des lunettes et des prothèses (un garde dit à une jeune fille: déposez tranquillement vos lunettes, vous en aurez d'autres à l'intérieur), déposez les objets de

valeur en guichet sans bon ou quittance. Un gradué juif de trois ans reçoit une brassée de ficelles qu'il distribue pensivement aux autres. C'est destiné à lier les chaussures, car jamais personne ne pourrait retrouver les paires assorties dans le tas haut de 35 à 40 mètres. Ensuite les femmes et les jeunes filles passent au "coiffeur". Avec 2 ou 3 coups de ciseaux, les cheveux sont coupés et disparaissent dans de grands sacs de pomme de terre.

Un Unterscharführer de service me dit: "C'est destiné à un usage spécial pour l'isolation de sous-marins". A ce moment déjà je prédis à tout le monde que bientôt ces sous-marins cesseront de roder en mer car l'armée la plus efficace doit perdre son mordant si elle a été souillée avec des fleuves de sang innocent.

En fait, les événements m'ont donné raison peu de temps après.

Le train de la mort se met alors en mouvement; en tête une jeune fille ravissante. Il descend l'allée. Tous nus, hommes, femmes, enfants; parmi eux, soutenues à droite et à gauche des hommes qui ont été obligés de déposer leurs prothèses.

Je me trouve avec le Capitaine WIRTH en haut de la rampe entre les chambres de la mort. Des mères avec leurs nourrissons aux seins, des petits enfants nus, des adultes, des enfants, des femmes, tous, pêle-mêle, nus, ils montent lentement. Ensuite, ils entrent dans les chambres de mort, poussés par ceux qui se trouvent derrière eux qui sont actionnés par les fouets des SS.

Dans un coin de l'allée se trouve un gros SS avec un visage de bull-dog qui est entouré par ces malheureux. D'une voix pastorale il leur dit: "Il ne vous arrive rien du tout. Vous devez seulement respirer à fond à l'intérieur des chambres, les inhalations sont indispensables à cause des épidémies et des maladies et cela vous fera du bien aux poumons". Sur la questions "que va-t-il nous arriver" il répond "Ja, naturellement les hommes doivent travailler, construire des maisons, des routes, mais les femmes n'ont pas besoin de travailler, seulement si elles veulent, elles peuvent aider dans les usines et à la cuisine".

Pour quelques uns parmi ces malheureux, cette lueur d'espoir est suffisante pour leur faire faire quelques pas jusque dans les chambres sans résistance, mais la majorité sait ce qui l'attend. L'odeur les a renseignés sur leur sort. Ainsi ils montent le petit escalier et voient toute l'installation. La majorité sans dire un mot résigné comme un mouton qu'on mène à l'abattoir. Une juive d'environ 40 ans avec des yeux flamboyants, appelle sur la tête des assassins tout le sang innocent versé ici par l'assassinat le plus lâche qui se vit jamais. C'est le Capitaine WIRTH personnellement qui la frappe 5 ou 6 fois de son fouet au visage. Elle disparaît à son tour dans la chambre. Quelques uns se tournent vers moi: "O, Monsieur, aider-nous, aider-nous". Beaucoup attendent. Je ne peux pas encore leur donner d'aide. X Je prie avec eux je m'enfonce dans un coin et je crie vers leur dieu et vers mon dieu à haute voix.

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à haute voix. Je peux me le permettre, il y a assez de bruit autour de moi. Avec quelle joie ne serais-je allé vers eux dans cette chambre, avec quelle joie ne serais-je mort de leur mort. En trouvant dans leur chambre un officier des SS en uniforme, les assassins n'auraient jamais supposé que cela pouvait être une protestation de ma part. Ils auraient considéré comme un accident et mon épitaphe aurait été: "Mort pour son Fuehrer bien-aimé, en exécution de son devoir important pour le Fuehrer".

Non, cela ne va pas, je n'ai pas encore le droits de céder à la tentation de mourir avec ces gens. J'en suis assez. WIRTH ne l'a dit: "Il n'y a pas dix personnes qui ont vu ce que j'ai vu et qui le verront; le personnel étranger auxiliaire sera exécuté à la fin. Je suis un des 5 hommes qui ont vu toutes ces installations. Il n'y en a certainement pas un, à part moi, qui voit cela comme adversaire, comme ennemi de cette bande d'assassins, donc je dois vivre encore et hurler ce que j'ai vu ici. En vérité cela doit être beaucoup plus difficile, je dois vivre et désigner.

Les chambres se remplissent: "Chargez bien" a ordonné le capitaine WIRTH. Ils se marchent sur les pieds les uns sur autres. De 700 à 800 êtres humains sur 25 m2, sur 45 m3. Je réalise vite, plus de la moitié sont des enfants, poids moyen maximum maximum 30 kgs. Poids spécifiques 1, donc 25,250 kgs d'hommes par chambre. WIRTH a raison, avec l'aide des SS, 750 personnes peuvent être casées en 45 m3 et les SS aident avec leurs fouets et enfournent autant que cela est physiquement possible. Les portes se ferment. Pendant ce temps, les autres attendent dehors, nus. Entre temps, le 2ème transport est arrivé. On me dit: "Naturellement ils attendent nus dehors même par mauvais temps, même en hiver". Je n'ai jusqu'à présent rien demandé, je parais m'y intéresser, mais un mot m'échappe bêtement: "Ils vont attraper la mort" "Ils sont bien là pour ça", me dit un SS dans son patois. En un éclair je comprends aussi pourquoi toute cette installation s'appelle "Fondation HOCHHELCHOC". HOCHHELCHOC est le chauffeur du Diesel. Un petit technicien attravailleur infatigable selon WIRTH, il a déjà maqué des mâittes impérissables lors de l'exécution des aliénés par son ardeur et sa fertilité en idées. Il est aussi le constructeur de toute l'installation, avec les vapeurs de son Diesel, toutes ces êtres humains doivent mourir. Mais la machine Diesel ne fonctionne pas. On me dit que ceci est assez rare.

WIRTH arrive. On voit qu'il lui est pénible que cela ne fasse juste aujourd'hui où je suis là. Oui je vois tout et j'entends tout: ma montre a tout bien enregistré, 50 minutes, 70 minutes, le Diesel ne démarre pas; l'humanité attend dans ces chambres en vain. On les entend pleurer et sangloter "comme à la Synagogue" remarque le professeur PFANNENSTIEL qui a collé l'oreille contre la porte en bois. Le capitaine WIRTH frappe du fouet l'Ukrainien qui doit aider HOCHHELCHOC au démarrage du Diesel.

Après 2 heures 49 minutes, mon chronomètre l'a bien enregistré, le Diesel démarre. Jusqu'à cet instant ces êtres humains vivent dans les chambres déjà remplies 4 fois 750 êtres dans 4 fois 45 mètres 3.

A nouveau 25 minutes se passent. Il est vrai que beaucoup sont déjà morts; on voit cela à travers la petite fenêtre éclairant un instant la chambre de lumière électrique. WIRTH m'a interviewé à fond pour savoir si j'estime préférable de laisser mourir ces gens dans une salle obscure ou claire. Il demande cela sur le même ton que l'on demande "Préférez-vous dormir avec ou sans couverture", "aimez-vous le café avec ou sans lait"

26 minutes plus tard, rares sont ceux qui vivent encore. Enfin,

après 32 minutes tout est mort; on me dit que cela est le temps normal pour tuer.

De l'autre coté des hommes du commando de travail ouvrent les portes en bois. Eux, juifs également, ont eu la promesse d'avoir la liberté e un certain pourcentage de tous les objets de valeur trouvés. Trois comptab tiennent un livre avec une exactitude scrupuleuse et calculent ce pourcentr

Comme des statues de marbre, les morts se tiennt pressés les uns aux autres. Dans la chambre il n'y a pas de place pour tomber ou même pour et penchés. Même dans la mort on peut reconnaître les familles; ils se tien les mains raidies par la mort et il est difficile de les arracher les uns a autres pour libérer les chambres, pour la charge prochaine.

Les cadavres nus et humides par la transpiration et l'urine, du sang d menstruation aux jambes, salis d'excréments, sont jetés au dehors, des corp d'enfants traversent l'air; il n'y a pas de temps à perdre. Les foucts des Ukrainiens tombent sur le dos du kommando de travail. 2 douzaines de dentis ouvrent les bouches avec des crochets et cherchent de l'or. Or à droite, à gauche. D'autres dentistes avec des pinces et des marteaux arrachent les dents en or des machoires. Le chef KURT GERSTEIN s'actille parmi tout cela, il est dans son élément. Quelques ouvriers controlent les organes génitaux et les anus pour chercher de l'or, des brillants, ou des objets de valeur. GERSTEIN me fait signe "Soulevez voir cette boite de conserves avec des dents en or, ce n'est que d'hier et d'avant-hier". Avec une vulgarité extraordinaire, il me dit: "Vous ne pouvez pas vous imaginer ce que l'on trouve tous les jours comme or et comme brillants, mais regardez" et il me conduit vers un bijoutier chargé d'administrer tous ces trésors, et montre tout cela. 2 grosses pi de 20 dollars semblent particulièrement plaire à GERSTEIN qui les fait disparai dans sa poche.

On me montre également un ancien chef d'une grande maison d'achats à Berlin. On fait jouer de son instrument un petit violoniste. C'est un ani capitaine de l'armée autrichienne, propriétaire de la croix de fer de 1ère classe. Tous les deux sont chefs du kommando de travail juif.

Les cadavres nus furent jeté quelques mètres plus loin, dans des fosse de 100 x 12 x 20 mètres. Quelques jours après, ces cadavres enflent et s'effondrent fortement ensuite, ce qui permet de les recouvrir d'une nouvell couche, 10 cm de sable environ sont jetés par dessus; il n'y a plus que quel bras et quelques têtes qui sortent. Le jour de ma visite, 2 transports ar ment avec environ 12,500 personnes arrivent à Belzec.

Cette "usine" fonctionne depuis avril 1942 et "fabriqué" environ 11,0 morts par jour. Lorsque le cercle de mes amis ou moi-même entendions l'émi de Londres ou la Voix de l'Amérique nous étions souvent surpris par les mens innocents qui parlaient de centaines de milliers de morts alors qu'en réalit il y avait déjà plus de DIX MILLIONS.

Durd l'année 1943, la Résistance hollandaise me fit dire par UBBINK qu j'étais prié de ne pas fournir d'atrocités inventées, mais de me contenter d reproduire la stricte vérité; malgré mes indications de ces choses, en Aout 1942, auprès de l'Ambassade suédoise à Berlin, on se refusa à croire ces chiffres. Malheureusement j'en réponds sous serment, ces chiffres sont exacts.

D'après mes documents certains j'estime le nombre des êtres humains sans défense assassinés par Adolf HITLER et [illegible] à [illegible]

à environ 20 millions. Il ne s'agit pas évidemment seulement des 5 ou 6 millions de Juifs d'Europe qui ont été ainsi assassinés, mais encore de toute l'intelligence tchèque et de l'élite d'autres peuples comme des Serbes qui suivirent le même chemin. Ensuite les Polonais, les plus nombreux et d'un petit nombre de tchèques non. Si il s'agit de ce que l'on appelle les "inutiles biologiques" qui, selon l'avis de la S.S. n'avaient plus le droit d'exister puisqu'ils ne pouvaient plus travailler.

Des commissions de soi-disant médecins, équipés de magnifiques voitures et d'un équipement de sorcellerie médicale, voyageaient de village en village, de ville en ville et auscultaient toute la population en manteau blanc, le stéthoscope à la main. Qui ne semblait pas capable de travailler, sur un simple coup d'oeil, était mis sur la liste des inutiles et était cherché quelque temps après et exécuté.

Ce sont les jeunes gens chers à HITTLER qui ont jugé, qui très souvent n'avaient même de sang bouillant, pas encore subi une formation d'école primaire et qui se congratulaient de "chers collègues" et de "M. le Professeur"

"Sans ces mesures, me dit un Sturmbannführer à Lublin, toute la Pologne serait sans valeur pour nous, car elle est trop surpeuplée et trop malade. Nous faisons seulement ce que la nature fait partout ailleurs et ce qu'elle oublie malheureusement chez les autres êtres humains."

Même un garde chasse ne confirme que l'élimination des faibles et des aliénés et justifie cette mesure avec beaucoup de conviction. Pour beaucoup cela devenait tellement nature l et indiscutable qu'il devenait difficile de discuter avec une grande partie de l'élite.

WIRTH me demande de ne pas proposer à Berlin de modifications dans les méthodes de mort dans les chambres à gaz employées jusqu'à présent car elles ont fait leurs preuves (sic). Ce qui est curieux c'est que l'on ne m'a posé aucune question à Berlin.

J'ai fait enterrer l'acide prussique exporté.

Le lendemain, 19 Aout 1942, la voiture du Capitaine WIRTH nous conduit à Treblinka, 120 kms nord-nord-est de Varsovie. L'installation est à peu près semblable mais beaucoup plus importante que celle de Belzec. 8 chambres à gaz et plusieurs montagnes de valises, de textiles et de linges.

En notre honneur, un festin vraiment hitlérien, dans le plus pur style, vieux germanique, est donné dans la salle commune. Le repas est simple mais tout est à la disposition de tout le monde en quantité illimitée. HITTLER lui-même a donné l'ordre de donner à volonté aux hommes de ce kommando autant de viande, de beurre, et surtout d'alcool qu'ils le désirent. Le Pr. FFANNENSTIEL tient un discours, soulignant l'importance et l'utilité du devoir de ces hommes. Se tournant vers moi, il parle de méthodes "très humaines" et de "beauté du travail". Cela semble invraisemblable, mais je garantis que FFANNENSTIEL, lui-même père de 5 enfants ne parlait ni en plaisantant, ni ironiquement, mais qu'il traitait comme médecin cette chose avec un sérieux absolu. Plus de la moitié des assassinés étaient des enfants; le temps normal pour tuer après le transport et l'attente si pénible était de 32 minutes. FFANNENSTIEL disait encore aux hommes du kommando: "En voyant ces corps de juifs, ces lamentables figures, on comprend encore mieux combien notre devoir provoquera de reconnaissance".

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Au départ plusieurs kilogs de beurre et de nombreuses bouteilles de liqueur nous sont offerts pour être emportés. J'ai grand peine à refuser ces choses en argumentant que, soi-disant, j'en disposais amplement. Très heureux PFANNENSTIEL empoche encore mes portions. Nous retournons en voiture à VARSOVIE. Au départ nous voyons encore un groupe de Juifs au travail qui s'active dans une des fosses communes sur un tas de " cadavres " on avait oublié de déshabiller ceux des arrivants qui étaient déjà morts naturellement, il faut rattraper cela, à cause des objets de valeur et des vêtements " m'explique le Chef WIRTH A VARSOVIE, attendant en vain un wagon-lit, je rencontre le secrétaire de légation de l'Ambassade suédoise à BERLIN, le Baron von OTTER dans le train ; encore sous l'impression fraîche de mes aventures effroyables, je lui ai tout raconté avec la prière expresse de communiquer immédiatement tout cela à son Gouvernement et aux Alliés car, chaque jour de retard coûte la vie à d'autres dizaines de milliers. Je lui dis : " Si les Alliés envoyaient à la place de nombreuses bombes, des millions de brochures et de tracts intelligents et bien faits en informant le peuple allemand de tout ce qui se passe, il est probable que dans quelques semaines ou mois, le peuple allemand en finirait avec Adolf HITLER ".

Le Baron von OTTER m'a demandé des références car cette conversation était pour lui, en tant que diplomate, très délicate. Je lui indiquai le Dr DIBELIUS à BERLIN, Brudervog E ,Z , est membre éminent de la résistance protestante, ami intime de mon ami, le Pasteur NIEMOELLER, à ce moment à DACHAU.

J'ai revu le Baron von OTTER à deux reprises à la légation suédoise. Entre temps, il a rendu compte personnellement à STOCKHOLM et me dit que son rapport a eu une influence considérable sur les relations suédo-allemandes. Quelques jours plus tard pour soulager ma conscience, et pour avoir fait tout ce qui est en mon pouvoir, j'ai essayé de rendre compte au Nonce du Pape à BERLIN ; dès mes premières paroles, on me demande si je suis soldat ; là-dessus toute conversation avec moi est refusée et je suis prié de quitter immédiatement la légation de Sa Sainteté.

Je dis cela uniquement pour prouver combien il était difficile, même pour un Allemand encore impitoyable du nazisme de trouver une voie pour discréditer un Gouvernement criminel.

Dans cette situation où tous les jours des dizaines et des dizaines de milliers attendaient l'assassinat, où une attente de quelques heures seulement me semblait criminelle, si dans cette situation, dis-je, un représentant quelconque de Jésus sur terre refuse toute conversation avec moi, que peut on demander à citoyen moyen contre le nazisme ? Que doit-il faire lui qui ne connaît ces erreurs, en général, à peine de ouï-dire ? Lui qui, comme des millions d'étrangers (telle la Résistance hollandaise) tient ces chèses pour terriblement exagérées, qui ne dispose pas de mon habileté, qui n'a peut être aucune occasion telle que moi d'écouter la radio étrangère, que doit-il faire contre le Nazisme ? Si même le représentant du Pape en Allemagne se refuse à écouter des informations de cette importance extraordinaire sur cette violation unique contre la base de la loi de Jésus " Tu dois aimer ton prochain comme toi-même ".

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Terriblement decu et abattu, je quitte la legation ou je n'ai pu trouver conseil ni aide. A peine sorti, je suis suivi par un policier ; quelques minutes plus tard, un agent cycliste me suit aussi. J'ai passe des minutes d'immense desespoir et de deception ; j'ai enleve le cran de surete de mon revolver dans ma poche et je venais mentalement de me preparer au suicide. L'incomprehensible eut lieu ; le policier me frola a 5cems près, arreta un instant et .... s'en alla. A partir de ce jour risquant a chaque heure ma vie, j'ai rendu compte de ces morts atroces a des centaines de personnes influentes : a la famille NIEMOELLER, a l'Attache de Presse de la legation Suisse a BERLIN, Dr HOCHSTRASSER, au syndic de l'Eveque Catholique de BERLIN, Dr WINTER en demandant une transmission a l'Eveque et au Pape, au Dr. DIBELIUS et a beaucoup d'autres ainsi des milliers ont ete informes par moi. Je dois ajouter que GUENTHER du R.S.H.A. (je crois qu'il s'agit du fils du GUENTHER des Etudes raciales) m'a redemande, au debut 1944, de grosses quantites d'acide prussique. Le poison devait etre livre a son bureau dans la Kurfuerstenstrasse a BERLIN et etre conserve dans un hangar qu'il me montrait. Il s'agissait de tres grosses quantites, ensemble de plusieurs wagons qui devaient etre entasses peu a peu et remises a sa disposition. Ce poison suffisait pour tuer plusieurs millions d'humains qui ainsi auraient disparu sans beaucoup de bruit. GUENTHER me disait qu'il ne savait pas encore ou, quand, comment, dans quel but, pour quel milieu ce poison devait etre utilise. En tous cas, il devait etre constamment disponible. J'ai deduit de plusieurs questions techniques de GUENTHER qu'une partie, tout au moins, de ce poison, devait etre utilisee pour supprimer une grande quantite d'hommes dans des clubs et des salles de lecture. D'apres les maigres indications je supposais qu'il s'agissait d'officiers ou de pretres, en tous cas de gens cultives et le poison devait etre employe a BERLIN meme.

Ayant visite les lieux a fond, je declare a GAUL NEB que je ne peux prendre la responsabilite de stocker de pareilles quantites de poison a cet endroit, dans la capitale, puisqu'il y avait assez pour tuer deux fois le nombre de tous les habitants. Avec beaucoup de difficultes, j'obtiens la conservation de ce poison a ORANIENBURG et a AUSCHWITZ, dans les camps de concentration. Je m'arrange ensuite de facon a faire supprimer le poison des l'arrivee, à moi-disant, pour la desinfection. Les factures de la firme ayant livre, la Societe Allemande pour la Lutte contre les Parasites, a FRANCFORT et a FRIEDBERG, ont ete etablies, sur ma demande, a mon nom; moi-disant pour mieux garder le secret ; en realite pour mieux faire disparaitre ce poison. Pour cette raison j'evite de presenter au paiement les nombreuses factures courantes pour ne pas reppeler constamment au S.D. et au R.S.H.A. les grosses quantites de poison qui devraient etre disponibles. Je fais patienter la firme et laisse les factures non payees. Le Directeur de cette maison; le Dr PETERS m'a dit, au cours d'une conversation qu'il a livre de l'acide prussique en ampoules pour l'execution d'etres humains. Je n'ai jamais su exactement quel etait le milieu que GUENTHER devait encore detruire sur ordre de son chef KITZINGER . D'apres les quantites, j'ai pense d'abord aux occupants des camps de concentration, c'est pour cela que j'ai repondu negativement au fils Jochen du Pasteur NIEMOELLER sur sa question : reverra-t-il jamais son père vivant ? L'ordre de HIMMLER de tuer tous les occupants des camps de concentration au besoin; etait a prevoir

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déjà à ce moment. Il était également clair que, tout au moins, les équipes ukrainiennes des camps de mort seraient sacrifiées pour supprimer des témoins gênants. Je pensais également à l'éventualité de l'assassinat des prisonniers de guerre comme moyen de chantage.

Lorsque plus tard, GOEBBELS indiqua que, s'il le fallait, le National-Socialisme claquerait la porte derrière lui de façon à secouer le monde, j'ai vérifié encore une fois, pour savoir si les réserves de poison étaient bien détruites.

Quelques temps après, DURRFELDER me rappela au R.S.H.A. et me demanda comment il pourrait être possible d'empoisonner les Juifs internés à MARIA-THERESIEN-STADT en jetant de l'acide prussique du haut de fortifications. Pour empêcher l'exécution de ce plan, j'ai déclaré celui-ci inexécutable.

J'ai appris plus tard qu'il s'était procuré de manière différente de l'acide prussique et qu'il avait tout de même exécuté les Juifs qui, soi-disant, menaient une si bonne vie à MARIA-THERESIENSTADT ; il s'agissait de Juifs pères de fils tués ou détenteurs de hautes décorations et ayant rendu particulièrement service.

Les camps de concentration les plus horribles n'étaient nullement BELSEN ou BUCHENWALD ; TISCHNITZ et MAUTHAUSEN étaient bien pires et des millions d'hommes ont disparu dans des chambres [illegible]

a gaz et dans des voitures à gaz (chambres à gaz mobiles) à AUSCHWITZ seuls, des millions d'enfants ont été tués par un traitement d'acide prussique dans le camp de concentration de RAVENSBRUCK.

J'ai assisté à ces essais sur des êtres vivants exécutés par le Dr GERHARD Hauptsturmführer, sur ordre du S.S. Gruppenführer, Professeur Dr. GEBHARDT Rekonlychan.

Les essais sur les femmes étaient, en quelque sorte, encore plus répugnants et odieux que dans les camps de concentration pour hommes. Au moins, aux hommes on disait honnêtement : Fais attention, tu vas recevoir une piqûre et tu vas crever ; au camp de concentration pour femmes de RAVENSBRUCK, on procédait autrement : Voilà, Mme MAYER, nous venons de constater que vous avez une abcès au foie, on va vous faire suivre une cure de quelques piqûres et vous allez voir que votre état va bien s'améliorer. Ce qu'il y avait de plus horrible, était le cynisme et la base ironie avec laquelle tout cela se faisait. C'était est un véritable concours partant de l'Etoile de David sur les chambres mortuaires et allant jusqu'à ces diagnostics humoristiques.

Quotidiennement, des expériences ont été faites à BUCHENWALD sur des centaines de détenus avec de la poudre de tablettes de pervitine d'autre part, injections de typhus. RUDOLF se réservait lui-même l'autorisation de pareilles expériences exercées sur des personnes condamnées à mort par le S.D. Les comptes-rendus de ces essais étaient tous centralisés dans mon bureau.

Le Stabsscharführer MOR[illegible]DEN [illegible] les donnait régulièrement.

Un autre jour, à ORANIENBURG, j'ai vu disparaître sans traces des milliers de pensionnaires dans un fourneau.

A MAUTHAUSEN, il était courant de faire disparaître des Juifs dans des carrières en les faisant tomber de haut.

Ce qu'il y a de curieux, c'est que ces " accidents de travail " étaient toujours prévus quelques minutes auparavant par des gardes.

Le S.S. Hauptsturmführer, Dr. Fritz KRANTZ, chef de mission auprès du Ministère S.S. du Reich, m'a rendu compte de ces faits avec un découragement sincère et a rendu publiques ces choses. KRANTZ est un ennemi fanatique des Nazis.

A BELZEC, j'avais l'impression le jour de mon inspection, qu'après une si longue attente dans les chambres, tout le monde était vraiment mort ; par contre, le Chef WIRTH, un être sans aucune instruction et sans aucune notion de chimie et de physiologie m'a raconté les choses les plus étranges apparemment. WIRTH était doué d'un sadisme particulier pour essais divers pour tuer les gens de vie à trépas. Il me parlait ainsi d'un petit enfant qu'ils ont trouvé un matin dans une chambre à gaz qui n'avait pas été vidée la veille et qui était parfaitement vivant et qui

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HIRTH se serait livré à des expériences particulièrement intéressantes sur des faibles d'esprit ; c'est sur eux que l'on pouvait expérimenter le mieux les divers degrés de sensibilité. Des essais ont également été faits à l'aide d'air comprimé ; des gens ont été mis dans de vieilles bouilloires remplies à l'aide de compresseur, d'air comprimé. A TREBLINKA, j'avais l'impression que certains vivaient encore et étaient seulement sans connaissance, ce qui n'excluait pas qu'au cours de la nuit, ils pouvaient se ranimer et souffrir un nouveau martyre jusqu'à la mort définitive.

Presque tous avaient les yeux ouverts et offraient un aspect effroyable. Malgré mon observation appliquée, je n'ai pas pu découvrir de mouvement. Dans l'ensemble, on ne s'est pas donné la moindre peine de faire ces exécutions de façon humaine si tel est qu'on ait le droit d'employer ce mot par rapport à ces faits. Tout cela a été fait moins par sadisme que par indifférence totale et commodité;

Le Hauptsturmführer Dr. VILLINGER de DORTMUND m'a parlé d'une chose qui l'a particulièrement impressionné : environ 2,000 ecclésiastes polonais ont été obligés de creuser des fosses ; ils devaient ensuite se déshabiller, se placer devant ces fosses et furent fusillés nus. Sur les questions ironiques s'ils croyaient toujours à Jésus-Christ, à Marie et à leur peuple polonais, ils répondirent avec une affirmation de foi sereine qu'ils croyaient plus que jamais au Christ, à la Sainte Mère de Dieu et à une résurrection de leur peuple.

VILLINGER me parlait de cela avec émotion.

D'autres Polonais sont morts de la même façon exemplaire, surtout des instituteurs et des institutrices. En entendant parler de tout cela, je me suis souvenu de ma propre prison dans la Buchhaenstrasse à STUTTGART ; une main inexpérimentée avait gravé dans le métal de mon lit : " Prie, la Mère de Dieu aide ". Ce ci a été pour moi dans des jours pénibles une grande consolation et ma cellule me semblait une petite Eglise. Je salue avec reconnaissance ce frère inconnu qui m'a envoyé ce signe et cet encouragement dans ma peine profonde. Que Dieu le récompense.

Un autre moyen de tuer du monde en Pologne était de faire monter les personnes en haut d'échelles de hauts-fourneaux et les jeter à l'intérieur après les avoir tuées d'un coup de pistolet. Beaucoup d'entre eurent disparu dans des fours à briques, étouffés par les gaz et brûlés. Dans ces cas, je ne dispose pas d'une source absolument garantie.

Un des chefs de la police de NUREMBERG, le S.S. Sturmbannführer KALLER raconta au médecin qui suivait le cours avec moi qu'il était d'usage à son arrivée à NUREMBERG de prendre les enfants Juifs par les pieds et de leur casser la tête contre le mur de leur appartement, pour éviter le bruit de la fusillade. Il aurait fait cesser ce non-sens et aurait obtenu la fusillade de ces enfants. Il aurait trouvé particulièrement pénible d'assister, lui-même, au fait de deux petites filles de 6 et de 8 ans, tombant à genoux et priant. Naturellement, conclut KALLER il fallait ensuite que je les fasse fusiller également. Il nous parla également de l'exécution des intellectuels polonais : ils étaient contraints de faire leur tombe, de s'y coucher sur le ventre et furent fusillés avec le pistolet mitrailleur ; les suivants étaient obligés de se coucher sur les cadavres chauds et furent fusillés à leur tour ; certains, pas encore morts,

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ont été fusillés au cours de leur tentative de sortie entre les diverses couches.

Un des chefs du Gouvernement allemand de KRAKAU m'a parlé en découpant une dinde d'une prise particulièrement bonne qu'il avait faite : un homme de la résistance polonaise, un Juif, avait refusé de parler, alors on lui avait brisé les poignets ; il continuait de se taire ; là-dessus, on l'a fait asseoir sur une plaque de fer chauffée à blanc. "Vous auriez dû voir, me dit-il, ce que ça l'a rendu bavard ".

Lors d'une visite à un bureau de construction de la Waffen S.S. à LUBLIN, les deux architectes me faisaient part d'une visite qu'ils avaient faite la veille à la morgue d'un camp de prisonniers de guerre, en vue de l'agrandir. " Des milliers de cadavres, en général de typhiques, ont été entassés là brusquement ; ils se sont aperçus que certains remuaient encore ; le Rottenführer qui portait la clef, s'est contenté de demander calmement : " Où est ? " puis a pris un marteau de fer rond tout près, et a enfoncé le crâne des personnes indiquées. " Ce n'est pas le fait lui-même qui a étonné les architectes, mais le naturel avec lequel le geste a été exécuté.

Lors de ma visite à BELZEC, une Juive avait coupé plusieurs des Juifs de travail, à l'aide d'un rasoir caché. WIRTH regrettait vivement que cette femme soit déjà morte, car elle aurait dû être punie de façon exemplaire.

Les Juifs blessés ont été parfaitement soignés par lui, pour leur faire croire qu'ils auraient la vie sauve et qu'ils auraient récompensés, " et ils croient cela, ces idiots ", s'écria WIRTH en riant.

Ce qui était particulièrement répugnant à BELZEC, était le concours organisé entre les hommes et les garçons de très petit pour traîner les effets d'habillement vers les trappes. Celui qui travaille le mieux fait partie de kommando de travail. Ainsi est constitué un concours pour la vie et la mort entre ces êtres nus qui transportent les vêtements sous les rires des S.S. ; naturellement, ils disparaissent tous sans exception, dans les chambres à gaz ; seuls, quelques êtres très vieux et très malades qui, même soutenus par les autres, ne peuvent se traîner jusqu'aux chambres étaient déposés à part et fusillés.

Quelques images particulièrement saisissantes ne me quittent plus : le garçonnet juif de 3 ans qui, revêtu, distribue les morceaux de ficelle pour lier les paires de souliers. Même cet enfant a été inconsciemment mis à contribution dans la machine de mort épouvantable de HITLER.

Je pense aussi à une petite fille qui a un peu de la chambre a perdu son petit collier en corail ; ce collier est retrouvé par un garçonnet de 3 ans ; il le ramasse, le considère amoureusement, s'en réjouit et au moment suivant est poussé, je dois le dire avec douceur, par un gardien conservant un reste de sentiment, à l'intérieur de la chambre.

! !!!!!!

Le SS Hauptsturmfuehrer ORLMEYER m'a raconte l'histoire suivante : dans un village a proximite, il avait rencontre un Juif venant de PIRMASENZ, sa ville natale. Pendant la guerre, ce Juif avait ete sous-officier, un tres chic type. Comme enfants, ils jouaient ensemble et meme, il avait sauve la vie, une fois a CHAMBERY. CHRISTMAS declara qu'il allait prendre maintenant cet homme avec sa femme dans son commando de travail. Je lui demandai ce qu'il allait devenir plus tard. Il me regarda d'un air etonne, " Que voulez-vous qu'il devienne ? la meme chose que les autres, il n'y a pas d'autre solution, enfin, peut etre que je les ferai fusiller ".

Je dois dire, pour etre juste que j'ai rencontre certains S.S. qui condamnaient formellement ces methodes et sont devenus des adversaires farouches du Nazisme. Je pense surtout au Hauptscharfuehrer HOHLAUFER qui m'a toujours mis au courant de tous les secrets et qui a toujours fait disparaitre tout ce qui aurait pu etre compromettant pour moi.

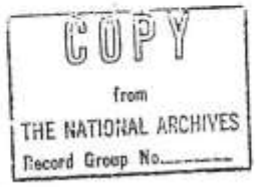
Un autre anti-Nazi etait le Chef de la Section Interieure de l'Hopital de .S.S de BERLIN, le S.S. Sturmbannfuehrer Dr. POPPT qui depuis 1941, a frequemment critique ouvertement ces methodes en risquant sciemment sa tete. La meme chose est valable pour le chirurgien SS Hauptsturmfuehrer Dr. MUSSEN de ITZEHOE et le Dr. SORGUE de JENA. Les trois pharmaciens en chef de la Waffen S.S. [illegible], BUNSENDORF et RUDOLPHI ont fait partie du groupe des officiers du 20 Juillet. Parmi les S.S. hollandais et belges, les 2/3 ont ete envoyes par force et par ruse sous pretexte de cours sportif. S'ils refusaient par la suite, d'obeir, ils etaient immediatement fusilles.

Toute personne qui, meme de l'exterieur, d'un geste imprudent, touchait au particulier d'un camarade etait immediatement fusillee. Cet ordre emanait directement de HIMMLER et a coute la vie a beaucoup de tout jeunes S.S., sortant de la Hitler Jugend et memes par force aux S.S.

De nombreux appartenant a l'aviation et a la marine ont ete brusquement mutes aux S.S. Il serait injuste, malgre la haine tres comprehensible qu'ont dechainee les S.S., de ne pas faire de difference.

Il faut dire ici que, frequemment, la police a ete bien pire que les S.S. Le President de la Croix-Rouge allemande, le S.S. Gruppenfuehrer, Dr. GRAWITZ est un des principaux responsables de la situation des camps de concentration.

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Collection of World War II War Crimes

Version of 6 May 1945: T VI



Bergassessor a.D. Kurt Gerstein
Diplom - Ingenieur

Tübingen, Württemberg, den 6. Mai 1945
z.Zt. Rottweil. Hotel Lehren.

Zur Person : G e r s t e i n , Kurt Bergassessor a.D., Diplom-Ingenieur aus dem Staatsdienst entfernt wegen antinationalsozialistischer Betätigung für die Bekenntniskirche (Niemöller) am 27. September 1936. Teilhaber der Firma De Limon Fluhme & Co., Maschinenfabrik für automatische Oel- und Fettschmieranlagen für Lokomotiven.

Vater: Ludwig E. Gerstein, Landgerichtspräsident a.D., Hagen, Westfalen.
Mutter: Clara Gerstein geb. Schemann, gestorben 1931.
Verheiratet seit 31. August 1937 mit Elfriede Gerstein geb. Bensch in Tübingen, Hartenstrasse 24.
3 Kinder: Arnulf 5 Jahre, Adelheid, 3 ½ Jahre, Olaf 2 Jahre.
Lebenslauf : 1905 - 1910 in Münster/ Westfalen. 1910 - 1919 in Saarbrücken, 1921 Halberstadt, 1922 - 1925 in Neuruppin bei Berlin, 1925 Abitur am humanistischen Gymnasium Neuruppin.

Studiengang : 1925 - 1927 Universität Marburg: Lehn, 1927 Aachen, Techn. Hochschule, 1928 - 1931 Technische Hochschule Berlin- Charlottenburg, dort 1931 Diplomingenieur - Examen. Seit 1925 aktives Mitglied der evangelischen Jugend, insbesondere der Bibelkreise an Höheren Lehranstalten.

Politische Betätigung: Aktiver Anhänger von Stresemann und Brüning. Seit 1933 seitens der Gestapo wegen staatsfeindlicher Betätigung für die Kirche des christlichen Widerstandes (Bekenntniskirche, Pastor Martin Niemöller) und wegen Fortsetzung der unterdrückten evangelischen Jugendverbände unter dauernder Verfolgung. Am 30. Januar 1935 wegen Protestes gegen die Aufführung des antichristlichen Stückes " Tittelkind " enthüllen einer Partei - Weihefeier im Stadttheater Hehn/ Westfalen verprügelt und verletzt. Am 27. November 1935 Bergassessor - Examen bei "Wirtschaftsministerium. Anschließend Beamter der Saargruben - Verwaltung zu Saarbrücken. Am 27. September 1936 Verhaftung aus dem Dienstzimmer heraus durch die Gestapo wegen Versendung von 8500 antinationalsozialistischer Broschüren an sämtliche Staats- und Ministerialräte sowie an alle höheren Justizbeamten. Aus der Beschuldigungsschrift .....
" wird wegen staatsfeindlicher Betätigung trotz immer wieder erfolgter Verwarnung wegen eines konzentrischen, Systematischen und organisierten literarischen Massenangriffs gegen den nationalsozialistischen Staat in Schutzhaft genommen ..... " ——— In Erfüllung eines Lieblingswunsches studierte ich alsdann nach meiner Entfernung aus dem Staatsdienst an evangelischen Deutschen Institut für Ärztliche Mission in Tübingen Medizin. Als Teilhaber der Firma De Limon Fluhme & Co. war ich bei einem Jahreseinkommen von rd. RM 18 000,— (Reichsmark) wirtschaftlich frei und unabhängig. Ein Drittel meines Einkommens pflegte ich seit 1931 für meine religiösen Ideale auszugeben. Ich ließ auf meine Kosten 250 000 antinationalsozialistische und religiöse Broschüren drucken und verteilte oder versandte sie auf meine Kosten. Am 14. Juli 1938. Am 14. Juli 1938 erfolgte meine zweite Verhaftung durch die Geheime Staatspolizei und SD Stuttgart und meine Verbringung unverhaft ins Gefängnis, dann in das Konzentrationslager Welzheim wegen staatsfeindlicher Betätigung. Vorher war ich zwei Dutzend mal durch die Gestapo und den SD verhört und verwarnt worden. Ich wurde für das ganze Reichsgebiet mit einem Redeverbot belegt, das bis zum Ende des Systems aufrecht erhalten blieb.

Als ich von dem Massenmord der Geisteskranken in Eglfing, Grafeneck und anderenorts hörte, hatte ich nur noch den einen Wunsch:" Du mußt in diesen ganzen Verbrechenssumpf hineinschauen und das Geschehene unter Einsatz Deines Lebens in Volk bekannt machen! " Ich brauchte hierbei keine

Skrupeln ;

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1764.

Skrupeln zu haben, da ich selber zweimal das Opfer von SD-Agenten geworden war, die in den eigenen Bruderrat der Bekenntniskirche sich eingeschlichen hatten und sogar die engsten Gebetsgemeinschaften, dort mit auf die Knie gingen und mitbeteten. Ich dachte mir : Was ihr könnt, das kann ich schon lange und meldete mich freiwillig zum Eintritt in die SS. Dies war da sehr, als meine Schwägerin Bertha Ebeling aus Saarbrücken in Haft gebracht worden war. Auf Grund zweier Empfehlungen von Gestapobeamten, die meine Sache bearbeitet hatten, war es mir ein Leichtes, in die Waffen-SS aufgenommen zu werden. Die Herren wären unbedingt der Ansicht, daß ein Idealismus, wie der meine, unbedingt für die NSDAP nutzbar gemacht werden müsse. So zeigten sie mir selbst den Weg, den ich alsdann ging.
Meine Grundausbildung erhielt ich mit 40 Ärzten zusammen in Hamburg-Langenhoorn, dann in Arnhein-Holland und in Oranienburg. In Arnhein nahm ich durch meinen Studienfreund, den Fabrikanten Ubbink aus Doesburg, Dipl.Ing., sofort die Fühlung mit der holländischen Widerstandsbewegung auf. Wegen meines Doppelstudiums in Medizin und Technik wurde ich alsbald ins SS-Führungshauptamt, Amtsgruppe D, Sanitätswesen der Waffen-SS, Abteilung Hygiene, berufen. Zugegeben, dieser Betrieb war von einer beachtlichen Großzügigkeit. So wurde es mir völlig selbst überlassen, mir eine Betätigung zu suchen. Ich konstruierte, um einen ganz dringenden Bedürfnis abzuhelfen, Desinfektionsanlagen, fahrbare und lokale, in großer Zahl, namentlich für Gefangenenlager, Konzentrationslager und für die kämpfende Truppe. Ohne mein Verdienst hatte ich hierbei außerordentliche Erfolge und wurde von da ab für ein ganz besonderes technisches Genie gehalten. Ich wurde daher auch für gleichartige Projekte des Ostministeriums und des Reichsarbeitsministeriums häufig herangezogen. Immerhin gelang es in der Tat, die entsetzliche Flecktieberwelle von 1941, die in den Gefangenen- und Konzentrationslagern zeitweise täglich mehrere zehntausende an Toten forderte, recht erheblich herabzusetzen. Ich wurde daher sehr bald Leutnant und Oberleutnant. In Dezember geriet ich nochmals in eine große Gefahr, da das Parteigericht, das meinen Ausschluß aus der Partei verfügt hatte, Kenntnis von meinem Eintritt in ein führendes Amt der SS erhielt. Wegen meiner großen Erfolge und wegen meiner allgemeinen Wertschätzung wurde ich jedoch seitens meines Amtes geschützt und gehalten. In Februar 1942 wurde ich Chef der Abteilung Gesundheitstechnik, die gleichzeitig das Trinkwasserwesen und die gesamte technische Desinfektion, auch die mit hochgiftigen Gasen, mit umfaßte.

An 8. Juni 1942 erhielt ich in meinem Dienstzimmer Besuch von dem SS-Sturmbannführer Günther vom Reichssicherheitshauptamt in der Kurfürstenstrasse. Er kam in Zivil, ich kannte ihn bis dahin nicht. Er gab mir unter allerlei geheimnisvollen Andeutungen den Befehl, ein Quantum Blausäure (- 260 kg -) zu beschaffen und mit diesem Gift mittels eines Kraftwagens des SD, an einen Ort zu fahren, der nur dem Chauffeur bekannt sei. Die Sache liefe als eine der damals geheimsten Reichssachen. Einige Zeit später fuhr ich mit besagten Wagen nach Kollin bei Prag. Ich kannte nur die Art des Auftrages ungefähr denken. Ich übernahm ihn jedoch, weil ich mich hier der Zufall an das Ziel führte, in diese gesamte Karchinerie den lang ersehnten Einblick zu erhalten. Ich hatte auch nicht die leisesten Bedenken. Denn wenn ich den Auftrag nicht übernommen hätte, hätte ihn ein anderer in Sinne des SD ausgeführt, während ich als Autorität auf dem Gebiet der hochgiftigen Gase ohne Schwierigkeiten die ganze Ladung — als versetzt oder gefährlich geworden oder verdorben — verschwinden lassen konnte. So,konnte nur ich jeden Mißbrauch der Blausäure zur Tötung von Menschen verhinde:

Fa.:

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Da noch ein Platz im Zuge frei war, erbat ich mich bereit, den SS Obersturmbannführer Prof. Dr. med. Pfannenstiel, Ordinarius für Hygiene an der Universität Marburg/Lahn, mitzunehmen. In Kollin hatte ich in der Fabrik den technischen Personal gegenüber durch absichtlich ungeschickte technische Fragen dur blicken lassen, daß die Blausäure zum Töten von Menschen bestimmt sei. Ich habe das in Folge stets so gehalten, die beste Art, die Sache im Volk herumzubringen. Prompt wurde in Kollin das Fahrzeug sorgfältig beobachtet. - In Lublin werden wir durch den SS- Gruppenführer General Globocnec empfangen. Dieser sagte zu uns: Diese Geheim Reichssache ist z.Zt. eine der geheimsten, man kann sagen, die geheimste überhaupt, die es gibt. Jeder der davon schwätzt wird erschossen.

Gerade gestern haben wir zwei Schnitzer still gemacht.- Im Augenblick, das war am 17. August - haben wir 3 Anlagen:

1.Belzec, an der Chaussee Lublin- Lemberg im nördlichen Winkel genau an der Stel wo die Demarkationslinie mit den Russen die Chaussee schneidet. Tagesleistungen etwa 15 000 Tötungen. Durchschnittliche Auswertung bisher seit April 11 000 pro Tag.

2. Sobibor, bei Lublin in Polen, ich weiß nicht genau wo. 2em 000 Tötungen pro Tag.

3. Treblinka, 120 km NNO von Tarschau in Polen, 25 000 Tötungen pro Tag. Durchschnittliche Auswertung etwa 15 500 Tötungen pro Tag seit Juni 1942.

4. Maidanek bei Lublin. War damals noch im Aufbau.

Ich habe Belzec, Treblinka und Maidanek in Begleitung des Chefs dieser ganzen Tötungsanlagen, dem Polizeihauptsturm W i r t h zusammen car ähnlich in Betrieb besichtigt. Wirth ist derselbe, der in Auftrage von Hitler und Himmler die Euthanasieanstalten in Hadamar, Grafeneck und anderwärts eingebracht hat.

Globocnec sagte zu uns, d.h. er wendete sich nur an mich: Ihre Aufgabe ist es, die großen Mengen Spinnstoffe, Wäsche, Kleidungsstücke und Schuhe, die in den Anlagen anfallen, zu desinfizieren. Die Mengen machen das 10 - 20fache der Ergebnisse der Spinnstoffsammlungen aus. Diese ganzen Sammlungen werden in wesentlichen nur deshalb durchgeführt, um den ausländischen Arbeitern und den Deutschen Volk die Herkunft der großen Mengen an Altkleidern einigermaßen plausibel zu machen.- Ihre andere, natürlich noch sehr viel wichtigere Aufgabe ist die, den Betrieb dieser Todesanlagen selbst umzustellen. Die Sache geschieht jetzt mit Diesel- Auspuffgasen von einem alten russischen Dieselmotor. Das muß auf etwa umgestellt werden, was schneller geht, und da denke ich vor allem an Blausäure.-Vorgestern- am 15. August 42 - waren der Führer und Himmler hier. Ich darf den Leuten, die die Anlagen besichtigen müssen, keine Einlaßscheine ausstellen, sondern muß sie um der Geheimhaltung willen persönlich dort abgeben. Darauf fragte Pfannenstiel:"Was hat denn der Führer zu den ganzen gesagt? " Darauf Globocnec" Die ganze Aktion soll rascheistens durchgeführt werden! " Inzwischer Begleitung befand sich noch der Ministerialrat Dr. Herbert Linden vom Reichsministerium. Der meinte ob es nicht besser sei, die Leichen zu verbrennen, anstatt sie einzuscharren. Es hätte doch mals noch uns eine Generation kommen, die das ganze nicht verstünde. Darauf habe ich Globocnec gesagt:" Meine Herren, wenn je eine Generation nach uns kommen sollte, die unsere große und so dankbare und nötige Aufgabe nicht verstehen sollte, dann allerdings, ist unser ganzer Nationalsozialismus vergeblich gewesen. Ich bin im Gegenteil der Ansicht, daß man Ehrentafeln versenken sollte, auf denen geschrieben ist, daß wir es waren, die den Mut gehabt haben, dieses so notwendige und wichtige Werk durchzuführen.— Darauf Hitler: Gut

Globocnec ..

Globocnes, das ist allerdings auch meine Ansicht.- Nachdringlicher Zeit hat sich dann doch die anderer Ansicht durchgesetzt. Die Leichen wurden dann auf improvisierten riesigen Rosten aus Eisenbahnschienen mit Benzin und Dieselöl verbrannt.- Ich mußte dann noch das sehr umfangreiche Betriebsbüro dieser Tötungsanstalten in Lublin in der sogenannten " Julius - Schreck - Kaserne -" besuchen. Am nächsten Tage fuhren wir mit dem Auto des Hauptmann Wirth nach Belzec. Ein kleiner Sonderbahnhof war hart an einen gelben Sandhügel in Norden nicht bei der Chaussee geschaffen worden. Südlich an der Chaussee befanden sich einige Betriebsgebäude mit der Aufschrift: " Sonderkommando Belzec der Waffen SS ". Globocnec übergab sich den SS- Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer aus Pressens, der sich mit großer Zurückhaltung die Anlagen sehen ließ. Hinter dichten Reisighecken hart am Bahnhof war zunächst eine große Baracke mit der Aufschrift: **G a r d e r o b e .** Dort befand sich ein großer Schalter:" Geld und Wertsachen-Abgabe." Dann folgte ein Zimmer mit etwa hundert Haaren, der Friseurraum. Dann eine Birkenallee von etwa 150 Metern, rechts und links mit doppeltem Stacheldraht umzäunt mit Schildern: " Zu den Inhalier- und Badehäusern !" - Dann stand vor uns ein Gebäude, etwa wie ein Badehaus, mit einem kleinen Treppchen, davon rechts und links je ein großer Blumentopf mit Geranien. Auf dem Dach als Windfahne der Davidstern in Schmiedearbeit.- Vor dem Gebäude eine Inschrift: " Heckenholt - Stiftung." Mehr habe ich an diesem Nachmittag nicht zu sehen bekommen. Insbesondere sahen ich nicht einen Toten zu sehen. Aber über dem ganzen, auch noch über der Chaussee lag ein pestartiger Leichengestank und Millionen Fliegen schwirrten überall herum. In den Badehaus selbst waren rechts und links von einen Flur je 3 Kammern etwa wie Garagen, 5 x 5 Meter groß, 1,90 m hoch, angeordnet.An anderen Morgen wurde mir wenigen Minuten vor 7 Uhr gesagt: Gleich kommt der erste Transport ! - In der Tat kam Punkt 7 Uhr ein Zug mit 45 Wagen von Lemberg. Hinter dem mit Stacheldraht vergitterten Luken sah man entsetzlich bleiche Kinder, auch einige Männer und Frauen, mit angstverzerrten Mägen. Der Zug verschwindet hinter der Rampe, 200 Ukrainer reissen die Türen auf und peitschen die Leute mit ihren Lederpeitschen aus den Wagen heraus, 6700 Personen, von denen 1450 bereits bei ihrem Eintreffen tot sind. Ein Lautsprecher gibt die Anweisungen: Sich ganz auszuziehen, auch Prothesen,Brillen usw. ablegen. (Zu einen Mädchen sagte ein Posten: Tun Sie die Brille ab, Sie bekommen darin eine andere Brille!) Die Wertsachen am Schalter abgeben, ohne Bon oder Quittung.- Ein kleines Judenmädchen kriegt eine Hand voll Bindfäden unter den Arm gedrückt, die das dreijährige Kind verspannen an die Leute anteilt : Zum Zusammenbinden der Schuhe!- Denn in den Haufen von 35 oder 40 Meter Höhe hätte keiner nachher die passenden Schuhe wieder zusammenfinden können.- Dann die Frauen und jungen Mädchen zum Friseur, der mit 2 - 3 Scherenschlägen die Haare herunterschneidet und sie in großen Kartoffelsäcken verschwinden läßt." Das ist für irgendwelche Spezialwäsche für U-Boote bestimmt, für Dichtungen oder dergleichen! --" sagt mir der Unterscharführer, der dort Dienst tut.- Ich sagte schon damals vielen Leuten voraus, daß diese U-Boote bald nicht mehr fahren würden, weil die noch so einsatzreiche Waffe stumpf werden müsse, wenn sie mit Strömen unschuldigen Blutes benetzt würde. Gott würde es irgendwie so einrichten, daß sie nicht mehr f a h r e n ! - In der Tat habe ich damit ja auch Recht behalten! - Dann setzt sich der Zug in Bewegung. Voran ein blindhüpfendes Mädchen, so gehen sie die Allee entlang, alle nackt, Männer, Frauen, Kinder, von beiden Seiten von Anderen gestützt, Männer mit Prothesen, die sie haben ablegen müssen .

Ich selbst stehen mit Hauptmann Wirth oben auf der Rampe zwischen den Todeskammern. Mütter mit ihren Säuglingen an der Brust, sie kommen herab, abgerun-

dem ..

dann treten sie ein in die Todeskammern.- An der Ecke der Birkenallee steht ein starker älterer SS-Mann, empfängt von den Armen. Mit pastoraler Stimme sagt er zu ihnen: Es passiert Euch nicht das Geringste ! Ihr müßt nur in den Kammern tief Atem holen, das weitet die Lungen, diese Inhalation ist notwendig wegen Krankheiten und Seuchen.- Auf die Frage, was mit ihnen geschehen würde, antwortet er : Ja natürlich die Männer müssen arbeiten, Häuser und Chausseen bauen, aber die Frauen brauchen nicht zu arbeiten. Nur wenn sie wollen können sie im Betrieb oder in der Küche mithelfen.- Für einige von diesen Armen ein kleiner Hoffnungsschimmer, der ausreicht, daß sie ohne Widerstand die paar Schritte zu den Kammern gehen-, die Mehrzahl weiß Bescheid, der Geruch kündet ihnen ihr Los! So steigen sie die kleine Treppe herauf- und dann sehen sie alles! Mütter mit ihren Säuglingen an der Brust,' kleine nackte Kinder, Erwachsene, Männer und Frauen, alle nackt durcheinander - sie zögern- aber die treten ein in die Todeskammern, von den anderen hinter ihnen vorgetrieben, oder von den Lederpeitschen der SS getrieben.'Die Mehrzahl ohne ein Wort zu sagen. Wie ein Lamm, das zur Schlachtbank geführt wird!'Eine Jüdin von etwa 40 Jahren mit flammenden Augen ruft : das Blut, das hier gemauschelt wird in den gemeinsten Henkelkerl, der ja durchgeführt wurde, über die Mörder. Sie erhält 5 oder 6 Schläge mit der Peitsche ins Gesicht, von Hauptmann Wirth persönlich, dann verschwindet auch sie in der Kammer.— Manche wenden sich an mich O Herr helfen sie uns doch, helfen Sie uns doch! — Viele Menschen beten. Ich kann ihnen doch nicht helfen, ich bete mit ihnen, ich drücke mich in eine Ecke und schreie laut zu meinen und ihren Gott.Es ist laut genug um mich her, ich kann mir das leisten, laut zu meinen Gott zu schreien. Die gerne wäre ich mit ihnen in die Kammer gegangen, wie gerne wäre ich ihren Tod mitgestorben. Sie hätten dann einen uniformierten SS-Offizier in ihren Kammern vorgefunden, auf einen Protest wären sie garnicht gekommen, sie hätten die Sache als Unglücksfall aufgefaßt, ich wäre gemeldet worden : " In treuen Dienst für seinen geliebten Führer in Erledigung einer großen Aufgabe für den Reichsführer starb im Dienst ..." Nein, so gehts also nicht. Noch darf ich dieser Versuchung, mit diesen Leuten zu sterben, nicht nachgehen. Ich weiß genau: Noch nicht 10 Personen sehen, was ich sehe und gesehen habe, der das ganze hier Übersieht, alle Anstalten und ihre Organisation. Sicher noch nicht einer außer mir sieht dies als Gegner, als Feind dieser Mordhelbande. Ich muß also noch leben und zuvor verkünden, was ich hier erlebe! Gewiß, es ist der viel viel schwerere Dienst! — Die Kammer füllen sich. Gut vollpacken, so hat es der Hauptmann Wirth befohlen. Die Menschen stehen einander auf den Füssen, 700 - 800 Menschen auf 25 Quadratmetern in 45 Kubikmetern. Ich überschlage :Durchschnittsgewicht höchstens 35 kg., mehr als die Hälfte sind Kinder, spez.Gewicht 1. Also 25 250 kg. Menschen pro Kammer, Wirth hat recht, wenn die SS etwas nachhilft, kann man 750 Menschen in 45 Kubikmetern unterbringen! - Und sie hilft nach, mit ihren Peitschen und zwängt sie hinein, soweit es physisch überhaupt geht.- Die Türen schließen sich.' Währenddessen warten die anderen draussen im Freien nackt. Inzwischen ist auch der zweite Transport eingetroffen. Man sagt mir selbstverständlich auch im Winter, oder bei kaltem Wetter nackt,! Ja, aber sie können sich ja den Tod holen! - sage ich, der ich sonst vorsichtig bin, überhaupt nichts frage, uninteressiert tue, dies Wort rutscht mir raus —." Ja grad für das sind sie ja doch! — sagt mir ein SS-Mann darauf in seinem Platt.—

Jetzt endlich verstehe ich auch warum die ganze Einrichtung " Eckenholt - Stiftung " heißt. Eckenholt ist der Chauffeur des Diesels, ein kleiner Techniker und unersetzlicher Schaffer. Neben bei der Tötung der Geisteskranken hat er sich - nach Wirth unerhörte Verdienste erworben

durch ...

durch seinen Fleiß, seinen Ideenreichtum. Er ist auch der Erbauer der ganzen Anlagen. Mit den Abgasen seines Diesels sollen die Menschen hier zu Tode gebracht werden. Aber der Diesel funktionierte nicht. Das kann verhältnismäßig selten vor, sagte man mir. - Der Hauptmann Wirth kommt. Man sieht, es ist ihm peinlich, daß das gerade heute passieren muß, wo ich hier bin. Obwohl ich sehe alles ! und ich warte. Seine Stoppuhr hat alles brav registriert. 50 Minuten, 70 Minuten- der Diesel springt nicht an ! Die Menschen warten in ihren Gaskammern. Vergeblich. Man hört sie weinen, schluchzen. -"Wie in der Synagoge! " bemerkt der Professor Pfannenstiel, das Ohr an der Holztür. Der Hauptmann Wirth schlägt mit der Reitpeitsche den Ukrainer, der den Dieselholt beim Diesel helfen soll,in's Gesicht.- Nach 2 Stunden 49 Minuten die Stoppuhr hat alles wohl registriert!- springt der Diesel an. Bis zu diesem Augenblick leben die Menschen in diesen bereits gefüllten 4 Kammern, 4 x 750 Menschen in 4 x 45 Kubikmetern ! % Von neuem verstreichen 25 Minuten. Richtig viele sind jetzt tot. Man sieht das durch das kleine Fensterchen, in den das elektrische Licht die Kammer einen Augenblick erleuchtet. Wirth hatte mich eingehend instruiert, ob ich es für richtiger halte, die Leute in den beleuchteten oder in den unbeleuchteten Kammer sterben zu lassen. Er fragte das in dem Stiel, in den man fragt, ob man mit oder ohne Heilkissen besser schläft. Nach 25 Minuten lebtja nur noch wenige. Endlich nach 32 Minuten ist alles tot! - Von der anderen Seite öffnen die Männer vom Arbeitskommando die Holztüren. Man hat ihnen, - selbst Juden !- die Freiheit und einen kleinen Promillesatz von allen gefundenen Werten für ihren schrecklichen Dienst versprochen. Drei Buchhalter führen mit großer Exaktheit Buch und berechnen natürlich die Promillesätze. Die Kassatücher stehen die Zähne aneinandergepreßt; in den Kammern. Es wäre auch kein Platz hinzufallen oder auch nur sich vorüberzuneigen. Selbst im Tode noch kennt man die Familien. Die Gatten sich, im Tode vereinigt, die Kinder, sodaß man Mühe hat, sie auseinanderzureißen, um die Kammern für die nächste Charge frei zu machen. Man wirft die Leichen - naß von Schweiß und Urin, verbeschmutzt, Menstruationsblut an den Beinen, herum. Kinderleichen fliegen durch die Luft. Man hat keine Zeit, die Reitpeitschen der Ukrainer sausen auf die Arbeitskommandos. Zwei Dutzend Zahnärzte öffnen mit Haken den Mund und schauen nach Gold - Gold links - ohne Gold rechts ! - Andere Zahnärzte brechen mit Zangen und Hämmer die Goldkronen und Kronen aus den Kiefern. - Unter allen springt der Hauptmann Wirth herum. Er ist in seinem Element. Einige der Arbeiter kontrollieren Genitalien nach Gold, Brillen und Suchen.- Wirth ruft mich heraus. Sehen Sie mal diese Konservenbüchse mit Goldzähnen, das ist nur von gestern und vorgestern! In einer unglaublichen und falschen Sprechweise sagt er zu mir : Sie glauben garnicht, was wir jeden Tag finden an Gold und Brillanten - er sprach es mit 2 L ohne J-Laut und Doller.- Aber schauen Sie selbst! - Und nun führte er mich zu einen Juwelier, der alle diese Schätze zu verwalten hatte und ließ mich alles sehen. Man zeigte mir dann auch noch einen früheren Chef des Bankhauses des Westens in Berlin W und ließ mir zu Ehren von einen kleinen Geiger vorspielen: Der ist ein ehemaliger Hauptmann der Kaiserlich-Königlich Österreichischen Armee mit den EK I, die beiden Chefs den jüdischen Arbeitskommandos.- Die nackten Leichen wurden auf Rollwagen nur wenige Meter weit in Gruben von 100 x 12 x ± 20 m geworfen. Nach einigen Tagen gärten die Leichen hoch und fielen alsdann kurze Zeit später stark zusammen, sodaß man eine neue Schicht auf dieselben draufwerfen konnte, dann wurden ca x 10 cm Sand darüber gestreut, sodaß nur noch vereinzelt Köpfe und Arme herausragten.- An den Tage meines Besuches trafen in Belzec nur 2 Transporte mit zusammen angeführt 12 500 Personen ein.

Diese..

Diese Anlage war seit April 1942 in Gange und schafft in Durchschnitt pro Tag rund 10000 Tötungen. Denn mein Freundeskreis und ich den Londoner Sender oder die Stimme Amerikas hörten, wunderten wir uns oft über die ahnungslosen Engel, die mit hunderttausenden von Toten aufwarteten, wo es schon sig Millionen waren. Die holländische Widerstandsbewegung ließ mir im Jahre 1943 durch Diplomingenieur Ubbink aus Doesburg bestellen, ich möchte ihr nicht mit Greueln aufwarten, sondern sie mit der strengsten Wahrhaftigkeit bedienen. Trotz meiner Weitergabe dieser Dinge im August 1942 an die Schwedische Gesandtschaft in Berlin glaubte man anscheinend einfach diese Zahlen nicht. Und doch sind sie leider - ich verbürge mich dafür mit meinem Eide w a h r ! Ich schätze die Zahl der auf Veranlassung von Adolf Hitler und Heinrich Himmler gemeuchelten wehr- und waffenlosen Menschen, die ohne jede Möglichkeit des Widerstandes in diese Kesselfallen gelockt und dort angebracht worden sind, auf mindestens 2o ooo ooo Menschen. Denn es handelt sich beileibe nicht nur um die vielleicht 5 oder 6 Millionen Juden Europas, die so umgebracht worden sind, sondern vor allem noch um die polnische und einen großen Teil der tschechischen Intelligenz, sowie um die führenden Schichten anderer Volkstümer, z.B. der Serben, insbesondere aber um die Polen und Tschechen.Dr.III. Dies waren sogenannte biologisch Wertlose, die da sie nicht mehr richtig arbeiten konnten, nach Ansicht der Nazis keine Existenzberechtigung besassen. Kommissionen von angeblichen Ärzten fuhren mit feinen Limousinen und allerlei Ärztlichem Hokuspokusgerät von Dorf zu Dorf,von Stadt zu Stadt und untersuchten, in weiße Mäntel gekleidet und mit Hörrohren die gesamte Bevölkerung. Wer den Augenschein nachmachte- nicht mehr arbeitsfähig war, kam als unnützer Fresser auf die Liste und wurde nach einiger Zeit abgeholt und vergast. Hierüber entschieden Leute, die oft noch nicht mal Volksschulbildung besassen und sich mit Herr Kollege und Herr Obermedizinalrat tituliertem.— Ja ! ohne diese Maßnahmen, sagte mir ein SS - Sturmbannführer in Lublin, wäre ganz Polen für uns wertlos, weil es sowieso stark bevölkert und krank ist. Wir holen nur noch, was die Natur sonst überall von sich aus benarft und leider gerade beim Menschen vergessen hat ! — In Treblinka sah ich an anderen Tage eine größere Anzahl Arbeiter, die in den Gruben auf Leichen herumturnten. " Man hat vergessen, die Leute auszukleiden, die bereits tot angekommen sind. Das muß natürlich nachgeholt werden wegen der Spinnstoffe und wegen der Wertsachen " sagte mir der Hauptsturm Wirth.- Wirth bat mich in Berlin keinerlei Änderung der bisher üblichen Gaskammern und Tötungsmethoden vorzuschlagen, da sich ja alles bestens bewährt und eingespielt habe. Ich bin merkwürdigerweise in Berlin nie nach derartigen gefragt worden. Die mitgenommene Blausäure habe ich vergraben lassen.

Am nächsten Tage, den 19. August 1942, fuhren wir mit dem Auto des Hauptsturm Wirth nach Treblinka 120 km NNO von Warschau. Die Einrichtung war etwa dieselbe nur wesentlich größer als in Belzec. Acht Gaskammern und wahre Gebirge von Kleidern und Textilien und Wäsche. Zu unseren Ehren wurde im Gemeinschaftssaal in typisch himmlerischem altdeutschem Stil ein Bankett gegeben. Das Essen war einfach, aber es stand alles in jeder Menge zur Verfügung. Himmler hatte selbst angeordnet, daß die Männer dieser Kommandos soviel Fleisch, Butter und sonstiges, insbesondere Alkohol erhalten sollten, wie sie wollten.Prof.Dr.med.Pfannenstiel hielt eine Rede, in der er den Männern die Nützlichkeit ihrer Aufgabe und die Richtigkeit ihrer großen Mission klar machte. So mir allein sprach er von " sehr harten Methoden " und von Schärfe der Arbeit ". Es klingt völlig unglaubig, aber ich verbürge mich dafür, daß er nicht etwa im Scherz, sondern in vollem Ernst als Arzt diese Dinge so bezeichnet hat! — Den Kameraden sagte er insbesondere noch : Wenn man diese Judenschweine sieht,

denn...

dann wird einem erst rechtklar, wie dankenswert eure Aufgabe ist. Beim Abschied werden uns noch mehrere Kilogramm Butter und viele Fläschchen Likör zum Mitnehmen angeboten. Ich hatte Mühe, diese Dinge mit Rücksicht darauf zurückzuweisen, daß ich von unseren angeblichen - 'D u t - alles dies genug hätte. Darauf Pfannenstiel beglückt noch noch seine Portionen einstrich.- Wir fuhren dann mit dem Auto nach Warschau. Dort traf ich, als ich vergeblich auf ein Schlafwagenbett wartete, in Frack den Legationssekretär der Schwedischen Gesandschaft in Berlin, Baron von Otter. Noch unter dem frischen Eindruck meiner entsetzlichen Erlebnisse habe ich diesen alles dies erzählt mit der Bitte, dies seiner Regierung und den Alliierten sofort mitzuteilen, da jeder Tag Verzögerung weiteren Tausenden und Zehntausenden das Leben kosten müsse. Von Otter bat mich um eine Referenz, als welche ich ihm Herrn Generalsuperintendenten Dr. Otto Dibelius, Berlin, Brüderweg 2 angabe, ein führendes Mitglied der evangelischen Widerstandsbewegung, zugleich einen vertrauten Freund meines Freundes, des Pfarrers Martin Niemöller. Ich traf dann Herrn von Otter noch 2 mal in der Schwedischen Gesandtschaft. Er hatte inzwischen persönlich in Stockholm Bericht erstattet und teilte mir mit, daß dieser Bericht erheblichen Einfluß auf die Schwedisch - Deutschen Beziehungen gehabt habe. Ich versuchte in gleicher Sache den päpstlichen Nuntius in Berlin Bericht zu erstatten. Dort wurde ich gefragt, ob ich Soldat sei. Daraufhin wurde jede weitere Unterhaltung mit mir abgelehnt. Ich wurde zum sofortigen Verlassen der Botschaft Seiner Heiligkeit aufgefordert. Ich sage dies hier deswegen, weil daraus erhellt, wie schwer es einem Deutschen gemacht wurde, sich in seiner N o t irgendwie Rat zu schaffen, wenn er s gar bei dem Vertreter Seiner Heiligkeit als dem Stellvertreter Christie auf Erden nicht einmal in so entsetzlicher Not Rat und Hilfe finden konnte! - Beim Verlassen der päpstlichen Botschaft wurde ich von einem Polizisten mit den Rade verfolgt. Ich hatte meinen Revolver entsichert in der Tasche um mich gerade t. erschießen, als dieser Polizist völlig unbegreiflicherweise zwar dicht an mich herranfuhr, aber dann Fahrt machte. Ich habe dann alles dies unter täglichen Riskieren meines Kopfes unter den Risiko, gequält und gehängt zu werden, hunderten von einflußreichen Persönlichkeiten berichtet, unter anderen den Syndikus des katholischen Bischofs von Berlin, Dr.Winter, zur Weitergabe an den Ew.Herrn B i s c h o f und an den Päpstlichen Stuhl. Ich muß noch hinzufügen, daß Günther vom Reichssicherheitshauptamt- ich glaube es ist der Sohn des Dessauer Günthers - Anfang 1944 nochmals sehr große Mengen Blausäure von mir für einen sehr dunklen Zweck verlangte. Das Gift sollte in seine Dienststelle in der Kurfürstenstrasse geliefert werden und dort in einem Schuppen, den er mir zeigte, verwahrt werden. Es handelte sich um sehr große Mengen, insgesamt um mehrere Waggons, die nach und nach aufgeteilt und zu seiner Verfügung gehalten werden sollten. Das Gift genügte zum Umbringen von vielen Millionen Menschen. Günther sagte, er wisse noch nicht und könne noch nicht übersehen, ob, wann, wozu welchen Zweck, für welchen Personenkreis das Gift gebraucht oder auch nicht gebraucht werde. Jedenfalls müsse es dort ständig verfügbar sein.- Aus manchen Fragen zur Technische, die Günther stellte, entnahm ich, daß wohl beabsichtigt gewesen sein muß, in einer Art Lage - oder Ehebrennen eine sehr große Zahl von Menschen umzubringen. Ich erklärte Günther nach einer eingehenden Ortsbesichtigung, daß ich die Verantwortung der Lagerung des Giftes in den genannten Schuppen mitten in der Reichshauptstadt keineswegs übernehmen vermöchte, da das Gift ausreiche, um mindestens 2 mal die genannte Bevölkerung von Berlin damit umzubringen und eine Zersetzung und Vergasung namentlich im Sommer wahrscheinlich sei. Mit Mühe gelang es mir dann, ihn zu überreden, das Gift in den Konzentrationslagern Oranienburg und Auschwitz zu verwahren. Ich richtete es dann so ein, daß ich das Gift dort sofort

noch ...

nach Eintreffen jeweils für Zwecke der Desinfektion, die dort laufend wegen Blausäure brauchte, verschwinden ließ. Die Rechnungen der Lieferfirma - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung, Frankfurt a.M. und Friedberg- lief - ich auf meinen Namen ausstellen, angeblich wegen der Geheimhaltung, in Wahrheit, um in seinen Dispositionen ungestörter zu sein und um das Gift besser verschwinden lassen zu können. Aus dem gleichen Grunde habe ich es stets vermieden, die vielen auflaufenden Rechnungen je zur Bezahlung vorzulegen, da ich da durch dem SD dauernd auf diesem Vorrat hätte erinnern müssen und Über den ordnungsmäßigen Befund von den bezahlenden Stellen sicher Nachforschungen angestellt worden wären. So ging es vor, die Firma auf Mahnungen hin zu vertrösten und Rechnungen unbezahlt zu lassen. Der Direktor der Degesch erzählte mir übrigens gesprächsweise, daß er für Tötung von Menschen Blausäure in Ampullen geliefert habe.- Welchen Personenkreis Günther auf Anweisung seines Vorgesetzten Eichmann gegebenenfalls umbringen sollte, habe ich nie erfahren. Ich dachte der Zahl nach an die Insassen der Konzentrationslager und die ausländischen Arbeiter, ob auch an die Offiziere, die Deutsche Pfarrerschaft und an die Kriegsgefangenen. Namentlich als Goebbels später davon sprach gegebenenfalls würde der Nationalsozialismus die für gewaltig hinter sich zuschlagen, habe ich nochmals sorgfältig geprüft, ob diese Nordreserve wirklich vernichtet war. Der Befehl Himmlers zur Unbringung aller Insassen von KL im Ernstfalle war schon damals ohne weiteres vorauszusehen. - Ein anderes mal fragte mich Günther, ob es möglich sei, in Maria - Theresienstadt in den dortigen Festungsgräben, in denen die dort internierten Juden spazieren gehen durften, diese durch von oben hineingeworfene Blausäuredosen zu vergiften. Um diesen schrecklichen Plan zu vereiteln, erklärte ich dies für unmöglich. Ich habe dann später erfahren, daß sich der SD auf andere Weise doch Blausäure verschafft und die Juden- die es in Theresienstadt angeblich so besonders gut haben sollten,- doch umgebracht hat. Es waren dies Väter von gefallenen Söhnen, Inhaber hoher Orden und verdienstvolle Juden.- Die Scheußlichsten Konzentrationslager waren übrigens keineswegs Belzen oder Buchenwald. Weit Schlimmer waren Mauthausen - Gusen bei Linz an der Donau und Auschwitz . Dort sind Millionen von Menschen in Gaskammern und Crematorien (fahrbaren Oefen) verschwunden. In Auschwitz wurden allein Millionen Kinder durch Unterhalten eines Blausäuretopfens unter die Nase getötet. In Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück bei Fürstenberg in Mecklenburg habe ich Versuche an lebenden Frauen gesehen, die in Auftrage des SS- Gruppenführers Professor Dr. Gebhardt - Hohenlychen der Hauptsturmführers Dr. med. Grundlach durchführte. Ich habe ferner in meiner Dienststelle viele derartige Berichte zu sehen bekommen. Diese betrafen z.B.Versuche mit Pervitin bis zu 100 Tabletten pro Tag an 100 bis 200 Häftlingen bis zum eventuellen Todeserfolg. Andere derartige Versuche wurden mit Serum und Lymphe- z.B. mit den verschiedensten fleckfieberig stoffen - durchgeführt. Himmler hatt sich die Genehmigung derartiger Versuche an durch den SD zum Tode Verurteilten persönlich vorbehalten. Ich habe es ferner in Oranienburg an einem Tage mehrere hunderte oder gar tausende Homosexueller sparlos in den Öfen verschinden sehen. In Mauthausen war es üblich, Juden in Steinbruch arbeiten zu lassen und sie absdann - wie zufällig - eine hohe Steinwand herunterwerfen zu lassen. Sie blieben unter tot liegen und wurden als Unfälle registriert. Der SS - Hauptsturmführer Dr. Krantz- ein wüster Antisemit - aus Bonn am Rhein, beim Reichsamt für SS und Polizei Abteilungsleiter hat mir und vielen anderen Personen häufig mit Entrüstung von seinen schlimmen derartigen Erlebnissen erzählt.

Ich hatte in Belzec den Eindruck, daß an Besichtigungstage noch so langen Zug in den Kammern wirklich alle Menschen tot waren. Aber der Hauptmann Wirth, ein völlig ungebildeter Mensch ohne auch nur die geringsten Kenntnisse von Chemie und Physiologie, hat mir die sonderbarsten Dinge erzählt.

Offensichtlich...

Offensichtlich besaß Wirth eine erhebliche Vorliebe für Versuche mit Menschen in Tötem. So erzählte er mir von einem kleinen Kinde, das sie morgens völlig munter aus der Gaskammer geholt hätten, die über Nacht zugeladen stehen geblieben war. Besonders interessante Experiment hätten sie bei den Geisteskranken angestellt. Dort habe man die unterschiedlichsten Empfindlichkeiten der einzelnen Menschen beachtet. Auch mit Preßluft sind Versuche gemacht worden: Die Leute wurden in Kessel gesteckt, in die mittels der üblichen Asphaltetrassen - Kompressoren Preßluft eingedrückt wurde. - In Treblinca hatte ich den Eindruck, daß mindestens manche noch lebten oder nur bewußtlos waren. Fast alle hatten die Augen offen und boten einen schrecklichen Anblick. Bewegungen habe ich jedoch trotz genauer Beobachtungen nicht mehr feststellen können. Im Ganzen hat man sich so gut wie keine Mühe gegeben, die Tötungen irgendwie " human " durchzuführen, soweit man in diesem Zusammenhang überhaupt dies Wort gebrauchen darf! - Das wohl weniger aus Sadismus, als aus einer völligen Gleichgültigkeit und Bequemlichkeit diesen Dingen gegenüber.

Von einem besonders anständigen Sterben berichtete mir der SS - Hauptsturmführer Dr.med.Villing aus Lorraud. Es handelte sich um mehrere tausend - ich glaube 6000 - polnische Geistliche und Priester. Diese wurden gezwungen, sich selbst lange, tiefe Gräben auszuheben, dann mußten sie sich nackt ausziehen, vor die Gräben stellen und werden sodann erschossen. Auf die höhnischen und spöttischen Fragen, ob sie nun immer noch an Jesus Christus, an Maria, an ihr polnisches Volk glaubten, antworteten sie mit einem festen Bekenntnis zu Christus, zur Heiligen Mutter Gottes, insbesondere zu die von Tschenstochau und an ein Auferstehen ihres Volkstums, Villing berichtet hierüber unter Tränen mit tiefster Rührung und Bewegung. Auch andere Polen sind in ähnlich vorbildlicher und anständiger Weise gestorben, insbesondere Lehrerinnen und Lehrer . Als ich von dem allen hörte , erinnerte ich mich an mein eigenes Gefängnis in der Rötebuchstr. in Stuttgart. Mit heimlicher kindlicher Hand war da auf den Rand meiner Blechpritsche mit eingelernten Buchstaben eingeritzt ; Pater, Mutter Gottes hilft! — Eine verbürgte Art, Menschen umzubringen, war in Polen die, daß man die Leute die Treppe von Hochöfen heraufsteigen ließ, sie dort oben immerhin mit einem Pistolenschuß erledigte und sie dann in Hochöfen verschwinden ließ. - Viele Menschen sollen in Ziegelöfen durch Benzingase erstickt worden und anschließend in selben Gang verbrannt worden sein. Hier ist meine Quelle jedoch nicht hundertprozentig zuverlässig. — Einer der Polizeichefs in Lemberg, SS - Sturmbannführer Heller erzählte den Ärzten meines Trupps und mir, daß bei seiner Ankunft in Lemberg es üblich gewesen sei, Judenkinder gleich in den Wohnungen mit den Kopf an die Wand zu klatschen, um den Lärm der Schießerei zu vermeiden. Er habe diesen Unfug abgestellt und für die Erschießung der Kinder gesorgt.- Er erinnerte sich noch lebhaft an zwei kleine Mädchen von 5 und 5 Jahren, die vor ihm auf die Knie gefallen und gebetet hätten. Aber auch sie mußte ich natürlich erschießen lassen, sagte Heller.- Heller erzählte und von der Einrichtung der polnischen Intelligenz. Auch diese Leute mußten sich Gruben graben sich mit den Bauch zuunterst hineinlegen und wurden dann mit Maschinenpistolen erschossen. Die Nächsten mußten sich nackend auf die noch warmen Leichen draufliegen und wurden dann ebenfalls von oben erschossen. Viele seien dann bei den Versuch zwischen den Leichen durchzukriechen, weil sie noch nicht ganz tot waren, beim Raufklettern erschossen worden.

Einer der Chefs der Krakauer Regierung erzählte mir, während er die Pate tranchierte, von einen besonders gelungenen Fang, den sie gemacht hätten: Ein Mann von der polnischen Widerstandsbewegung - ein

Jude...

Jude habe sich in Schweigen gehüllt. Darauf habe man ihn die Gelenke gebrochen, als er auch dann noch schwieg, habe man ihn mit den Hintern auf eine glühende Herdplatte gesetzt. Sie hätten mal sehen sollen, wie der Mann gesprächig wurde.

Gelegentlich eines Besuches beim Baubüro der Waffen SS in Lublin, teilten mir d beiden Architekten mit, daß sie am Vormittag die Leichenhalle in einen Betonbunker umgebaut hätten, um sie zu vergrößern. Tausende von Leichen - meist Fleckfieberkranker - hätten dort aufgestapelt gelegen. Plötzlich hätten sie gesehen, wie sich einige noch bewegten. Der Rottenführer, der den Schlüssel hatte, habe nur gefragt :"Tot" dann habe er ein bereitliegendes Stück Rundeisen genommen und den Leuten den Schädel eingeschlagen.— Nicht d u r c h diese geschah, sondern die Baraute, habe sie gewundert, sondern die Selbstverständlichkeit, mit d diese geschah ! — Bei Gelegenheit meines Besuches hatte eine Jüdin mit einem verborgen gehaltenen Rasiermesser einigen Arbeits - Juden in den Hals be gebracht. Wirth bedauerte lebhaft, daß die Frau schon tot war, sie hätte exemplarisch bestraft werden ! Die verwundeten Juden ließ er sorgfältig ärztlich betreuen, damit sie glauben sollten, sie würden wirklich am Leben bleiben, angesiedelt und belohnt werden ! Und das glauben die Leute, das glauben die Idioten, diese Idioten, rief Wirth laut vor sich hin ! -In Belzec war besonders grausenhaft der Wettbewerb, den man unter den Männern und Jungen der Transporte veranstaltete, die Kleider zu den Waggons zu schleppen. Wer am besten schafft kam zum Arbeitskommando ! -Es entstand ein Wettrennen vermeintlich auf Leben und Tod unter diesen nackten Menschen, die unter den Gelächter der SS die Kleider wegschleppten. Natürlich verschwanden alle nachher in den Kammern. Nur einige ganz alte und kranke Leute, die nicht einmal mehr von den anderen getötet zu den Kammern wanken konnten, wurden abseits gelegt und alsdann erschossen.- Einige ergreifende Bilder stehen mir noch vor Augen : Das verträumte 3 jährige Judenbübchen das die Kindfüßchen zum Zusammenbinden der Schuhe anbieten mußte - selbst ein solches Kind wurde unbarmherzig eingespannt in Hitlers entsetzliche Todesmaschinerie und Menschenfolterei, in Himmlers und Wirths Leichenfledderei. - Oder ich denke an ein kleines Mädchen, das einen Vater vor der Kammer ein kleines Kuscheltierchen verlor, das dann ein Judenbübchen von 3 Jahren fand: wie es das Kätzchen hob es liebevoll betrachtete, seine Freude darum hatte - und dann in nächsten Augenblick - ja, diesmal muß ich sagen: sanft in die Kammer hineingeschoben wurde. Der SS - Hauptscharführer Obermeyer aus Pirmasens erzählte mir: in einem Dorf bei in der Nähe habe ich einen Juden mit seiner Frau aus meiner Heimatstadt Pirmasens getroffen. Der war im Weltkrieg Feldwebelleutnant, ein anständiger Kerl. Wir haben Karten miteinander zusammen gespielt, er hat mir sogar einmals das Leben gerettet, wo ich beinahe tot gefahren worden wäre. Dem Mann nebst Frau werde ich jetzt mitnehmen in mein Arbeitskommando." Ich fragte Obermeyer, was aus dem Mann später würde. Er sah mich erstaunt an:" Was soll aus ihm werden, genau dasselbe wie mit allen anderen, da gibts garnichts anderes. Na vielleicht werde ich sie totschiessen lassen.

Andererseits habe ich in der SS eine Anzahl von Leuten angetroffen,die diese Methoden scharf verurteilten und z.T. darüber zu glühenden Gegnern des Nazismus geworden waren. Ich denke da vor allem an den Stabsführer des Obersten Hygienikers beim Reichsarzt SS und Polizei, Hauptsturmführer Heinrich Hollländer. Dieser gab mir Kenntnis von allen irgendwie wichtigen Vorgängen und ließ alles verschwinden, was mich in meiner Dienststelle irgendwie belasten oder verdächtig machen konnte. Ich wäre selbst längst im Ofen gelandet, wenn dieser treue christkatholische Freund und glühende Antinazi nicht treulich die Hand über mich gehalten hätte. Scharfer Antinazi war auch der Leiter der inneren Abteilung des SS-Lazarettes Berlin, SS Sturmbannführer Dr. med. Tocht, der seit 1941 viele mutige Worte sch

Pr/S-4/12.

für Verurteilung der Nazi- und SS - Methoden fand und damit ständig seinen Kopf riskierte.- Das Gleiche gilt für die Chirurgen SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr.med. Wiesen und Itzehoe und Dr. med. Sorge aus Jena. Ein wirksamer Antinazi - Propagandist war auch der SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. phil.Fritz Krantz aus Bonn, der die zahlreichen Scheußlichkeiten, die er in den Konzentrationslagern zu sehen bekam, unter ständigem Risiko, gehängt zu werden, in Volk brachte bekannt machte.

Zu der Gruppe der Offiziere von 20. Juli 1944 zu rechnen sind die leitenden Apotheker der Waffen SS, SS-Gruppenführer Dr. pharm. Blumenreather und seine beiden Mitarbeiter SS-St-urmbannführer Dr.Bohnenburg und Dr. Rudolphi. Letzterer trat in Oktober 1944 das Führerbild seines Dienstzimmers mit Füssen.

Von der belgischen, holländischen und luxemburgischen SS waren 2/3 der Kameraschaften durch unglaubliche Lügen- und Betrugmanöver über angebliche Sportkurse und dergleichen mit Gewalt hereingepreßt worden. Ehe die Leute sich versahen - noch bevor sie eingekleidet waren - waren sie durch bloße Anwesenheit bei einer Vereidigungsakt mit vereidigt und wurden im Falle der Weigerung als fahnenflüchtig behandelt oder wegen Gehorsamsverweigerung geächtet oder bestenfalls erschossen. Wie streng derartige Dinge gehandhabt wurden, erhellt z.B.aus der Tatsache, daß zahlreiche ganz junge jugendliche Angehörige der Waffen SS lediglich deswegen erschossen worden sind, weil sie einen Kameraden von hinten in der Stallgegend an die Hose gefaßt haben. Dieser Befehl zur Abhaltung auch nur des geringsten Anzeichens einer perversen Neigung wurde allen Angehörigen der SS verlesen und war von Himmler selbst unterzeichnet.- Tausende von Hitlerjungen sind auf dieselbe Weise, wie oben erwähnten Auslander gegen ihren Willen in die SS gepreßt worden. Das Gleiche gilt für die auf Hitlers und Himmlers Befehl in die SS gepreßten Angehörigen anderer Wehrmachtsteile, insbesondere der Luftwaffe und der Marine. Es wäre ganz falsch und ungerecht- höchst ungerecht, ohne Prüfung dieser Verhältnisse jeden SS-Angehörigen für die furchtbaren Verbrechen der SS mitverantwortlich zu machen zu wollen. Es muß hier auch noch erwähnt werden, daß vielfach die Polizei viel übler war als die SS. Sie hat z.B. bei der Erfassung der Juden, bei ihrer Zusammenstellung zu den Transporten und bei der Ablieferung bei Himmlers Schlächthäusern die übelsten Handlangerdienste geleistet, obwohl es den alten und erfahrenen Beamten sicher ein Leichtes gewesen wäre, mindestens einen großen Teil der Juden kartei-mäßig verschwinden zu lassen. Ausserdem ist es billig, an diese alten gereiften Beamten, die wissen mußten,was Recht und Unrecht ist, andere Anforderungen zu stellen, als an unreife Hitlerjungen und junge SS-Leute. Die Tatsache, daß Himmler nicht nur Reichsführer der SS. sondern gleichzeitig Chef der Deutschen Polizei war, wird vielfach lange nicht genug berücksichtigt. Die Blutschuld der Polizei an der reibungslosen Durchführung der Judenschlächterei ist ungeheuer, auch wenn sie größtenteils vom sicheren Schreibtisch aus oder aus der Gebärgewehr der Büros erfolgte. In dieser Beziehung ist weitgehend zwischen Gestapo und Polizei kaum ein Unterschied zu machen. Das schließt nicht aus, daß mancher Gendarm und Polizeibeamte sich ernsthaft bemüht haben mag, dem Recht zu dienen und seine Pflicht nach seinem Gewissen, nicht nach den Nazibefehlen auszurichten. Das aber wäre seine Sache, dies zu beweisen. Grundsätzlich müßte jeder Polizeibeamte zunächst genau so angesehen werden, wie jeder SS.-Mann.— In meiner Wohnung in Berlin W 35, Lützowstrasse 47 I links hatte ich einen größeren Kreis bewährter leidenschaftlicher und aktiver Antinazis um mich versammelt. Ich nenne hier einige Namen :

Major ...

Major Lutz Reiß a.Zt. Hamburg - Clasurit - Werke.

Direktor Alexander Menne, bis 1939 in der englischen Farbindustrie, tätig, 1944 - 1945 8 Monate in SD.-Haft, jetzt Hamburg Clasurit - Werke.

Dr. jur. Landgerichtsrat a.D. Felix Buss, Justizbeamter der Generaldirektion Telefunken, Berlin SW 11. Zwar Mitglied der NSDAP, aber seit 1934 scharfer aktiver Antinazi, der sich mit viel Geschick und Erfolg bemühte, die Partei von innen her zu zersetzen. Einer der leidenschaftlichsten Hasser des Nazitum

Pfarrer Buchholz, Strafanstaltspfarrer der Anstalt Plötzensee. Buchholz hat tausende von Leuten, die vom Volksgerichtshof zum Tode verurteil waren zum Schaffot oder zum Galgen begleitet unter anderen die Offiziere des 20. Juli 1944. Unter eigener Gefahr hat Buchholz die Gefangenen mit Nahrungsmittel, Medikamenten, Betäubungsmittel und Rauchwaren usw. versorgt.

Fräulein Dorothea Schultand Frau Arndt, Sekretärinnen und Hilfen von Pastor Niemöller aus Dahlem und Dachau.

Dr. Hermann Ehlers und Dr. Ebbo Klos, Justiziare der Bekenntniskirche und der Widerstandsbewegung Niemöller.

Pfarrer Koch alsky, Vertreter im Amt von Pfarrer Martin Niemöller.

Ausserdem stand in mit folgenden Personen aus der antinationalsozialistischen Bewegung in enger Fühlung.

Generalsuperintendent Dr. Otto Dibelius, Berlin- Lichterfelde, Drüderweg 2 m Familie Pfarrer Niemöller, z.Zt. Locni a.Starnberger See, Villa Kayser,

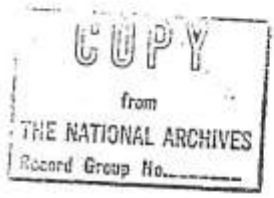
Präses D.Koch, Führer der westfälischen Bekenntniskirche, Bad- Oynhausen
Professor Freiherr von Hueno, Universität Tübingen.
Pfarrer Rehling, Hagen Lutherkirche, führendes Mitglied der Westf. Bekenntniskirche.
Pfarrer Valpertap Hagen, kath, Marienkirche.

Pfarrer Otto Wehr, Saarbrücken, Chef der südwestdeutschen kirchlichen Widerstandsbewegung.
Fabrikant Bernhard J.Goedecker, Clemensstrasse 17, München.
Direktor Franz Bäuerle, i.Fa.Goedecker, ebendort,
Architekt u. Schriftsteller Otto Völckers, München, Stievesstr. 9,
Dr.med.Herbert Straub, Arzt, Metzingen, nebst Familie,
Papiergroßhändler Heinz Nebenthau, Berlin - Dahlem, z.Zt. Kirchentellinsfurt bei Tübingen nebst Familie,

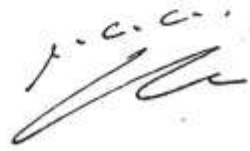
alle meine Angaben entsprechen in vollem Ausmaß der Wahrheit. Ich bin mir der ausserordentlichen Tragweite dieser meiner Auf-zeichnungen vor Gott und der gesamten Menschheit voll bewußt und nehme es auf meinen Eid, daß nichts von allem, was ich hier aufgezeichnet habe, erdichtet oder erfunden ist, sondern alles sich genau so verhält.

gez: Kurt Gerstein.

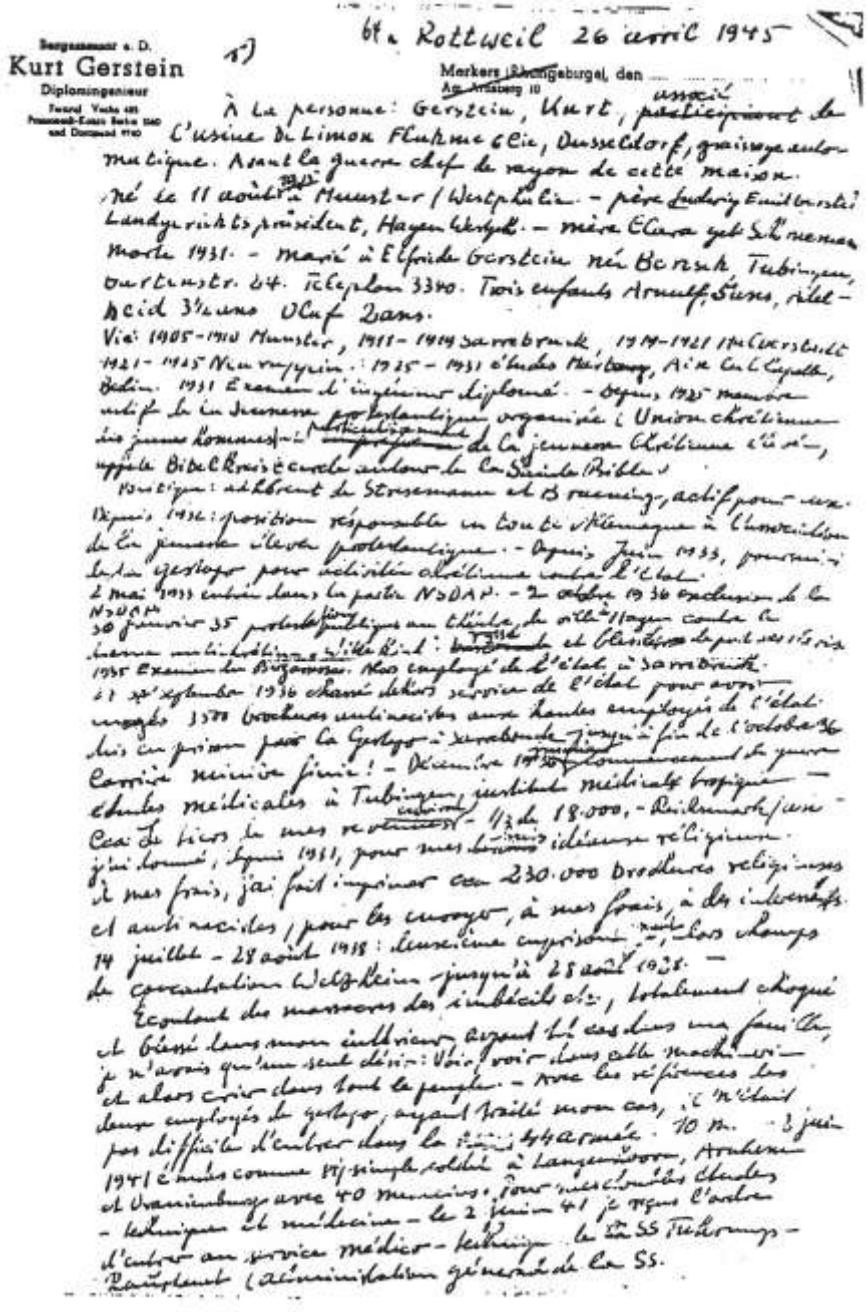




RG 238, Records of the National Archives
Collection of World War II War Crimes
2170-PS



Drafts of T I



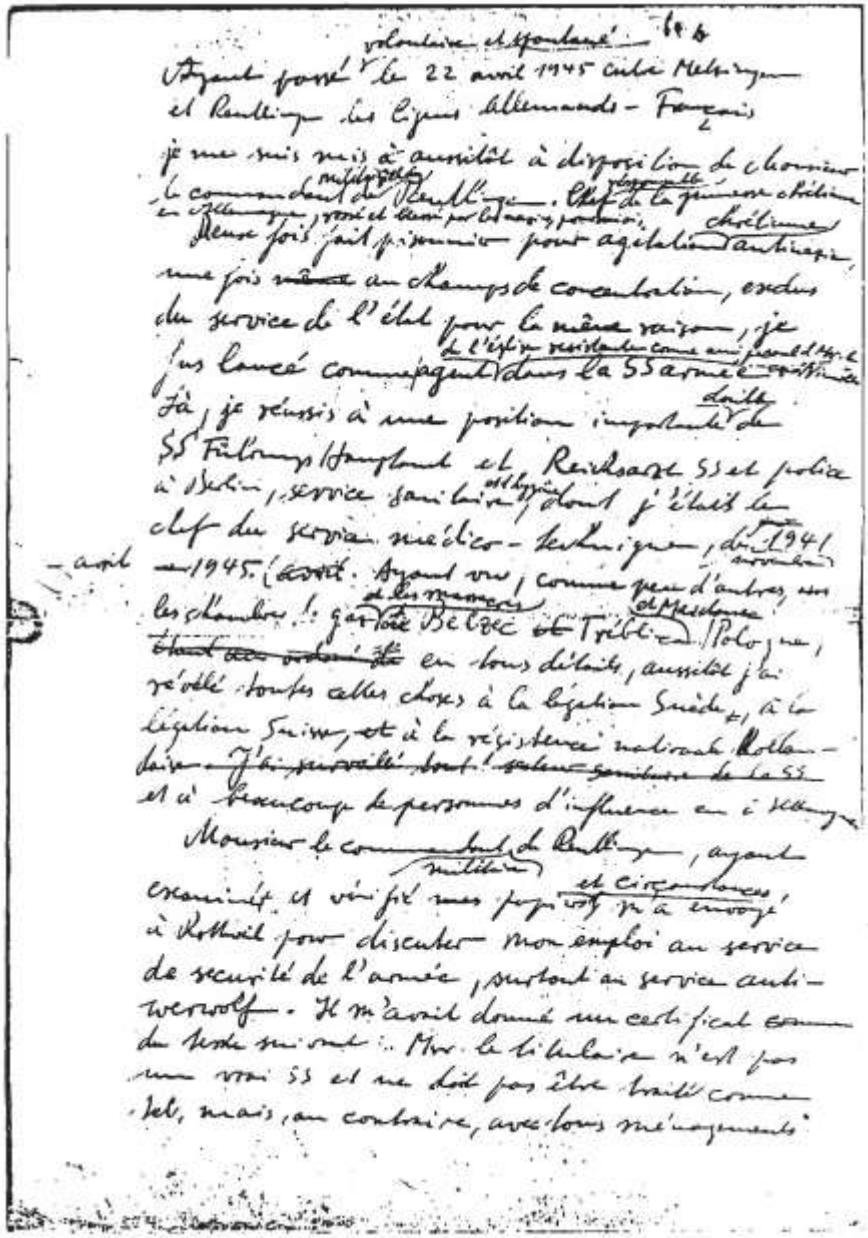
Bergassessor a. D.
Kurt Gerstein
Diplomingenieur

Markers (Rheinisch-Westf.), den
Adr. Anschrift: 10

64 a Rottweil 26 avril 1945

1)

À la personne: Gerstein, Kurt, associé participant de l'usine de Limon Fluhme & Cie, Dusseldorf, graissage automatique. Avant la guerre chef de rayon de cette maison.
né le 11 août à Munster / Westphalie. – père Ludwig Emil Gerstein Landgerichtspräsident, Hagen Westph. – mère Klara geb. Schmeman morte 1931. – marié à Elfride Gerstein née Bernath, Tübingen, Ourtenstr. 64. Téléphon 3340. Trois enfants Arnulf, Suse, Adelheid 3½ ans Ulrich 2 ans.
Vie: 1905-1910 Munster, 1911-1914 Sarrebruck, 1914-1921 Münster
1921-1925 Neuwied: 1925-1931 études Marburg, Aix La Chapelle, Berlin. 1931 Examen d'ingénieur diplômé. – Depuis 1925 membre actif de la jeunesse protestantique organisée (Union chrétienne des jeunes hommes) – particulièrement de la jeunesse Chrétienne étudiante, appelé Bibelkreis (cercle autour de la Sainte Bible).
Politique: adhérent de Stresemann et Braun-ing, actif pour eux.
Depuis 1936: position responsable en toute clandestinité contre l'Allemagne à l'intérieur de la jeunesse protestantique. – Depuis Juin 1933, pourvoi de la jeunesse pour activités chrétiennes contre l'état.
2 Mai 1933 entrée dans le parti NSDAP. – 2e octobre 1936 exclusion de la NSDAP.
30 janvier 35 protestations publiques en chaire, de ville en ville contre la haine antichrétienne de Hitler: Barmen et Christkönig de Westphalie
1935 Examen des Bergassessor. Mon employé de l'état à Sarrebruck.
21 septembre 1936 chassé hors service de l'état pour avoir soigné 1300 frères antiracistes aux mains des employés de l'état.
Mis en prison par la Gestapo à Sarrebruck jusqu'à fin de l'octobre 36
Carrière minière finie! – Décembre 1936 commencement de mes études médicales à Tübingen, particulièrement médicale tropicale –
Ceci de bien de mes économies – 1/3 de 18.000, – Reichsmark/une j'ai donné, depuis 1931, pour mes buts idéaux religieux.
et de mes frais, j'ai fait imprimer ces 230.000 brochures religieuses et antiracistes / pour les envoyer, à mes frais, à des intervalles
14 juillet – 28 août 1938: deuxième emprisonnement, dans les camps de concentration Welzheim – jusqu'au 28 août 1938. –
Écoulant des massacres des imbécile etc., totalement choqué et blessé dans mon intérieur, ayant lu ces deux mots fatidiques je n'avais qu'un seul désir: Voir, voir dans cette machine – et alors crier dans tout le peuple. – avec les références des deux employés de Gerstein, ayant visité mon cas, il m'était pas difficile d'entrer dans la Waffen-SS armée. 10 m. – 3 juin 1941 entrée comme H/Sturm soldat à Langemarck, Arolsen et Oranienburg avec 40 mensuels, pour mes études chimiques – techniques et médecine – le 2 juin 41 je reçus l'ordre d'entrer au service médico – technique de la SS Führungs – Hauptamt (Administration générale de la SS.



volontaire et spontané 146
Ayant passé le 22 avril 1945 entre Melsungen
et Rastlingen les lignes allemandes - Françaises
je me suis mis à aussitôt à disposition de chomier
le commandant de Rastlingen. Chef de la guerre chimique
en allemagne, connu et tenu par les nazis pour ennemi.
Deux fois j'ai fait prisonnier pour agitation antinazie
une fois même au champs de concentration, exclus
du service de l'état pour la même raison, je
fus lancé comme agent dans la SS armée spirituelle
Là, je réussis à une position importante de
SS Führungs Hauptamt et Reichsarzt SS et police
à Berlin, service sanitaire allemand dont j'étais le
chef du service médico-technique, de 1941
- avril - 1945. (Août). Ayant vu, comme peu d'autres, aux
les chambres à gaz de Belzec et Treblinka en Pologne,
etant aussi [illegible] en tous détails, aussitôt j'ai
révélé toutes celles choses à la légation Suède, à la
légation Suisse, et à la résistance nationale Hollan-
daise. J'ai personnellement informé de la SS
et à beaucoup de personnes d'influence en allemagne.
Monsieur le commandant de Rastlingen, ayant
examiné et vérifié mes papiers et circonstances,
m'a envoyé à Kassel pour discuter mon emploi au service
de sécurité de l'armée, surtout au service anti-
werwolf. Il m'avait donné un certificat comme
suit: Mr. le titulaire n'est pas
un vrai SS et ne doit pas être traité comme
tel, mais, au contraire, avec tous ménagements

Additions to T II (PS-1553)



1553 P.S

L'acide prussique selon notes ajoutées était ordonné par le Reichs-Sicherheitshauptamt, Berlin W35, Kurfürstenstrasse, à l'ordre de SS Sturmbannführer Guenther. Moi, responsable pour ce service, ai fait légaliser ce service pour l'acide arrivée l'acide à Oranienburg et transmettre, faire livrer vallon les boîtes dans les chambres de désinfection. Ainsi, il était possible d'empêcher aux Juifs mes risque de l'acide. Pour empêcher de rappeler la présence de ces Juifs — ou, mieux, la non-présence — au Reichs Sicherheitshauptamt, je n'ai jamais payé ces factures, dont l'adresse de notes était, pour la première fois, moi même. Ainsi, il était possible de faire disparaître aussitôt après arrivé l'acide. S'il on avait épicer la non-présence, j'aurais répondu: dite un crime des servitude désinfection, qui ne servait et qui ne devait savoir le vrai chemin, ou j'aurais dit: l'acide était de ce jour-là, et n'était pas encore possible de la garder plus longtemps.

49365

Gerstein



Domicile permanent:
Tuebingen-Neckar.
Gartenstr. 24 26 Avril 1945

Augsturmführer a. D.
Kurt Gerstein
Diplomingenieur

45 53 P.S
13

My deposition is interesant for Secret Service.
The things, I have seen, no more than
4-5 others have seen, and these others
were nazis. Many of responsables of
Belsen, Buchenwald, Maidanek, Oranienburg,
Hamburg, Dachau etc. were under-
ling, whilst I have seen them
in my double position in:
1) SS Führungs-Hauptamt, Department
and 2) Reichsführer-SS and Polizei, Berlin.
I am in situation to say the names
and crimes of the terrible responsables
of this things, and I am, thereby to give
the materials for his accusation in Court-
Tribunals.

Myself, confidential friend of Reichsminister
Dr. Nemöller and his family (now at
Leoni / Starnbergersee / Bavaria). I was after
2 years and a half concentration-camp agent of
foreign-service - Abwehr, Waffen SS-Obersturm-
führer and compartement-chef in
SS-Führungshauptamt and of Reichsführer SS
and Polizei; a dangerous position!

10366

The things I have seen [illegible]
has seen: 1941, August, I have made
my report to the Swedish legation in


POLICE D'ISRAEL
משטרת ישראל
135

155315
14

Berlin. I am ready and in situation to say all my observations to your Secret-Service.

The secretary of Swedish Legation Berlin, now at Stockholm Baron von Otter is ready to be witness of my relation of 1942 of all this cruelty. I propose to demand me for this informations.

Reference: Msr. Nicmeroller (Reverend Martin Niemöller's cousin Leoni Bleuler-Hoyer See (Minister Counsel).

Note: Your army has seized Mr. Nicmeroller Mr. Stahlin junior Mr. Schlenburg at Farkau. They are degraded, nobody knows, who they are.

Please do not publish my report before enactment msr: Niemöller is liberated or dead.

Gerstein

B19367



DEGESCH
DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR
SCHÄDLINGSBEKÄMPFUNG M.B.H.
FRANKFURT/M.

1553 / 43

Herrn Oberstabsführer
Kurt Gerstein
Berlin
Leipziger Str.31/32

RECHNUNG

Frankfurt a.M, den 14. Februar 1944
E.

O.G.L.		Einzelpreis	Endbetrag
	Wir senden heute mit der Bahn ab Dessau mit einem Wehrmachtfrachtbrief der Heeresstandortverwaltung Dessau an das Konzentrationslager Auschwitz, Abt. Entwesung und Entseuchungs-Station: Auschwitz, als Eilgut folgende Sendung:		
	ZYKLON B Blausäure ohne Reizstoff		
50066/ 78	= 13 Kisten, enthaltend je: 30 = 390 Quetschen à 500 g = 195 kg CN	5.—	975.—

Brutto: 832 kg
Tara: 276,25 kg
Netto: 555,75 kg

Die Etiketten tragen den Vermerk:
" Vorsicht, ohne Warnstoff "

R 49376

POLICE D'ISRAEL

185

1553-PS

DEGESCH
DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR SCHÄDLINGSBEKÄMPFUNG M.B.H.
FRANKFURT/M.

neue Anschrift
DEGESCH
Friedberg/Hessen
Kaiserstr. 76, Postfach 43

WEISSFRAUENSTR. 9 / FERNSPRECHER: OLYMPIA 20021 / FERNRUF: 24644 / NACHTRUF: 20141 / VERANTWORTL. DEGESCH
FÜR BANKSCHRIFT: DEGESCH FRANKFURT/MAIN, SOMMERBACH 218 / TELEGRAMM-ADR. DEGESCH FRANKFURT/M. TELEGRAMM-ADR. AUF CODES

Herrn Obersturmführer
Kurt Gerstein
(1) Berlin
Loipigerstr. 34/32

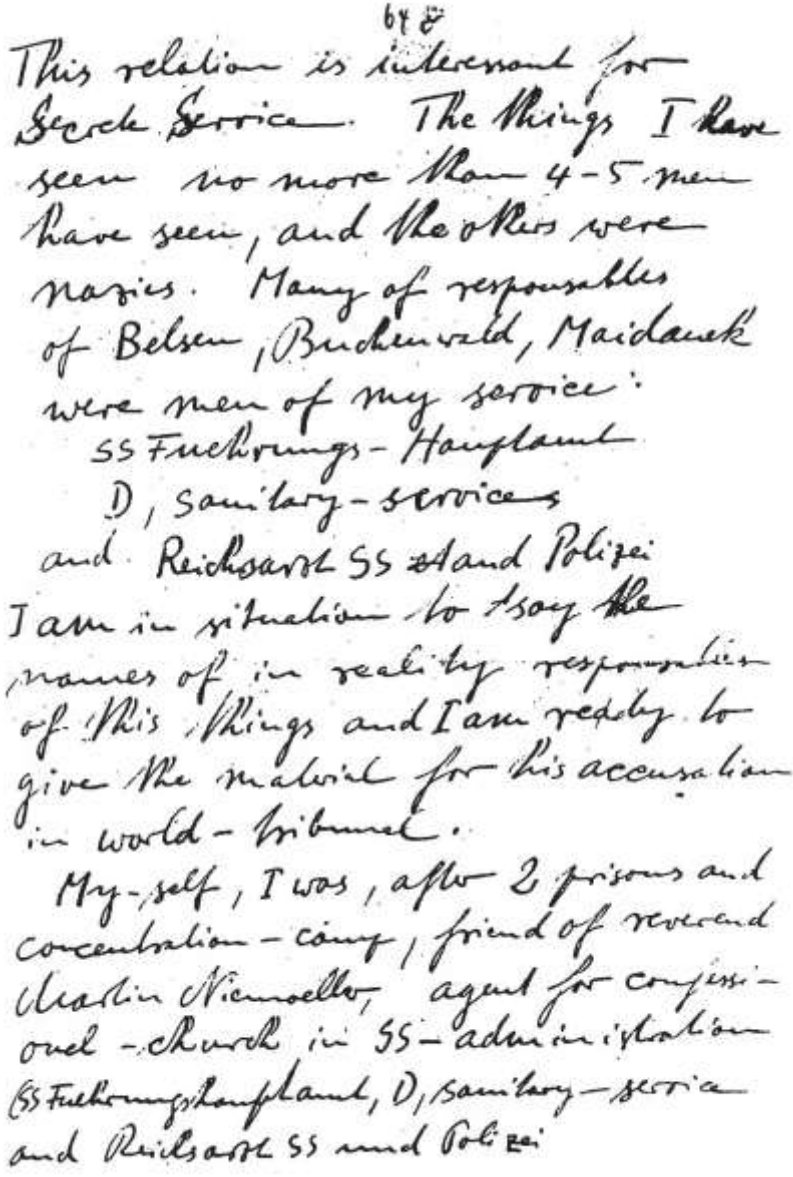
RECHNUNG
No. 1

Frankfurt a. M., den 31. Mai 1944

D.G.S.		Einzelpreis	Betrag
	Wir sandten am 26. Mai ds. Js. unter Nr. 1 einen Nachnahmebrief der Waffen-SS Standortverwaltung Dessau an das Konzentrationslager Oranienburg, Abteilung Entwesung und Entseuchung.		
	Station: Oranienburg		
	als Frachtgut folgende Sendung:		
	ZYKLON B Blausäure		
50198	2 to = 33 Kisten, enthaltend je 50 = 396 Büchsen à 500 g = 395 kg CN	5.--	975.--
	Brutto: 832,00 kg Tara: 276,25 " Netto: 555,75 "		
	Die Etiketten tragen den Vermerk: " Vorsicht, ohne Warnstoff "		

B 49378

Undated Handwritten Text in English



64 E

This relation is interessant for Secrete Service. The things I have seen no more than 4-5 men have seen, and the others were nazies. Many of responsables of Belsen, Buchenwald, Maidanek were men of my service:
SS Fuehrungs-Hauptamt
D, Sanitary-services
and Reichsamt SS und Polizei
I am in situation to say the names of in reality responsables of this things and I am redy to give the material for this accusation in world-tribunal.

My-self, I was, after 2 prisons and concentration-camp, friend of reverend Martin Niemoeller, agent for confessionel-Church in SS-administration (SS Fuehrungshauptamt, D, Sanitary-service and Reichsamt SS und Polizei

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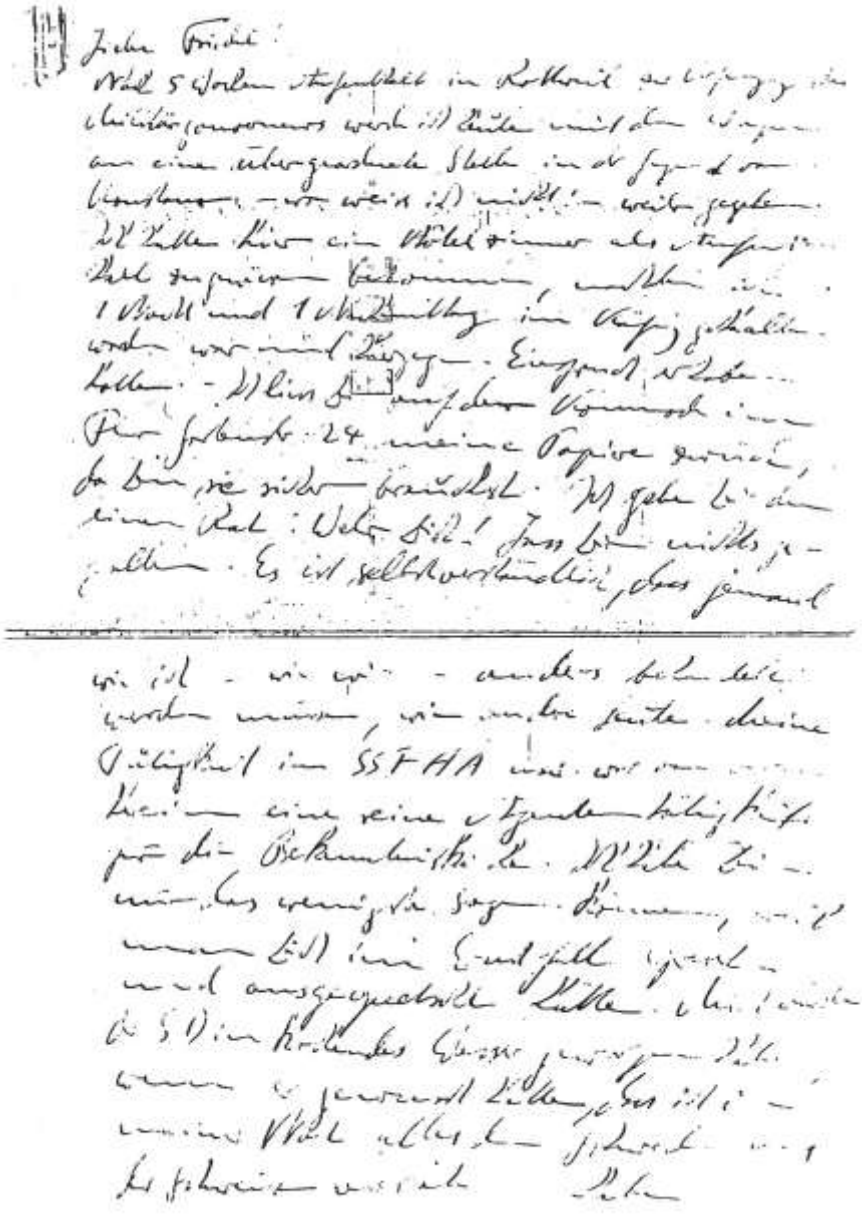
Post scriptum : - 16- 64.e

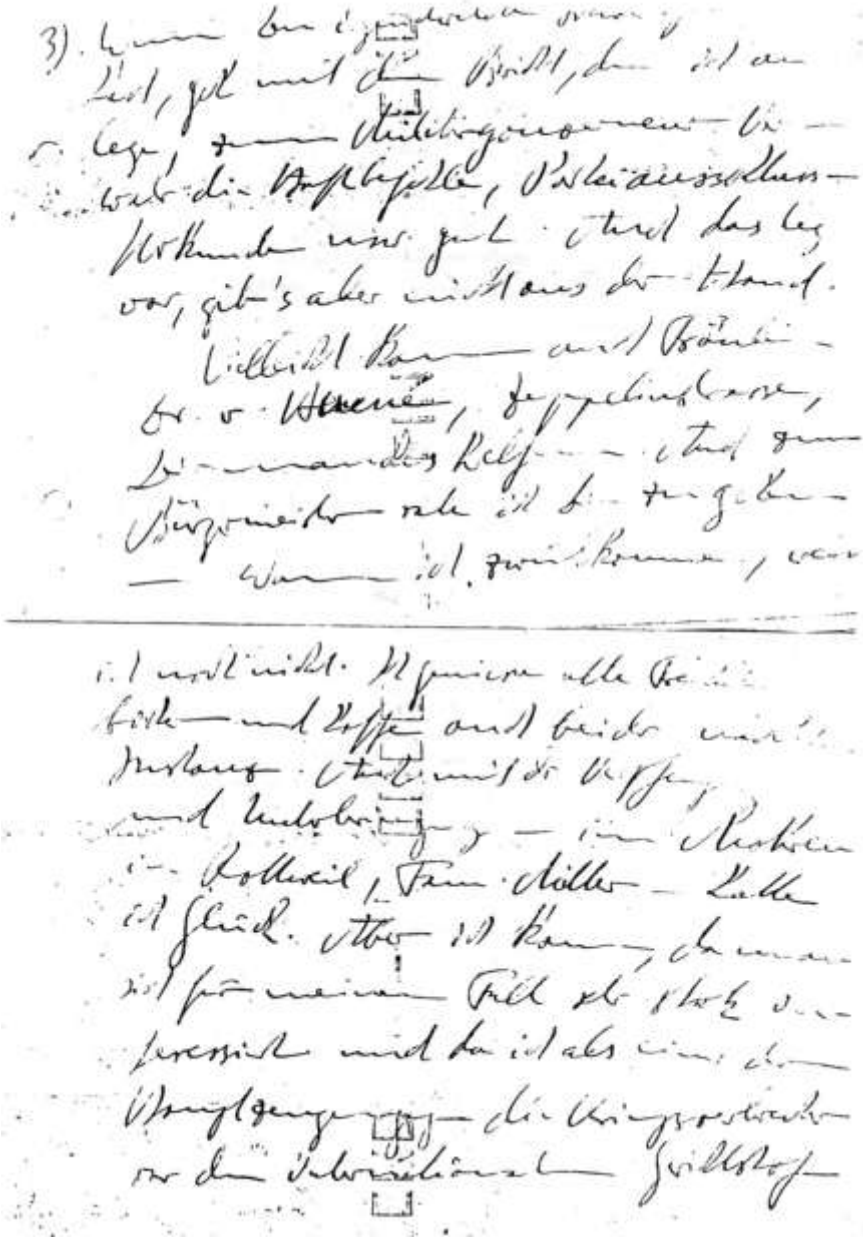
A Belzec il était très terrible la concurrence qu'on faisait parmi les hommes et garçons au transport des vêtements.-Je pense encore au petit garçon juif de 3 ans, 4 ans, qui devait partager les ficelles pour joindre les chaussures : même tel enfant fût abusé sans savoir à cette machine terrible d'assassinat de Hitler et Wirth- Ou je pense à une petite fille de 5 ans qui outlicit - totalement nu- une petite chaine de corail, que quelque minutes plus tard - 1 mètre avant les chambres de gaz- trouve un garçon de 3 ans : se réjouissant, contemplant et - au prochain moment- fût lancé dans la chambre.-Obermeyer me raconta? à un village auprès d'ici j'ai trouvé un juif de ma ville paternelle, de Pirmasens. Au guerre de 14-18 il était sergeant, un homme très honorable. Enfants, nous avons joué ensemble. Il m'a sauvé une fois la vie, m'étant au danger d'être surpassé. Cet homme et sa femme je prendrai avec moi pour mon commando travailleurs!-- Demandé, ce qu'il ferait d'après de ces hommes, il me dit, totalement étonné : Qu'est ce que deviendra de lui? Le même que tous les autres, dans telles choses il n'y a que quelque autre manière— mais -peut être- je les ferai fusiller !—

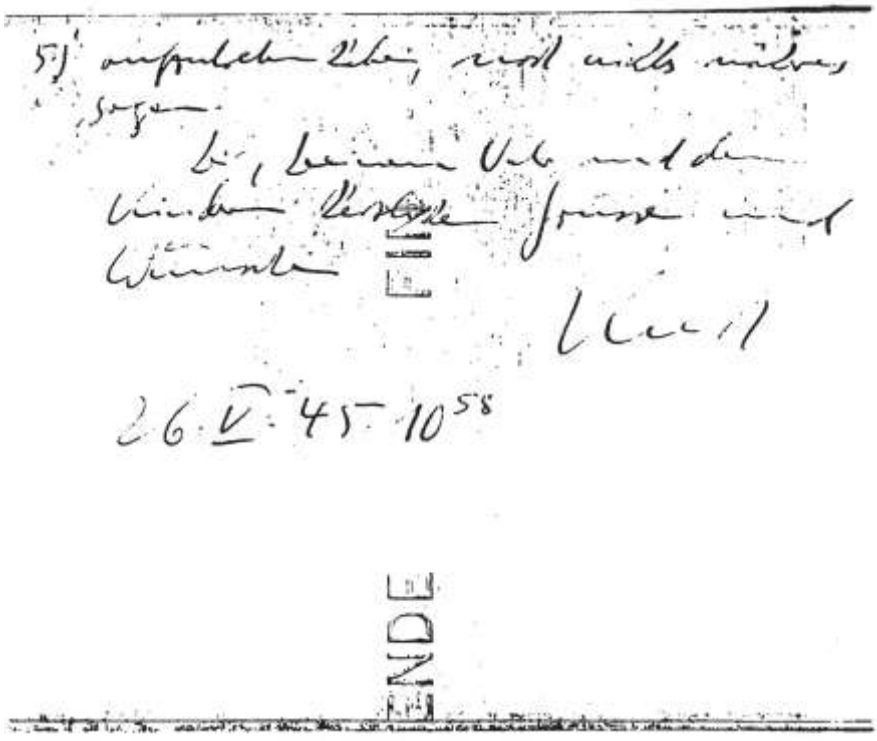
Mais j'ai aussi trouvé quelques SS, devenus par ces méthodes des adversaires vives de ce régime :SS-Hauptscharfuehrer Heinrich Hollaender du Reichsamt SS et de police, qui me donnait science de toutes choses extraordinaires et intéressantes.-Moi même, j'étais disparu dans les chambres de gaz, si Hollaender ne m'avait pas gardé souvent des choses dangereuses.-Antinazi aussi:
SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Dr.med.Pocht, chef de rayon intérieur de SS-Lazarett Berlin-Lichterfelde,
Dr.med.Nissen, SS-Hauptsturmfuehrer, Itzehoe Hollstein
Dr.med.chir, Sorge de Jéna,--
Officiers, qu'on peut garder comme ceux du 20 juillet 1944 :
SS-Grup enfuehrer Dr.pharm.Blumenreuther, chef du rayon pharmacien de police et SS
SS-Sturmbannführer Dr.pharm.Behamburg, du même service,
SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Dr.pharm Rudolphi, " " "
Le dernier a ruiné aux piedas, octobre 1944, le Hitler-Bild.
2/3 de la SS hollandaise, belge etc étaient forcés dans ce service par methodes frauduleuses et violantes.De même une grande partie des jeunes gens de la HITLERJUGEND sont forcés à ce service, de même les commandés de aérienne et de la marine.
-Souvent, les agents de la police étaient beaucoup plus mauvais comme les SS. Il étaient coupables en grande nombre des empriesonnements des juifs, qui, quelque temps plus tard, furent assassinés.

Supplementary Documents

Letter by Kurt Gerstein to His Wife, Dated 26 May 1945






ENDE

Typewritten Transcript of Gerstein's Letter to His Wife

Abschrift des handschriftlichen letzten Briefes meines Mannes
Kurt Gerstein vom 26. V. 1945, an mich.

Liebe Friedel!

Nach 5 Wochen Aufenthalt in Rottweil zur Verfügung des Militärgouverneurs werde ich heute mit dem Wagen an eine übergeordnete Stelle in der Gegend von Konstanz - wo weiss ich nicht ! - weiter gegeben. Ich hatte hier ein Hôtelzimmer als Aufenthalt zugewiesen bekommen, nachdem ich 1 Nacht und 1 Nachmittag im Käfig gehalten worden war und hiergegen Einspruch erhoben hatte. - Ich liess Dir auf der Kommode im Flur Gartenstr. 24 meine Papiere zurück, da Du sie sicher brauchst. Ich gebe Dir den einen Rat: Wehr Dich ! Lass Dir nichts gefallen. Es ist selbstverständlich, dass jemand wie ich - wie wir - anders behandelt werden müssen, wie andere Leute. Meine Tätigkeit im SSFHA usw. war von vornherein eine reine Agententätigkeit für die Bekenntniskirche. Ich habe Dir nur das wenigste sagen können, weil man Dich im Ernstfall erpresst und ausgequetscht hätte. Mich würde der SD in kochendes Wasser geworfen haben, wenn er gewusst hätte, dass ich in meiner Not alles den Schweden und der Schweiz verraten habe.

Wenn Du irgendwelche Schwierigkeiten hast, geh mit dem Bericht den ich anlege, zum Militärgouverneur. Verwahr die Haftbefehle Parteiausschluss-Urkunden usw. gut. Auch das leg vor, gib's aber nicht aus der Hand.

Vielleicht kann auch Fräulein Dr.v.Huene, Zeppelinstrasse, Dir manches helfen. Auch zum Bürgermeister rate ich Dir zu gehen.

- Wann ich zurückkomme, weiss ich noch nicht. Ich geniesse alle Freiheiten bisher und hoffe auch bei der nächsten Instanz. Auch mit der Verpflegung und Unterbringung - im Mohren ~~im~~ in Rottweil, Pam. Miller - hatte ich Glück. Aber ich kann, da man sich für meinen Fall sehr stark interessiert und da ich als einer der Hauptzeugen gegen die Kriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Gerichtshof aufzutreten habe, noch nichts näheres sagen.

Dir, Deinem Vater und den Kindern
herzliche Grüsse und Wünsche

K u r t .

26.V.45 10^{58}

Protocol of Interrogation Dated 26 June 1945

PARIS, le 26 juin 1945 12

INTERROGATOIRE de Monsieur Kurt GERSTEIN
par le Commandant BECKHARDT
(Officier Interrogateur de la U.S.C.C.
48, rue de Villejust - PARIS)

I - Interrogatoire d'identité

NOM : GERSTEIN
Prénoms : Kurt
Né le : 11 aout 1905 à Münster (Westphalie)
Fils de : Ludwig E. GERSTEIN (Président de la Cour de Justice en retraite) et de Klara SCHIEMANN décédée en 1931
Marié le 31 aout 1937 avec Elfriede née A Bensch
Domicile : 24 Gartenstrasse à Tubingen
3 enfants : Arnulf né le 25/9/39
Adelhaid née le 25/10/41
Olaf né en décembre 1942
Nationalité : allemande
Religion : protestantisme confessionnel - luthérien -

II - Formation professionnelle

En 1919, je rentre comme apprenti ouvrier aux Mines de Lintfo près d'Aix-la-Chapelle, jusqu'en 1925, après avoir, au préalable, été lycéen à Sarrebrück de 1915 à 1919. En 1925, je termine mes études et passe mon baccalauréat.

En 1931, après avoir suivi différents stages je deviens ingénieur diplômé du Service des Mines

III - Activités politique et religieuse

De 1922 à 1933, je suis républicain et partisan actif de BRUENING et STRESEMANN.
En 1933, le 30 janvier 1935 et le 27 septembre 1935, je suis arrêté et malmené par la Gestapo pour propagande anti-nationale-socialiste et activité chrétienne. Par suite, je fus exclus du Service des Mines de l'Etat.
J'étudiais alors la médecine tropicale à Tubingen à l'Institut protestant de Tubingen.
Le 14/7/38, je suis arrêté par la Gestapo et le S.D. de Stuttgart; je fus interné en prison puis au camp de concentration de Welzheim.
Je reçus l'interdiction de prononcer des discours.
En 1940, par l'intermédiaire de l'évêque de Stuttgart, j'appris l'assassinat massif d'aliénés à Hadamar et Grafeneck. Ma belle-sœur, Bertha EBLENING figurait parmi les victimes. C'est alors que je pris la décision d'entrer aux Waffen SS.

IV - Activité dans les Services Nationaux-Socialistes

D - Etes-vous rentré aux Waffen SS pour espionner et servir votre idéal religieux ?

- 2 - 11

R - Oui, pour mener une lutte active et mieux connaître les buts nationaux-socialistes et leurs secrets

D - Comment avez-vous pu rentrer dans cett organisation après avoir été vous-même arrêté plusieurs fois par la Gestapo ?

R - Je n'ai fait qu'accepter la proposition que des subalternes de la Gestapo m'avaient faite, lors de ma deuxième arrestation

D - A quelle date avez-vous été tatoué du signe distinctif des Waffen SS ?

R - En mai 1941, je fus tatoué du signé AB correspondant à la 4e catégorie sanguine.

D - Quelle formation vos chefs SS vous ont-ils donnée

R - Je suivis des cours spéciaux pour médecins à Hambourg, Langenhoorne Arnhem et à Oranienburg; le 9 novembre 1941, je fus nommé sous-lieutenant SS, service d'hygiène. Un an après, ayant amélioré les installations sanitaires des camps de prisonniers et des camps de concentration, je fus nommé lieutenant SS.

D - Quelles ont été vos activités depuis février 1942 jusqu'au 21 avril 1945, date à laquelle vous vous êtes constitué prisonnier de l'Armée française ?

R - Le 8 juin 1942, le SS SturmbannfÜhrer GÜNTHER du RSHA me donne l'ordre de transporter 260 kgs ~~d'acide prussique~~ de cyan de potassium à Kollin près de Pragues. Le SS SturmbannfÜhrer Professeur-Docteur PFANNENSTIEL ...

D - Connaissez-vous l'adresse du Dr en Allemagne ?

R - Oui, Marburg (Lahn) Rottenberg 1

... Je connaissais le projet d'utilisation de cyanure et étais décidé 1° à essayer d'en faire disparaître, 2° de faire savoir aux ouvriers qui le fabriquaient que ce produit était destiné à tuer des êtres humains.

A Lublin, je suis reçu par le SS GruppenfÜhrer GLOBOCNEC Général Waffen SS (fait prisonnier par les Américains à Trieste) Il me mit au courant de l'organisation

1° : à Belzec, entre Lublin et Lemberg
exécutions quotidiennes : 15.000

2° : Sobibor près de Lublin en Pologne (20.000 par jour)

3° : Treblinca en Pologne (25.000 par jour)

Ces trois installations fonctionnent respectivement depuis les mois d'avril, juin et mai 1942.

4° : Maïdanneck près de Lublin, encore en préparation

D - A votre connaissance, quelles étaient les nationalités et races des victimes ?

R - Pour la plupart des Juifs, des Polonais et des Tchèques.

... Les victimes étaient asphyxiées au moyen d'un moteur Diesel à échappement toxique (oxide et gaz carbonique) dans les quatre installations précitées.

./.

- 3 -

D - Combien de temps êtes-vous resté dans ces camps et en avez-vous visité d'autres ?

R - Seulement trois jours, puis l'on me conduisit à Lublin où le SS Hauptsturmführer OBERMEYER (originaire de Pirmasens) me fit visiter l'installation. J'assiste à l'arrivée d'un convoi : 45 wagons contenant 6.700 personnes dont 1450 mortes au cours du voyage. Les victimes sont entièrement dépouillées de leurs effets. Les cheveux sont coupés et récupérés dans des sacs de jute. Deux ou trois heures après, ils étaient tous exécutés

D - Avez-vous été appelé à prendre une part indirecte à ces massacres ? Les SS se sont-ils contentés de faire de vous un simple spectateur ?

R - Je n'ai aucune vie humaine sur la conscience, mon travail consistait exclusivement dans des installations sanitaires en vue d'éviter des épidemies contre des maladies. J'étais chargé également de rendre l'eau potable et en étais responsable auprès des SS et de la Police

D - Avez-vous eu des contacts avec les organisations de résistance allemandes ou autres ?

R - Oui, j'étais chef de la résistance protestante, en liaison avec la résistance hollandaise et avec les légations de Suède et de Suisse.

D - Pouvez-vous le prouver, et avec quelles personnes étiez-vous en relation ?

R - Pour la résistance protestante, je recevais des consignes du Pasteur NIEMOELLER (détenu à Dachau depuis 1937) par l'intermédiaire de sa famille et des religieuses.

Avec la résistance hollandaise, depuis 1941, par l'intermédiaire UBBINK originaire de DOESBOURG (Ingénieur - propriétaire d'un fonderie)

Avec la résistance de Suède, par la Légation de Suède de Berlin, M. Baron de OTTER

Avec la résistance suisse, par la Légation suisse de Berlin Docteur HOCHSTRASSER

En 1942, je faisais la connaissance d'un restaurateur français, au carrefour Strasbourg-St-Denis, Restaurant "Louis XIV" à qui j'exprimais mon dégôut des bagnes et des assassinats

D - Connaissez-vous d'autres agents ou officiers de Gestapo ou du S.D. qui aient eu une responsabilité importante dans l'organisation des camps et des exécutions.

R - Un certain GÜNTHER et son chef EICHMANN tous deux chargés de l'anéantissement de la race juive. GÜNTHER est le fils de l'écrivain raciste connu.

Le Docteur GUNDNACH, Hauptsturmführer, originaire de Berlin s'est livré à des études médicales sur des êtres vivants.

Le SS Sturmbannführer HALLER de la Police de Bromberg, se trouvait vers la fin des hostilités à Degginglen, se serait occupé tout particulièrement de la fusillade des enfants juifs

Le Dr Sturmbannführer GROSS, demeurant à Berlin, s'est livré sur des êtres vivants, à des études pour le cancer

Le Dr GRAWITZ qui travaillait à Berlin, né à l'est de l'Elbe (Pommern) Chef de la Croix-Rouge allemande mais en même temps SS, Obergruppenführer, responsable de la direction des bagnes.

- 4 -

D - Quels sont les noms des chefs de camps que vous avez connus

R - A Oranienburg, le Sturmbannführer HEINDEL, un punaise, responsable de nombreuses atrocités. Il est autrichien ou bavarois

D - Connaissez-vous encore d'autres criminels de guerre ?

R - Oui, le SS Gruppenführer, Dr. Ing KAMMLER, originaire de Berlin, Chef de l'armement, responsable de traitements des déportés employés pour travailler sous terre

Le SS Sturmbannführer WICK qui a la responsabilité de l'attaque contre les institutions religieuses de Sennheim (Alsace

Le SS Sturmbannführer TORDOFF, engagé dans les SS depuis leur formation.

Le SS Untersturmführer, Dr. Wolfgang STICHEL, chargé de la répression des anti-nazis; a décapité un professeur de l'université de Berlin - originaire de Berlin

Lecture faite, persiste et signe

Protocol of Interrogation Dated 19 July 1945

TRIBUNAL MILITAIRE PERMANENT
2e TRIBUNAL MILITAIRE PERMANENT
DE PARIS
Séant à 53, Rue de la Faisanderie 53
XVIe arr.

PROCES-VERBAL D'INTERROGATOIRE OU DE CONFRONTATION

L'AN mil neuf cent quarante cinq, le dix neuf juillet à dix heures

Après avoir été extrait de la prison militaire du Cherche-Midi

Devant nous, Commandant de Justice Militaire Mathieu MATTEI, Juge d'instruction militaire, assisté de COUDROY, sergent, et de (en marge : M. Malkov Boris, 45 ans, Lieutenant, interprète de langue allemande, lequel a prêté le serment prescrit par l'article 332 du Code d'instruction criminelle) a été amené à

notre cabinet, le nommé GERSTEIN dont la première comparution est constatée par procès-verbal du treize juillet 1945.

Mentionnons que Me LEIMANN, dûment appelé par notre lettre recommandée expédiée le 16 juillet 1945 dont le récépissé postal est annexé et avisé par la même lettre de la mise à sa disposition de la procédure la veille du présent jour.

Le défenseur étant présent, nous avons interrogé comme il suit l'inculpé. Mentionnons que nous donnons à lui lecture intégrale de son interrogatoire par l'Organisation de la Recherche des crimes de guerre, à Paris, le 26 juin 1945.

S.I.R. — Je confirme mes déclarations antérieures. Je tiens à rectifier trois points dont un me paraît d'une importance extrême, à savoir :

En ce qui concerne mon entrée aux (en marge : Waffen SS), ce n'est pas autant les conseils et les suggestions des sous-officiers qui me poussèrent à y entrer que mon désir personnel de me documenter sur ce que faisaient ces gens, chose impossible à qui ne portait pas leur tenue ;

— en ce qui concerne les indications portées à la page 2 de mon interrogatoire, paragraphe 3 in fine, au sujet des « trois installations fonctionnent respectivement... » ; il s'agit bien de trois camps d'extermination ;

— Je rectifie la dernière phrase de mon interrogatoire : le Docteur Wolfgang STICHEL aurait dénoncé le Professeur ordinaire de Zoologie à Berlin qui par la suite a été décapité à la suite d'une exécution du Tribunal du peuple.

D. — Veuillez nous faire connaître quelles ont été dans l'ordre chronologique vos affectations, mutations, occupations depuis que la France était en guerre avec l'Allemagne.

R. — A la déclaration de la guerre j'étais civil, ingénieur des mines au service de la Société anonyme WINTERSHALL à MERKERS (Thuringe).

Le 15 août 1940 je cessai mon travail dans cette société pour entrer à l'usine appartenant à mon grand-père à DUSSELDORF et ce en qualité d'associé apportant mes connaissances techniques.

J'avais d'ailleurs des intérêts dans la dite société depuis 1930. Cette société fabriquait des pompes à huile pour les locomotives et avait pour raison sociale DE LIMON, FLUHME et Co.

Jusqu'au 5 mars 1941, je restai donc civil à cette société.

Auparavant, c'est-à-dire en décembre 1940, j'avais adressé une demande écrite pour être admis à servir en qualité de Waffen SS ; la dite demande ayant été acceptée, je fus incorporé dans cette formation le 10 mars 1941.

On m'affecta à Berlin, sanitätsdienst (service sanitaire) ; Direction générale des Waffen SS. J'étais alors simple soldat — et ai suivi pendant trois mois l'instruction ordinaire des simples soldats en diverses localités.

A l'issue de cette instruction, on m'affecta à l'institut d'hygiène de Berlin SS.

— Au début je n'y avais aucun emploi défini. Mais plus tard je demandai à m'occuper plus spécialement des appareils de désinfection et des questions d'eau potable.

En gros, je remplis ces fonctions jusqu'au mois d'avril 1945 avec en principe résidence à Berlin et remplissant de temps à autres quelques missions auprès des firmes qui fabriquaient les différents appareils utilisés dans le service.

En novembre 1941 j'ai obtenu le grade de sous-lieutenant SS, spécialiste (UNTERSTURMFUHRER F.).

D. — Faites-nous connaître exactement la nature des missions que vous avez remplies, notamment celles effectuées dans différents camps que vous avez vous-même énumérés dans l'interrogatoire que vous avez subi.

R. — Je me suis rendu en mission :
deux fois au camp de ORANIENBURG
deux fois à celui de DROEGEN
une fois à celui de RAVENSBRUCK
une fois à un camp d'israélites près de (un mot illisible)
une fois aux camps d'extermination de :
BELCEC (orthographe phonétique), TREBLINKA et MAIDANECK
deux fois enfin au camp de HEINKELWERK près de ORANIENBURG.

Dans les camps autres que les trois camps d'extermination, le but des différentes missions accomplies par moi était d'examiner et contrôler les installations sanitaires (désinfection, eau potable, etc.), mon rôle était purement technique.

En juin 1942 je fus chargé de tranporter ultérieurement deux cent soixante kilogrammes de cyanure de potassium au camp de BELCEC. Lorsqu'on me chargea de ce transport, on me précisa qu'il s'agissait d'un secret d'Etat.

J'avais reçu comme consigne de prendre livraison à KOLLIN près de Prague de ce poison et de le transporter au camp sus-indiqué.

Je remplis ma mission au mois d'août 1942, c'est-à-dire que je transportai bien le cyanure mais le cyanure n'arriva pas à destination. Au départ, le cyanure était placé en quarante cinq bouteilles d'acier. En cours de route l'une d'elles fut vidée par mes soins avec toutes les précautions voulues car c'était dangereux.

Les quarante quatre bouteilles qui restaient n'ont pas été amenées au camp de BELCEC mais furent dissimulées par le chauffeur et moi-même à douze cents mètres environ du camp.

D. — Pourquoi avez-vous été, si l'on vous croit, personnellement choisi pour, alors que vous vous trouviez à Berlin, effectuer le transport de cyanure d'un point à un autre du territoire polonais ?

R. — Ceci est, à mon sens, dû au hasard d'une désignation provenant d'un chef quelconque. Mon nom a été mis en avant par un des officiers du service de chimie auquel l'autorité, c'est-à-dire GUNTHER, s'était au début adressée.

D. — Pourquoi l'autorité a-t-elle éprouvé le besoin d'envoyer de Berlin à KOLLIN (Tchécoslovaquie) un officier pour simplement y prendre livraison de cyanure et transporter celui-ci à BELCEC en Pologne alors qu'il aurait dû lui apparaître plus simple de détacher à ce travail de transport un officier se trouvant déjà soit en Tchécoslovaquie, soit en Pologne ?

R. — Parce qu'on me considérait comme un spécialiste de l'utilisation du cyanure pour la désinfection.

D. — Avez-vous reçu un ordre de mission, écrit ou verbal, et quels en étaient les termes ?

R. — Je reçus un ordre de mission verbal, confirmé quarante-huit heures après par écrit. Cet écrit disait approximativement ceci : je vous donne l'ordre de vous procurer deux cent soixante kilogrammes de cyanure de potassium et de les transporter à un lieu qui vous sera désigné par le conducteur du véhicule N° X... affecté à la mission.

C'est moi-même qui ai choisi KOLLIN car je savais que l'on y fabriquait du cyanure, comme on en fabriquait également à DESSAU.

S.I. — Le cyanure m'a été livré par la fabrique à KOLLIN au vu de mon ordre de mission et d'un bon de réquisition délivré par le service central de sécurité à Berlin (Reichssicherheits-hauptamt). L'ordre de mission portait un timbre avec mention « Secret d'Etat ».

D. — A qui avez-vous rendu compte de l'exécution de votre mission ?

R. — A mon retour à Berlin d'un voyage qui a duré environ deux semaines, je n'ai rendu compte à quiconque de l'exécution de ma mission. Personne ne m'a demandé quoi que ce soit.

S.I.R. — Avant le voyage, je ne connaissais pas le chauffeur qui devait me conduire. Le dit chauffeur appartenait au service central de sécurité, je l'ai perdu de vue par la suite.

D. — Comment, puisque vous ne connaissiez pas auparavant le chauffeur, pouviez-vous avoir confiance en celui-ci et ne pas remplir très exactement la mission qui vous avait été confiée et dont celui-ci était incontestablement au courant ? Et ce alors surtout que le chauffeur appartenait au service de sécurité. N'avez-vous pas craint une dénonciation qui aurait entraîné pour vous des conséquences d'une gravité certaine ?

R. — Le chauffeur a eu peur en cours de route et alors que nous avions chargé le poison. Il n'a pas mieux demandé que de me voir débarrasser la voiture de ce qui pour lui constituait un danger. Je n'ai pas eu peur de la dénonciation du chauffeur car j'étais en mesure de me justifier auprès des autorités de Berlin. D'autre part les autorités de BELCEC ne tenaient pas du tout à recevoir du cyanure, ayant déjà une autre méthode d'extermination, à savoir un moteur Diesel à échappement toxique.

Vu l'heure tardive nous suspendons le présent interrogatoire qui sera repris à 15 heures ce jour.

Lecture faite, l'inculpé persiste et signe avec nous, le greffier et interprète, approuvant la rature de dix-sept mots rayés nuls et de huit lignes rayées nulles.

Signatures : M. Mattei, B. Malkov, Kurt Gerstein, A. Coudroy.

L'an mil neuf cent quarante cinq, le dix-neuf juillet à 15 heures, assisté comme précédemment, mêmes greffier et interprète, avons continué l'interrogatoire ci-dessus suspendu en raison de l'heure tardive. Mentionnons que Me Lehmann s'était excusé, nous avons passé outre et procédé à l'interrogatoire comme il suit :

D. — A votre départ de Berlin, pour remplir la mission dont nous avons parlé ce matin, vous a-t-on donné d'autres instructions que celles concernant le transport proprement dit du cyanure ?

R. — Parfaitement. L'officier de SS GUNTHER m'avait chargé de prendre toutes dispositions utiles pour, une fois arrivé au camp de BELCEC, remplacer comme moyen d'extermination, le moteur Diesel à échappement toxique par l'emploi du cyanure. Il m'était laissé à moi le soin d'examiner les possibilités techniques de ce remplacement.

D. — Qui avait fixé la quantité de cyanure à emporter ?

R. — C'est moi-même qui l'avait fixée et cela compte tenu de la capacité de transport de la voiture.

D. — Vous saviez donc au départ de Berlin que le cyanure était destiné à l'extermination d'êtres humains ?

R. — Je le savais. Je présumais qu'il s'agissait de Juifs et probablement de Polonais.

D. — C'est probablement aussi pour cela que vous avez pris une aussi grande quantité de poison ?

R. — Je n'ai pris pareille quantité que pour utiliser à fond la capacité de transport de la voiture.

D. — Comment devait être techniquement employé le cyanure pour l'extermination ?

R. — GUNTER à Berlin n'en avait la moindre idée. Il supposait que je devais en avoir une. Mais en réalité je n'en avais pas car je n'ai jamais utilisé le cyanure que pour la désinfection.

D. — Voulez-vous nous indiquer comment vous employiez le cyanure pour la désinfection.

R. — Deux moyens :

Le premier qui consistait à rendre étanche l'endroit à désinfecter (baraque, caserne, etc.) et à introduire dans les lieux des récipients contenant le poison, et à faire ouvrir de l'extérieur, et à l'aide d'un dispositif, les dits récipients de manière à ce que le liquide se rendit volatile.

Le deuxième moyen était employé à la désinfection des vêtements.

D. — A quelle dose employiez-vous le cyanure pour la désinfection ?

R. — Approximativement 5 kg (sic !) pour 540 m3 (cinq cent quarante mètres cubes).

S.I.R. — Je ne sais exactement quelle quantité de cyanure il faut pour tuer un homme, c'est là une question théorique, mais je pense qu'il faut environ un gramme.

S.I.R. — Je persiste à affirmer que je n'ai procédé à aucune expérience ni à aucune utilisation du cyanure.

D. — Comment avez-vous expliqué votre arrivée au camp de BELCEC puisque vous y étiez envoyé, d'après ce que vous dites vous-même, pour remplacer par le cyanure le mode d'extermination qui y était employé et ce alors que vous arriviez sans la moindre parcelle de cyanure ?

R. — Je suis arrivé avec le cyanure au camp et j'ai raconté au commandant du camp ce qui m'était arrivé en cours de route au sujet de la bouteille dont la fermeture n'avait pas été bien assurée. J'ai indiqué au commandant du camp le danger que présentait l'emploi du cyanure en lui faisant connaître que je ne pouvais prendre sur ma responsabilité l'emploi du cyanure que j'avais apporté. Ce commandant était un homme peu cultivé et s'est contenté de mes explications, disant par ailleurs être satisfait du système d'extermination en usage.

D. — Ce matin vous nous avez déclaré que quarante quatre bouteilles de cyanure — votre entier chargement, une des bouteilles ayant été vidée — n'étaient pas arrivées au camp de BELCEC car elles avaient été dissimulées par le chauffeur et vous-même à douze cents mètres environ du camp ; tout à l'heure, vous venez de nous dire être arrivé au camp avec votre chargement. Quand dites-vous la vérité ?

R. — Je suis arrivé au camp sans le cyanure mais le commandant du camp savait que j'en avais apporté dans la voiture qui était restée à douze cents mètres du camp.

D. — Pourquoi la voiture est-elle restée si loin du camp où le cyanure devait être apporté et employé d'après les instructions que vous avez reçues ?

R. — En raison du danger que ce cyanure présentait.

D. — Puisque le commandant du camp connaissait le but de votre mission et le fait que vous aviez apporté du cyanure, comment avez-vous pu dissimuler celui-ci car vous nous avez déclaré ce matin l'avoir dissimulé ?

R. — Le commandant du camp avait grand peur du cyanure, il ne tenait pas du tout à ce qu'il soit employé. D'autre part j'avais moi-même toute latitude en ce qui concerne l'utilisation ou la non-utilisation du poison.

D. — Vous avez été chargé d'une mission. Vous nous dites ne point l'avoir remplie. Vous nous dites également que le commandant du camp où vous devez remplir cette mission ne tenait pas du tout à ce que vous la remplissiez. Vous avez ce matin déclaré qu'à votre retour à Berlin vous n'aviez rendu compte à quiconque du résultat de votre mission. Nous avons tout lieu de penser que des choses pareilles n'étaient pas précisément en usage dans l'armée allemande. Expliquez-vous à ce sujet.

R. — Le lendemain de mon arrivée au camp de BELCEC est revenu le véritable commandant du camp — le hauptmann polizei WIRTH, qui avait une grosse influence à Berlin et qui a liquidé cette question sans que j'aie à intervenir.

D. — A quelles autres autorités avez-vous eu affaire au cours de votre mission à BELCEC ?

R. — J'avais reçu en cours de route, par l'intermédiaire du chauffeur, des instructions d'avoir à me rendre à LUBLIN auprès du général major Gruppen Führer SS GLOBOCNEC qui commandait les quatre camps d'extermination. Conformément à ces instructions, j'ai été reçu en audience par cet officier général. Au cours de l'audience, il m'a indiqué avoir eu quelques jours auparavant la visite de HITLER et de HIMMLER, l'un et l'autre désireux de voir pousser l'extermination des Juifs à une cadence plus rapide.

Ce général ne me donna aucune instruction d'ordre technique mais l'ordre de me rendre à BELCEC, me disant qu'il y irait lui-même, en personne car nul ne pouvait être reçu au camp sans être présenté par le général en personne.

D. — Avez-vous au cours de cette mission visité d'autres camps que celui de BELCEC ?

R. — Oui, ceux de MAIDANECK - TREBLINCA. Dans ces deux camps, j'ai été amené par le hauptmann WIRTH et le professeur Docteur PFANNENSTIEL pour que j'examine sur place les possibilités de remplacer le système d'extermination employé (moteur diesel à dégagement toxique) par le cyanure.

S.I.R. — Je ne pense pas que dans ces deux camps et à BELCEC on ait utilisé le cyanure comme moyen d'extermination mais je n'en sais rien car je n'y suis pas retourné.

D. — Vous avez donc, de votre propre aveu, reçu à Berlin une mission importante et ce en votre qualité de technicien ; cette mission était si importante que vous deviez l'accomplir comme un secret d'Etat ; vous avez visité trois camps, vous avez été reçu en audience par un général qui, étant donné le but de votre mission, a cru devoir vous rapporter les propos mêmes des deux grands chefs nazis. Comment pouvez-vous persister à nous faire croire :

1) que vous n'avez pas rempli le but même de votre mission ;
2) que vous n'avez rendu compte à personne de celle-ci ;
3) que personne ne vous a non plus rien demandé à ce sujet.

R. — Le hauptmann WIRTH avait une telle position personnelle auprès de HITLER et de HIMMLER qu'il a pu me dire de ne plus m'occuper de cette affaire et dans cette condition je lui ai obéi. Voilà ce que j'ai à répondre.

S.I.R. — Personne ne s'est intéressé à ce qu'est devenu le cyanure (sic !).

D. — Quand êtes-vous venu en France pendant la durée de la guerre ? Qu'y avez-vous fait ?

R. — Premier voyage en octobre 1940, j'étais alors civil et en voyage d'affaires qui dura une semaine.

Deuxième voyage — à la Noël 1940 — voyage d'affaires à Paris, d'une durée de quatre jours.

Courant 1941, je viens deux ou trois fois à Paris toujours pour affaires. Au cours d'un de ces voyages je fus en relation avec de WENDEL.

En 1942, alors que j'étais déjà SS je reviens à Paris trois fois, en service, pour achat d'ouvrages géographiques et scientifiques ainsi que de matériel (autoclaves).

En 1943 et 1944 j'effectuai d'autres voyages dans le même but.

S.J.R. — J'ai en effet visité les installations destinées à l'extermination des Juifs dans les camps déjà nommés.

Mention. Ici l'inculpé s'exprime en français.

Les installations étaient les plus primitives et les plus cruelles. Il y avait de petites gares de trois cents mètres environ dans lesquelles entraient les trains avec cinquante wagons. Alors les Ukrainiens chassaient à l'aide de cravaches les personnes transportées qui n'étaient pas mortes à leur arrivée. Il y avait vingt pour cent de morts. Des hauts parleurs donnaient les ordres d'avoir à se déshabiller complètement, y compris les lunettes et les appareils de prothèse (jambes artificielles, etc.). Les personnes qui débarquaient devaient attacher ensemble leurs chaussures par paires, remettre toutes les valeurs, argent et objets. Les victimes devaient apporter elles-mêmes en courant leurs effets dans les wagons. On coupait les cheveux ras aux femmes, les cheveux étaient recueillis dans des sacs à pommes de terre. Les victimes étaient amenées toutes nues sans distinction de sexe dans un passage barbelé qui conduisait dans un bâtiment spécial de bain.

L'inculpé reprend en allemand.

Ce bâtiment couvert portait sur le toit et par dérision l'étoile hébraïque. Il comportait six pièces à BELCEC et huit à TREBLINCA. On entassait à l'aide de coups de cravache les arrivants dans les dites pièces et ils y étaient si serrés qu'ils étaient obligés de se maintenir un pied sur l'autre. Les enfants à la mamelle étaient au bras de leur mère. L'entassement était tel que, même lorsque les gaz avaient fait leur œuvre, les cadavres restaient tous debout, les uns soutenant les autres.

Une fois tout le monde entassé dans chaque pièce, on faisait fermer les portes et tourner le moteur à gaz, non sans avoir soumis pendant des heures les victimes à cet entassement. Une fois j'ai compté moi-même que les victimes étaient restées ainsi entassées pendant exactement deux heures quarante neuf minutes avant que les gaz ne parviennent dans la chambre.

Le gaz parvenait dans les dites chambres par des tuyaux à ce destinés. Les victimes étaient soumises à l'effet des gaz pendant une durée d'environ trente deux minutes.

Des prisonniers juifs étaient chargés de vider les chambres à gaz des victimes que celles-ci contenaient et qui étaient couvertes de leurs propres excréments.

Des prisonniers également juifs, dentistes de profession, étaient chargés d'examiner les cadavres et de leur retirer l'or qu'ils pouvaient avoir dans la machoire. On fouillait également les anus et les parties sexuelles des femmes pour savoir s'ils ne recelaient pas des matières précieuses. Les cadavres étaient ensuite entassés dans d'immenses fosses communes et recouverts d'à peine (dix) dix centimètres de sable.

Les nazis étaient particulièrement fiers de l'énorme quantité d'objets et de vêtements récupérés de cette façon. C'était, disaient-ils, d'un rapport cinq fois plus élevé que toutes les collectes de vêtements organisées en Allemagne. On fouillait de même les cadavres de ceux qui étaient décédés au cours du voyage en chemin de fer.

S.J.R. — Dans les trois camps que j'ai visités, il est mort le jour de ma visite environ trente cinq mille Juifs. Je précise que mes visites ont eu lieu les 17 et 18 août 1942.

S.J.R. — Les trains devaient en principe arriver journellement dans les camps.

S.J.R. — Sans être très précis, je puis indiquer que le système d'extermination a dû commencer au mois d'avril 1942.

S.J.R. — Je pense que l'extermination a duré toute la guerre puisque je n'ai jamais entendu dire qu'elle ait cessé.

D. — Comment s'appelait exactement le service, si l'on peut dire, dont relevait cette extermination préméditée et exécutée pendant si longtemps ?

R. — Il s'appelait EINSATZ REINHARDTZ. Ce service relevait lui-même du R.S.H.A. (service central de sécurité).

Lecture faite, l'inculpé persiste et signe avec nous, le greffier et l'interprète, approuvant la rature de neuf mots rayés nuls et de une ligne, rayée nulle.

Signature : M. Mattei, B. Malkov, Kurt Gerstein, A. Coudroy.

Article in France-Soir, 4 July 1945



"J'AI EXTERMINÉ jusqu'à 11.000 personnes par jour"

(Du correspondant de guerre Geo KELBER)

STUTTGART, — Juin. — Devant Dieu et devant les hommes, je prends la responsabilité de mes aveux, car j'ai été l'un des rares témoins oculaires des plus grands assassinats hitlériens. Je n'ai rien retranché des choses que j'ai vues ; je n'y ai rien ajouté. Ainsi soit la vérité. Que le ciel m'aide...

Ainsi parle Kurt Gerstein, ingénieur S.S., professeur diplômé à Marburg, Alt-la-Chapelle et Berlin, aux officiers enquêteurs de la première armée française.

Et il commença sa déposition qu'il rédigea ensuite soigneusement et signa. C'est le récit des abominations des Hitlériens dont Gerstein se chargea, au camp de Belzic, en qualité de chef des exécutions scientifiques!

— Un jour, le sturmbannführer Guntier m'envoya d'urgence à Lublin pour « une affaire d'Etat que je devais être le seizième personne à connaître, par faveur spéciale du Führer. » A Lublin, je fus reçu par le général S.S. Globocnick et son adjoint, le colonel S.S. Wirth, qui m'apprirent qu'Hitler et Himmler avaient visité la veille les trois stations expérimentales d'asphyxie de Belzic, de Sobibor et de Treblinca. Hitler avait été très mécontent. « Le procédé d'asphyxie par les gaz d'échappement des moteurs Diesel est trop lent, dit-il. Il faut diminuer plus vite le matériel humain biologiquement sans intérêt. » Et c'est moi que l'on avait choisi pour présider à cette accélération. On me conduisit le lendemain à Belzic. Un bâtiment composé de cinq pièces étanches, de cinq mètres sur cinq. Deux inscriptions au fronton : « Fondation Meckenholt ; Inhalation et Hydrothérapie ».

Une sept heures. Il y eut un « arrivage » : un train de marchandises de 45 wagons, d'où les S.S. et leurs aides ukrainiens firent descendre à coups de crosse 6.700 personnes : hommes, femmes et enfants. Un haut-parleur clamait :

— Déposez vos vêtements et objets personnels.

Un air de danse fut diffusé : « Tu qui tiens-tu ton jolie yeux brun... » Les femmes étaient rassurées, rondelins chez la coiffeur installé dans une petite baraque portant l'inscription « garde-robe ». Et la cérémonie pénétra dans la fondation Meckenholt.

— Entassez bien l'ordonna le colonel Wirth.

Jug à 700 personnes furent poussées dans les cinq pièces. Wirth m'expliquait la « manœuvre ».

— Le poids moyen de chaque homme étant de 68 kgs, nos chambres peuvent recevoir 25.250 kgs d'êtres humains chacune. Avec un peu de bonne volonté nous obtenons une densité moyenne de 250 personnes par « opération » !

« Les portes furent fermées. Les moteurs Diesel mis en mouvement. Nous regardions par des lucarnes. A l'intérieur des chambres visiblement éclairées. Les moteurs fonctionnaient mal. Wirth s'excusa de la mauvaise marche de l'opération. Vingt, trente, quarante minutes passèrent. Le grésil aux moteurs Diesel. un S.S. nommé Mackenholt, s'impatientait. Enfin les moteurs tournèrent.

« A l'intérieur des baraques les hommes étaient toujours vivants ! Je chronométrais la durée du supplice : cinquante, soixante minutes ! Les premiers morts tombèrent. Dix minutes passèrent encore. Enfin, ce fut fini !...

« Des équipes d'Ukrainiens sortent les cadavres tout refroidants de sueur et d'odeurs. Ils arrachent les dents en or, ils ciseront les cheveux des femmes destinés à être utilisés pour la fabrication des étoffes et dans certains instruments de précision pour sous-marins ! Quand le délestage fut fini, d'autres Ukrainiens poussèrent une nouvelle fournée de condamnés dans les chambres d'asphyxie.

Le document officiel du 3e Bureau de la 1re Armée française, où Gerstein, le bourreau de Belzic, a consigné ses crimes.

J'étais en règle avec ma conscience"

— Je remarquais ma surprise, ajouta Gerstein. Ou me demandait de découvrir un moyen de supprimer

(SUITE PAGE 2)

GROS SUCCÈS A LONDRES pour la Comédie-Française

Et plus vif succès encore pour la dernière tournée de Churchill !!

(De notre envoyé spécial permanent Jacques PECHERAL)

LONDRES, 3 juillet (par téléphone). — *Dans la salle du New Theater où la Comédie-Française, en visite à Londres, donnait hier soir, en présence de notre ambassadeur M. Massigli, sa première avec* L'Impromptu de Versailles *et le* Barbier de Séville, *un Anglais, assis à côté de moi, faisait remarquer à sa voisine française, que ce n'était pas seulement un magnifique spectacle mais, en même temps, à en juger par la réaction des spectateurs, la preuve de l'immense progrès fait par les Britanniques dans la compréhension de l'esprit français.*

Le public était en grande majorité anglais et les plus fines

Les aveux d'un bourreau nazi

SUITE 2

sion plus rapide et plus efficace que cette extermination d'un genre primitif. Je proposai l'utilisation de gaz plus toxiques, et notamment de ceux que dégage l'acide prussique.

Et le misérable conclut :

— J'étais en règle avec ma conscience car j'abrégeais les souffrances d'une humanité « biologiquement inutile et vouée à la destruction », comme disait Hitler. Désigné sous le nom de catégorie 3, ce matériel humain comprenait des Juifs, des Polonais, des Russes, des Tchèques, des Lituaniens et des Hongrois.

» Jusqu'à onze mille exécutions furent ainsi opérées certains jours. Beaucoup d'enfants figuraient parmi les victimes. De temps à autre un professeur faisait aux nommés chargés des exécutions — le « kommando de travail » — un discours pour leur expliquer leur grande mission. Hitler lui-même, visitant Belzic avait dit : « Nous enterrerons ici des plaques de bronze afin que nos descendants connaissent notre œuvre d'assainissement biologique de la planète ». Pour sa défense, Gerstein expliqua qu'en 1941 il tenta d'entrer en communication avec le pasteur « résistant » Niemöller et que, même, il se présenta, à Berlin, au nonce du pape qui, d'ailleurs l'éconduisit. Il prétend avoir toujours été antinazi et n'avoir accepté les terribles fonctions de bourreau que pour avoir la possibilité de témoigner contre le nazisme, au jour de la défaite allemande...

Le plus étrange c'est que le SS Gerstein répand ses déclarations comme preuve de sa révolte « humanitaire » et qu'il est encore en liberté, comme s'il n'avait aucune responsabilité dans l'œuvre de mort du camp de Belzic...

Gersten's Request for a Lawyer, 15 July 1945



GERSTEIN KURT
DEMANDE A MONSIEUR LE COMMANDANT DU TRIBUNAL MILITAIRE
DECHERCHE MIDI
239
DE LUI PERMETTRE LE CHOIX D'UN AVOCAT. AVANT-HIER, JE NE CONNAISSAIS PAS LE NOM D'UN TEL AVOCAT. MAIS JE VOUS SOLLICITE DE ME PERMETTRE, SI L'AVOCAT DE CONFIANCE DE LA LÉGATION DU SAINT PÈRE À PARIS OU L'AVOCAT DE CONFIANCE DE SA ALTESSE L'ÉVÊQUE DE PARIS OU CELUI DE LA CONGRÉGATION SOCIETAS JESUS DE PARIS. À MON CAS SONT TRAITÉS DES AFFAIRES DES ÉGLISES CHRÉTIENNES, POUR LESQUELLES JE VOUS PRIE TEL AVOCAT AVEC DES INTERÊTS ET CONNAISSANCES SPÉCIFIQUEMENT CHRÉTIENNES, MOI MÊME N'AYANT PAS SUR MOI QUE DE CCA. 1 HO. — MARK DE MONNAIE ALLEMANDE, JE SUIS SUR QUE SE DÉCLARERONT RÉSPONSABLES POUR LE SALAIRE :
1) LA BEKENNTNISKIRCHE DE LA WESTPHALIE DU SUD, L'ÉGLISE DE LA RÉSISTANCE ANTINAZIE, DONT J'ÉTAIS PRESBYTERIEN REPRESENTÉ PAR MESSRS. LES PASTEURS REHLING ET KUEPPER À HAGEN WESTPHALIE. 2) LA BEKENNTNISKIRCHE DE SARREBRUCK, REPRESENTÉ PAR MR. LE PASTEUR OTTO WEHR À SARREBRUCK. — 3) LE FABRICANT INGÉNIEUR DIPLOMÉ UBBINK DE DOESBOURG — HOLLANDE, MEMBRE DE LA RÉSISTANCE ANTINAZIE HOLLANDAISE. LES PERSONNES CI-DESSUS CONAISSENT MON CAS. — JE PRIE MONSIEUR SA DIGNITÉ LE GURÉ DE PRISON DE ME PROCURER UN TEL AVOCAT.

15 JUILLET 45

KURT GERSTEIN

Letter by Pierre Lehmann, 25 July 1945

PIERRE LEHMANN
AVOCAT
2 RUE RAYMOND AROUX
PARIS (6e)
Passy 44-44

25 juillet 1945

GERSTEIN

Mon Commandant,

A mon vif regret, il ne me sera pas possible d'assister l'inculpé GERSTEIN jeudi 26. J'en suis navré, non seulement par déférence pour la Justice & pour vous-même, mais aussi parce que cette affaire paraît extrêmement intéressante.

Mes scrupules sont atténués à la pensée qu'une impartialité que j'ai eu apprécier dès la première séance d'instruction sauvegardera pleinement les droits d'un inculpé qui, au surplus, me semble point coupable.

Veuillez, mon Commandant, avoir la bonté de m'excuser & d'agréer l'assurance de ma haute considération.

Henri Lehmann

A Monsieur le Commandant MATTEI
Juge d'Instruction
Deuxième Tribunal Militaire de PARIS
53 rue de la Faisanderie 53
PARIS.16e.

Police Report on Gerstein's Death, 25 July 1945



COMMISSARIAT DE POLICE
DE QUARTIER
Notre-Dame-des-Champs

L'an mil neuf cent quarante — cinq
et le vingt-cinq juillet

Nous, C. Le CALL

Continuant l'information,

Envoi à l'Institut médico-légal

transportons le corps du nommé Gerstein à l'Institut médico-légal auquel fins d'autopsie

Le Commissaire de Police,

Déclaration de décès

Mentionnons que la déclaration de décès a été faite par nous soussigné à la mairie du VIe arrondissement

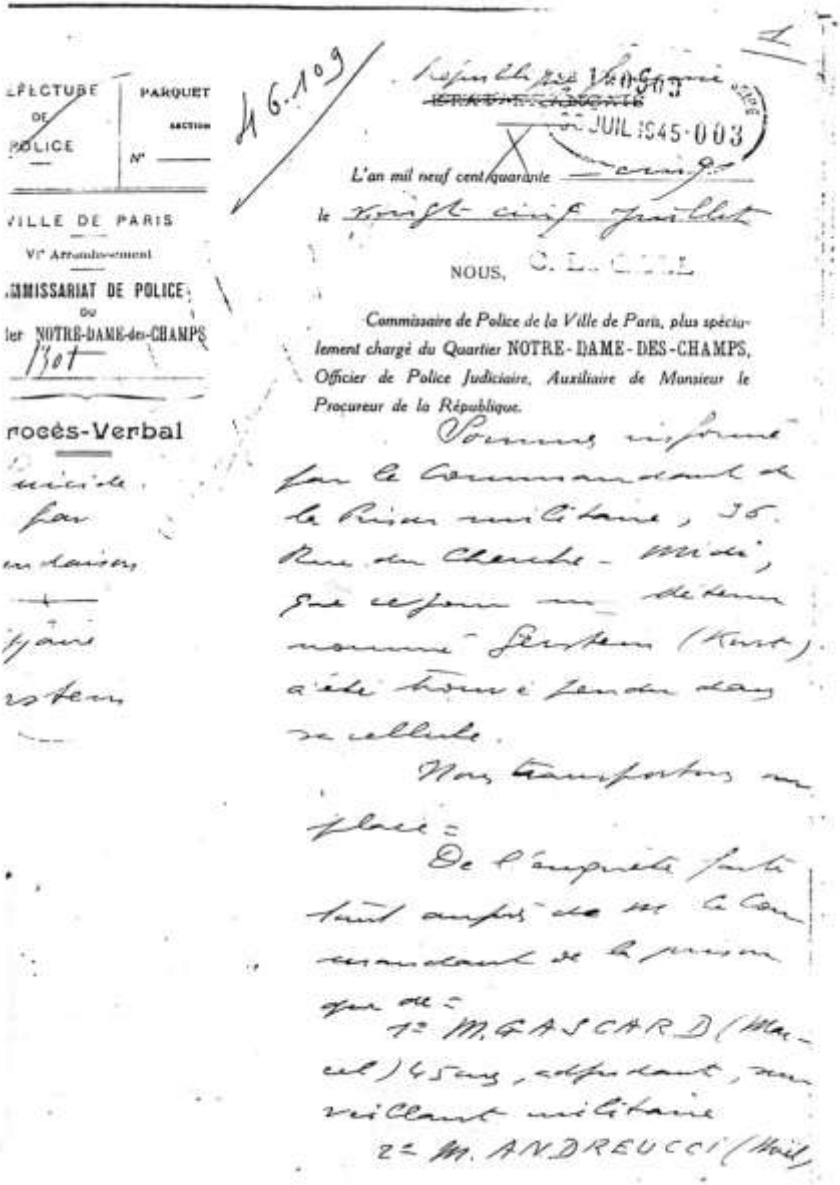
Le Commissaire de Police,

Renvoi

Remettons le présent information à Monsieur le Procureur de la République avec le rapport de l'Institut médico-légal

COMMISSARIAT DE POLICE

Commissaire de Police,



PRÉFECTURE DE POLICE — PARQUET — section — N°

VILLE DE PARIS
VIe Arrondissement
COMMISSARIAT DE POLICE
du
1er NOTRE-DAME-des-CHAMPS

Procès-Verbal

16.109

Reçu le 22 JUIL 1945 003

L'an mil neuf cent quarante cinq
le vingt cinq juillet

NOUS, C. L. [illegible]

Commissaire de Police de la Ville de Paris, plus spécialement chargé du Quartier NOTRE-DAME-DES-CHAMPS, *Officier de Police Judiciaire, Auxiliaire de Monsieur le Procureur de la République.*

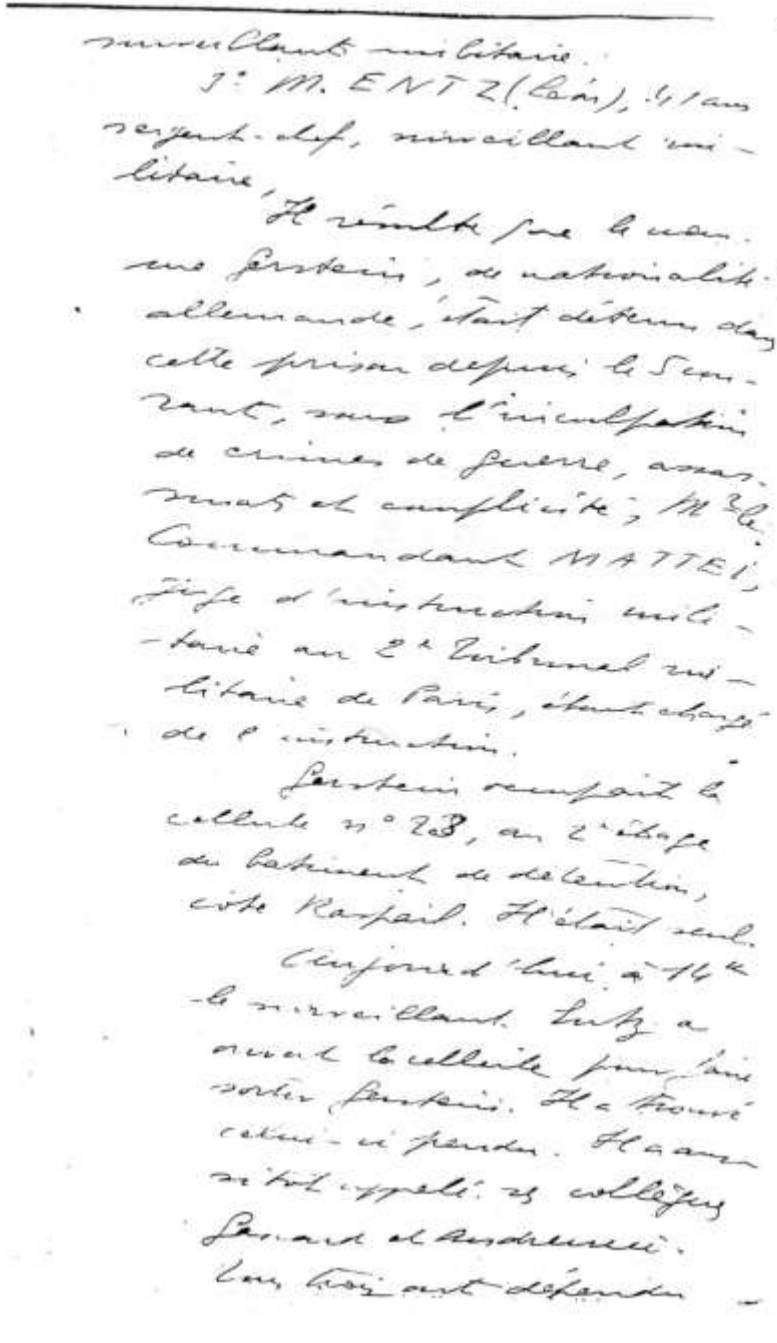
Sommes informé par le Commandant de la Prison militaire, 15, Rue du Cherche-Midi, que cette prison renferme un détenu nommé Gerstein (Kurt), a été trouvé pendu dans sa cellule.

Nous transportons en place =

De l'enquête faite tant auprès de M. le Commandant de la prison que de :

1° M. GASCARD (Marcel) 45 ans, adjudant, surveillant militaire

2° M. ANDREUCCI (Noël)



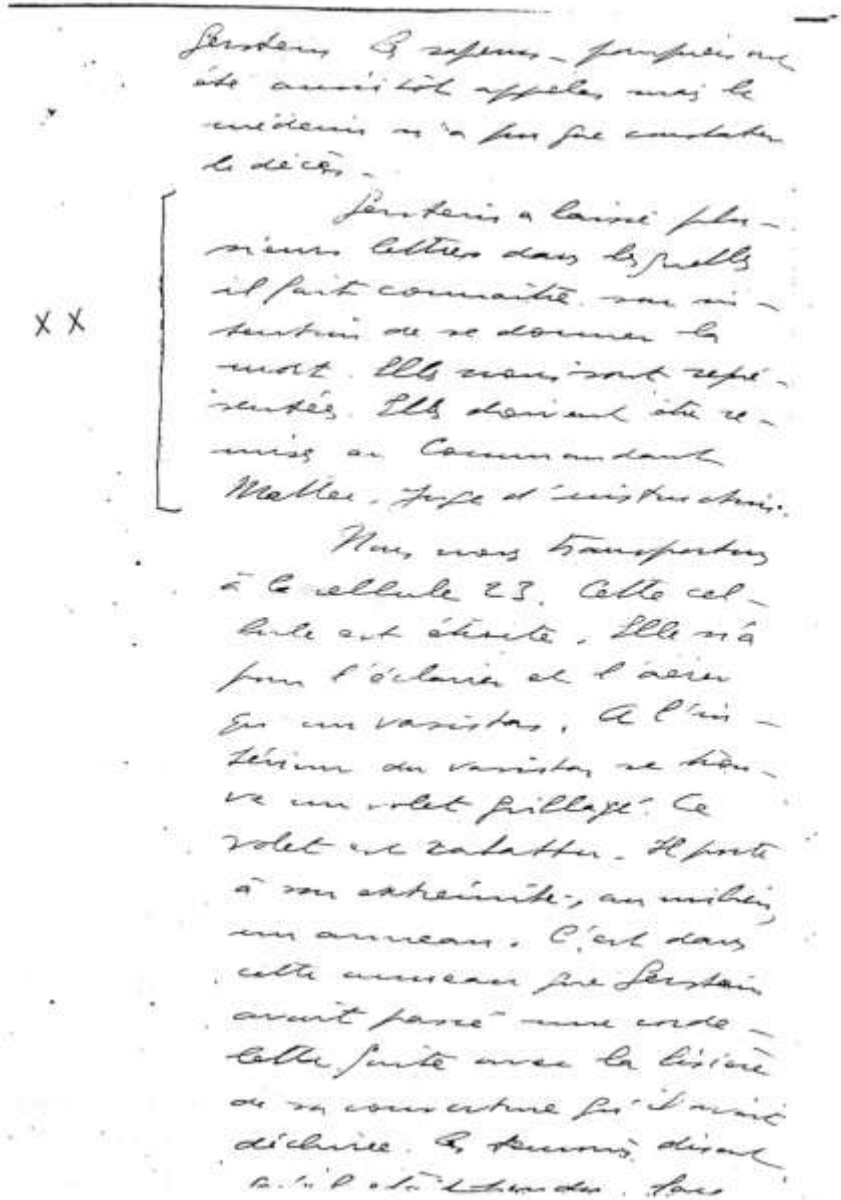
surveillant militaire.

3° M. ENTZ (Léo), 41 ans, sergent-chef, surveillant militaire.

Il résulte que le nommé Gerstein, de nationalité allemande, était détenu dans cette prison depuis le 5 courant, sous l'inculpation de crimes de guerre, assassinats et complicité; M. le Commandant MATTEI, Juge d'instruction militaire au 2e Tribunal militaire de Paris, étant chargé de l'instruction.

Gerstein occupait la cellule n° 23, au 2e étage du bâtiment de détention, côté Ranfain. Il était seul.

Conformément à l'ordre n° 14 le surveillant Lutz a ouvert la cellule pour faire sortir Gerstein. Il a trouvé celui-ci pendu. Il a aussitôt appelé ses collègues Lécard et Andrieux. Les trois ont détendu



Gerstein & refusé – pompier est
été aussitôt appelé, mais le
médecin n'a pu que constater
le décès.

XX Gerstein a laissé plusieurs
lettres dans lesquelles
il fait connaître son in-
tention de se donner la
mort. Elles nous sont repré-
sentées. Elles devaient être re-
mises au Commandant
Wetzel, Chef de l'Institut d'hy-

Nous nous transportons
à la cellule 23. Cette cel-
lule est éteinte. Elle n'a
pour l'éclairer et l'aérer
qu'un vasistas. A l'in-
térieur du vasistas se trou-
ve un volet pliable. Ce
volet est cadenassé. Il porte
à son extrémité, au milieu,
un anneau. C'est dans
cet anneau que Gerstein
avait passé une corde
Cette fois avec la boucle
de sa cravate qu'il avait
déchirée. Il devait debout
sur le siège [illegible]

au mur, le fenêtre fermée
presque au sol de la cellule.

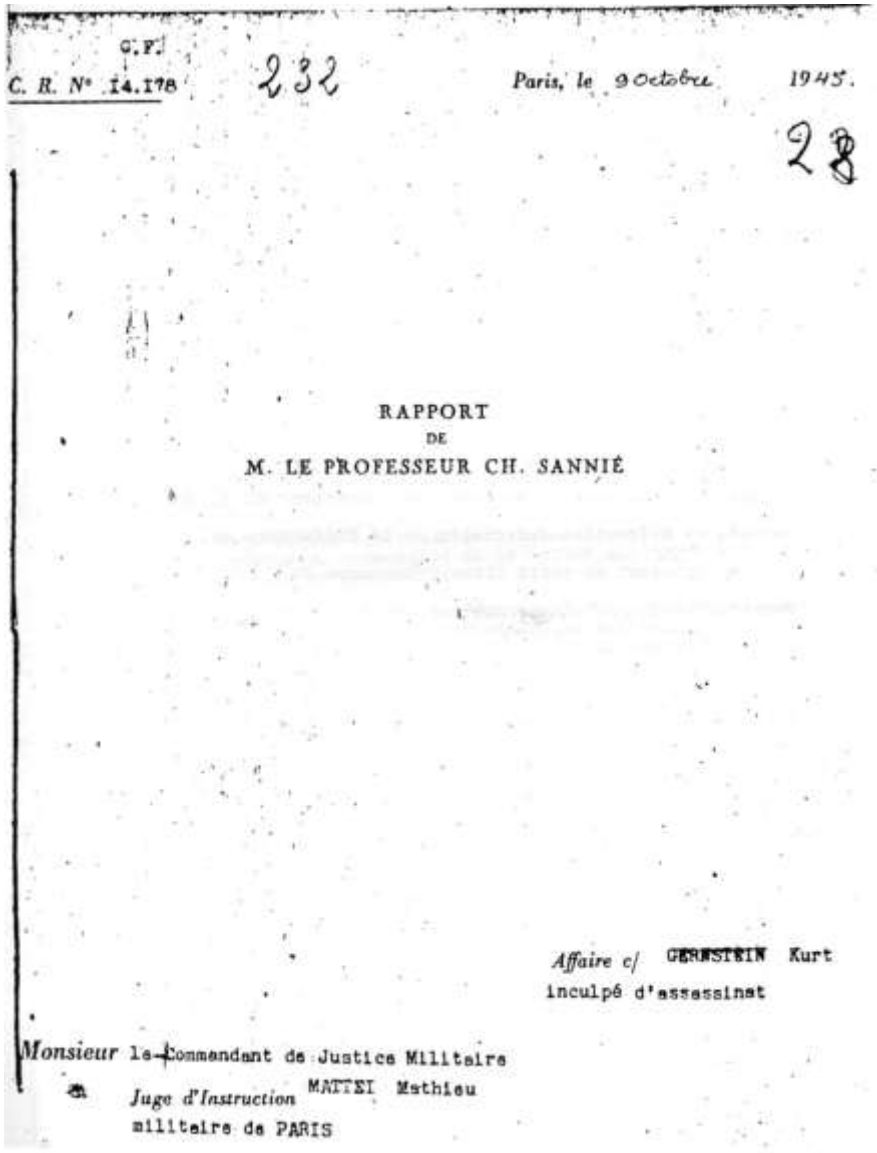
Le corps de Gerstein est
étendu sur une paillasse.
Il est vêtu d'une chemise
et d'un pantalon. On voit
dans la partie antérieure
du cou un sillon violâ-
cé et profond qui corres-
pond à la cordelette. Le vi-
sage paraît calme. On ne
relève sur le corps aucune
autre trace de violences. On
ne relève dans la cellule
aucune trace de lutte.

Le corps est encore
souple. Les extrémités se
refroidissent.

Au greffe de la
prison nous relevons
comme seul état-
civil un décès :

GERSTEIN (Kurt)
né le 11 Août 1905, à Münst
er (Westphalie) de Ludwig
et de Clara Schumann, do-
micilié à Hagen (Westphalie
ressortissant allemand

Report of Professor Ch. Sannié, Paris, 9 October 1945



C.F.

C. R. N° 14.178 232 *Paris, le* 9 Octobre 1945.

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RAPPORT

DE

M. LE PROFESSEUR CH. SANNIÉ

Affaire c/ GERSTEIN Kurt

inculpé d'assassinat

Monsieur le Commandant de Justice Militaire

Juge d'Instruction MATTEI Mathieu

militaire de PARIS

C. R. N° 14.178 Paris, le 9 Octobre 1945

Nous, soussigné, Docteur Charles SANNIÉ,

Professeur à la Faculté de Médecine, Directeur du

Service de l'Identité Judiciaire de la Préfecture de

Police, agissant en vertu d'une Ordonnance de

Monsieur le Commandant de Justice, Juge d'Instruc-
Militaire MATTEI Mathieu
tion, ainsi conçue :

Nous MATTEI Mathieu
Juge d'Instruction [illegible], Militaire de Paris,

Nous, Commandant de Justice Militaire MATTEI Mathieu
Juge d'Instruction militaire de Paris

Vu la procédure commencée contre le nommé GERNSTEIN Ku
inculpé d'assassinats.

Attendu qu'il importe d'informer et d'éviter les frais.

Vu l'article 52 du Code de Justice Militaire et les articles 83 et 85 du Code d'Instruction criminelle,

Prions et requérons au besoin Monsieur le Directeur de l'Identité Judiciaire,

auquel nous adressons la présente commission rogatoire, de vouloir bien citer à comparaître devant lui,

à l'effet de faire photographier et d'adresser ensuite en quat
exemplaires les pièces jointes:

.....

nº I commençant par ces mots: "Pour Monsieur le Colonel" et finissant par "le matin";

nº 2 commençant par les mots "jamais, jamais" et se terminant par "Chrétienne";

nº 2 bis commençant au recto par les mots: "Messieurs ayez la" et se terminant par "les cheveux" et, au verso, commençant par "Monsieur le Curé" et se terminant par "Jésus Christus" suivi d'une signature;

nº 3 commençant par "GERSTEIN Kurt" au recto et se terminant au verso par "volonté de Gunther";

nº 4 commençant par "Au deuxième Bureau" et se terminant par "Burkhardt";

nº 5 pièce en langue allemande écrite sur une feuille au crayon encre;

nº 6 pièce en langue allemande écrite sur une feuille au crayon encre;

nº 7 carte lettre écrite au crayon, en français portant au verso l'adresse du Commandant de la Prison Militaire et le timbre de la Poste de Froissy 24-7-45 Oise;

nº 8 commençant au recto par "Moi seulement" et se terminant au verso, par "notre premier veu (?);

nº 9 commençant au recto, par "informé comme tous" et se terminant au verso, par "je l'ai";

nº 10 commençant, au recto, par"un mot encore" et se terminant, au verso, par "cette quantité";

nº 11 commençant au recto, par "contre d'une visite" et se terminant, au verso, par "encore rien";

nº 12, commençant par "autres témoins" et se terminant par "Prison";

nº 13 inscriptions au crayon portées sur le dos de la couverture d'un opuscule "Wermsacht Shrachführer";

nº 14 inscriptions au crayon, en langue allemande, portées sur quatre pages de garde d'un livre religieux en langue allemande.

Prions, en outre, de nous renvoyer la présente Commission rogatoire avec les procès-verbaux d'information dressés en

.....

conséquence, ainsi que toutes les pièces qu'il y aurait lieu de rédiger pour son exécution, conformément à la loi.

à Paris, le six Août 1945
Le Juge d'Instruction militaire -
signé : A. MATTEI

Serment préalablement prêté, avons rempli comme suit, la mission à nous confiée.

Le 9 Août 1945, en même temps que l'ordonnance nous commettant, Monsieur le Commissaire du Gouvernement près le Tribunal Militaire Permanent de Paris nous remettait plusieurs documents à photographier, numérotés de I à 14, ayant trait à un nommé GERSTEIN, Kurt, inculpé d'assassinat.

Ces documents ont été reproduits photographiquement recto et verso en vraie grandeur, en quatre exemplaires et sont joints au présent rapport.

Nous certifions que ces reproductions sont rigoureusement conformes aux documents originaux.

Le document n° 12, n'étant pas joint à l'ordonnance, celui-ci n'a pu être reproduit.

D'autre part, nous signalons que les documents du n° 14, concernant le livre religieux, figurent non seulement sur les quatre pages de garde, mais également sur vingt feuillets, à l'intérieur du livre. Nous avons donc jugé utile de tous les reproduire.

File Memo by Mathieu Mattéi, 10 October 1945

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L'an mil neuf cent quarante cinq, le dix Octobre

Nous, Mathieu Mattéi, Commandant de Justice Militaire, Juge d'instruction militaire au 2ème Tribunal Militaire Permanent de Paris

Vu la procédure instruite contre GERNSTEIN, Kurt, du chef d'assassinat et complicité.

Vu notre Commission Rogatoire en date du six Avril 1945 commettant Mr le Directeur de l'Identité Judiciaire aux fins de photographier les documents y énumérés.

Vu les deux rapports de Mr le Directeur de l'Identité Judiciaire en date du 9 Octobre 1945, les pièces en retour et leurs photographies.

XX Ordonnons au dossier de l'information, sous deux enveloppes portant le cachet du Juge d'Instruction Militaire, 1°) les documents dont s'agit — 2°) leurs photographies.

De tout quoi nous dressons le présent procès-verbal que signons avec notre greffier.

Le Juge d'Instruction Militaire

Le greffier

Letter by Martin Niemöller to Elfriede Gerstein, 24 May 1946



MARTIN NIEMÖLLER D. D.
PFARRER

BÜDINGEN / HESSEN
SCHLOSS

24. Mai 1946
N./K.

Frau
Elfriede Gerstein
(14b) Tübingen
Tropengenesungsheim

Sehr verehrte, liebe Frau Gerstein!

In Tübingen erhielt ich Ihren Brief vom 17.5. und hatte auch zweimal eine kurze Besprechung mit mit Ernst Kupper wegen der Angelegenheit Ihres Mannes. Leider war es völlig unmöglich für mich vorbeizukommen, weil ich schon mit meinem Vortrag und dann spät in die Nacht mit Besprechungen besetzt war und am nächsten Morgen in aller Frühe weiterreisen musste, um mittags zur rechten Zeit zu einer Pfarrkonferenz in der Nähe von Darmstadt zu sein. Leider bin ich nun durch das Gespräch mit Herrn Kupper auch nicht recht weiter gekommen. Mir scheint das Entscheidende, dass man zunächst einmal festzustellen sucht, wo überhaupt Ihr Mann sich jetzt befindet, damit dann solche Menschen, die Kurt persönlich nahe gekannt haben und ein vollgültiges Zeugnis für ihn ausstellen können, wie vielleicht Pastor Rehling in Hagen und Dr. Ehlers in Oldenburg, versuchen, der Entwicklung einen Stoss vorwärts zu geben und sich für seine Freilassung bezw. für seine Rehabilitierung einzusetzen. Persönlich kann ich ja in dieser Angelegenheit deshalb so wenig machen, weil mir selbst jeder Eindruck über die Entwicklung Ihres Mannes seit 1937 fehlt, den ich als meine persönliche Überzeugung mit Aussicht auf Erfolg geltend machen könnte. Wohl aber kann ich, wie ich das ja im Fall von Pfarrer Rehling wohl schon getan habe, bezeugen, dass die Referenzen von Freunden und nahen Bekannten Ihres Mannes als zuverlässig gelten können, weil ich für diese Personen (wie Pfarrer Rehling und Dr. Ehlers) in vollem Umfange bürgen kann. Dazu bin ich in jedem Fall gern bereit.

Dies wollte ich Sie wenigstens gleich wissen lassen, und das umsomehr, als ich Sie nun persönlich ja nicht habe sehen und sprechen können.

Mit herzlichen Grüssen und in der Hoffnung, dass die Zeit im Tropengenesungsheim Ihnen gut tun möchte, bin ich

Ihr sehr ergebener

Martin Niemöller

ORCG Letter dated 6 June 1945



RÉSIDENCE
GOUVERNEMENT

DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE
ÉTUDES ET RECHERCHES

PARIS le 6 JUIN 1945

Le Chef de l'Organe de
Recherches des Crimes de
à
Monsieur le Professeur
CARLTON GARDENS, 4
LONDRES

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser ci-joint la copie de l'interrogatoire par nos services de l'ancien SS GERSTEIN de TUBINGEN

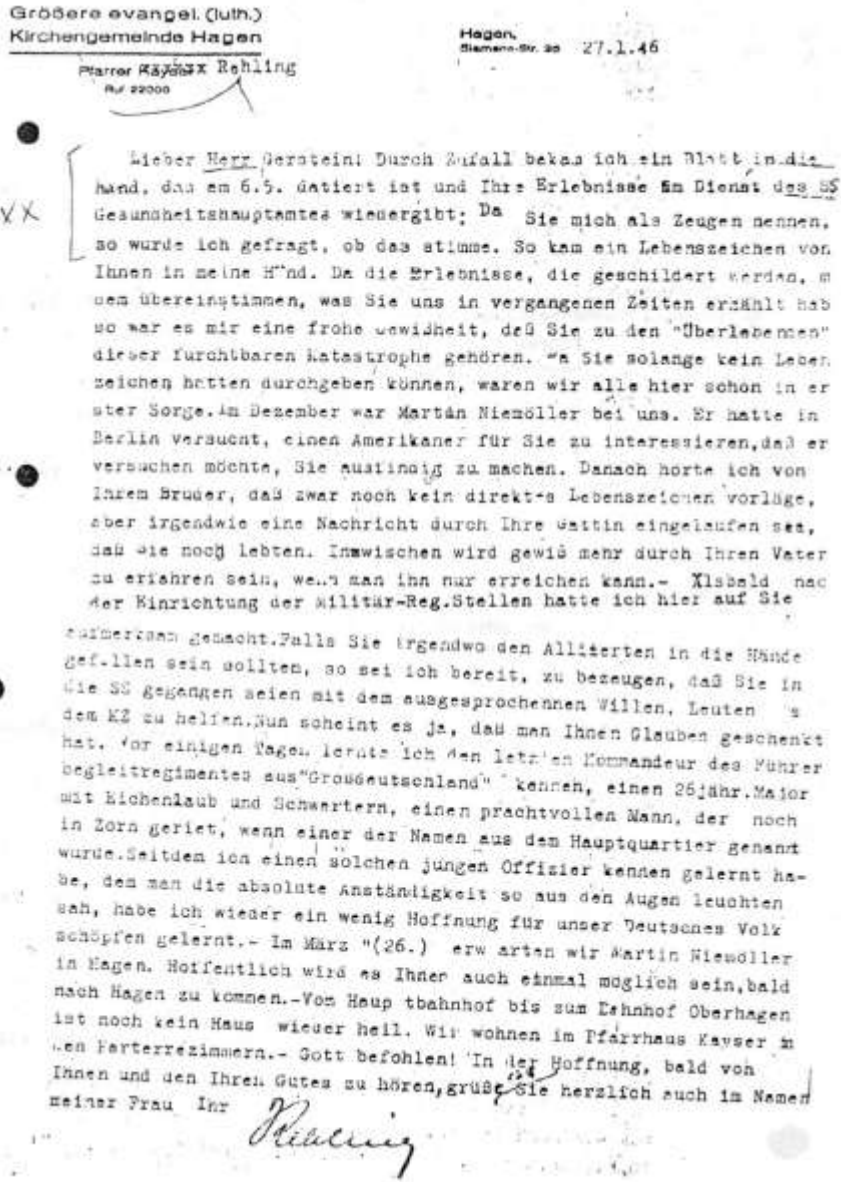
Ce document ne manquera pas, je pense, de vous intéresser

Je vous laisse en tous cas, le soin de voir s'il y a lieu de faire adresse à la WAR CRIMES COMMISSION.

Je suis satisfait des premiers résultats obtenus par les équipes françaises de recherches de Criminels de Guerre qui fonctionnent actuellement en Allemagne, et je vous signale que mes services sont actuellement en possession de 41.000 fiches de Criminels de Guerre.

G. MANTOUT

Letter by Kurt Rehling to Kurt Gerstein, 27 January 1946



Größere evangel. (luth.)
Kirchengemeinde Hagen

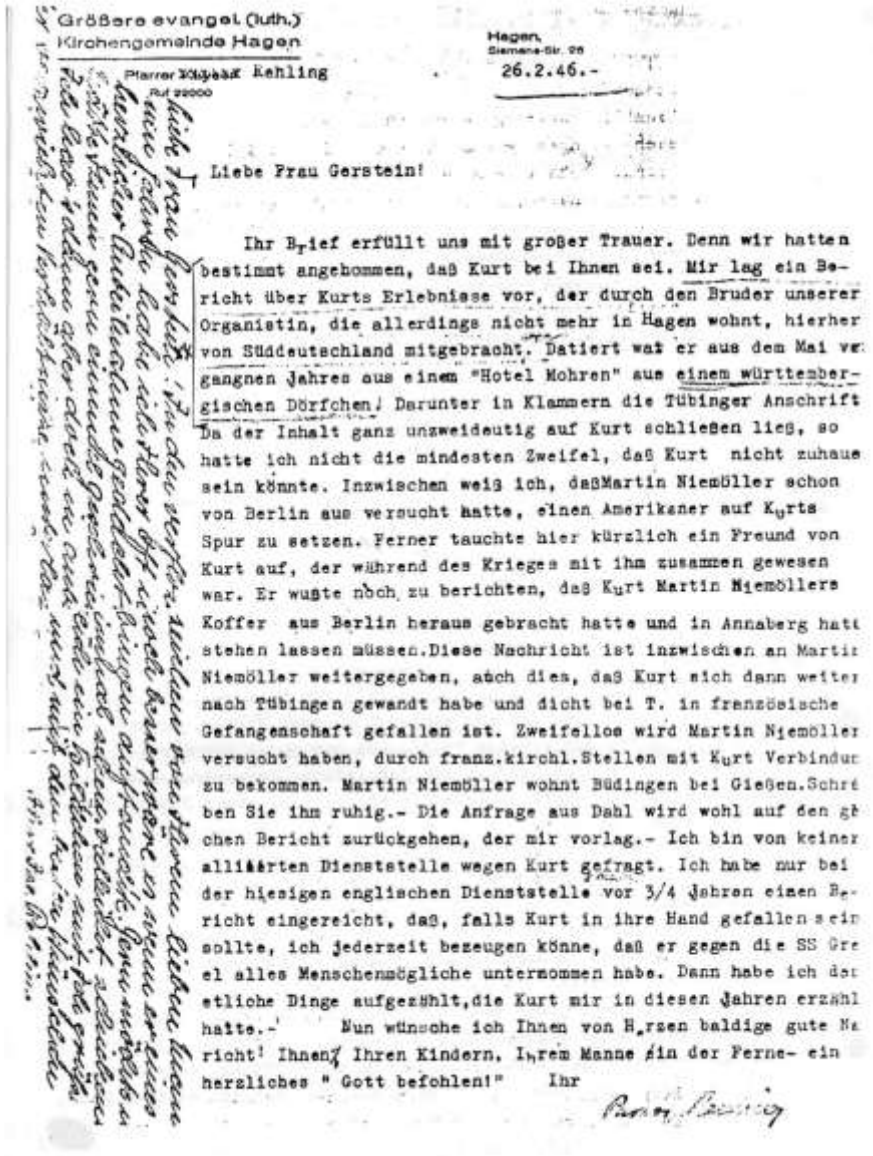
Pfarrer Rehling

Hagen,
Bismarck-Str. 28 27.1.46

Lieber Herr Gerstein! Durch Zufall bekam ich ein Blatt in die Hand, das am 6.5. datiert ist und Ihre Erlebnisse im Dienst des SS Gesundheitshauptamtes wiedergibt. Da Sie mich als Zeugen nennen, so wurde ich gefragt, ob das stimme. So kam ein Lebenszeichen von Ihnen in meine Hand. Da die Erlebnisse, die geschildert werden, mit dem übereinstimmen, was Sie uns in vergangenen Zeiten erzählt hab so war es mir eine frohe Gewißheit, daß Sie zu den "Überlebenden" dieser furchtbaren Katastrophe gehören. Da Sie solange kein Lebenszeichen hatten durchgeben können, waren wir alle hier schon in großer Sorge. Im Dezember war Martin Niemöller bei uns. Er hatte in Berlin versucht, einen Amerikaner für Sie zu interessieren, daß er versuchen möchte, Sie auszutauschen. Danach hörte ich von Ihrem Bruder, daß zwar noch kein direktes Lebenszeichen vorläge, aber irgendwie eine Nachricht durch Ihre Gattin eingelaufen sei, daß sie noch lebten. Inzwischen wird gewiß mehr durch Ihren Vater zu erfahren sein, wenn man ihn nur erreichen kann.- Alsbald nach der Einrichtung der Militär-Reg.Stellen hatte ich hier auf Sie aufmerksam gemacht. Falls Sie irgendwo den Alliierten in die Hände gefallen sein sollten, so sei ich bereit, zu bezeugen, daß Sie in die SS gegangen seien mit dem ausgesprochenen Willen, Leuten aus dem KZ zu helfen. Nun scheint es ja, daß man Ihnen Glauben geschenkt hat. Vor einigen Tagen lernte ich den letzten Kommandeur des Führer Begleitregimentes aus "Großdeutschland" kennen, einen 26jähr. Major mit Eichenlaub und Schwertern, einen prachtvollen Mann, der noch in Zorn geriet, wenn einer der Namen aus dem Hauptquartier genannt wurde. Seitdem ich einen solchen jungen Offizier kennen gelernt habe, dem man die absolute Anständigkeit so aus den Augen leuchten sah, habe ich wieder ein wenig Hoffnung für unser Deutsches Volk schöpfen gelernt.- Im März "(26.) erwarten wir Martin Niemöller in Hagen. Hoffentlich wird es Ihnen auch einmal möglich sein, bald nach Hagen zu kommen.- Vom Hauptbahnhof bis zum Bahnhof Oberhagen ist noch kein Haus wieder heil. Wir wohnen im Pfarrhaus Kayser in den Parterrezimmern.- Gott befohlen! In der Hoffnung, bald von Ihnen und den Ihren Gutes zu hören, grüße Sie herzlich auch im Namen meiner Frau Ihr

Rehling

Letter by Kurt Rehling to Elfriede Gerstein, 26 February 1946



Größere evangel. (luth.)
Kirchengemeinde Hagen

Pfarrer Kurt Rehling
Ruf 22000

Hagen,
Siemens-Str. 26
26.2.46.-

Liebe Frau Gerstein!

Ihr Brief erfüllt uns mit großer Trauer. Denn wir hatten bestimmt angenommen, daß Kurt bei Ihnen sei. Mir lag ein Bericht über Kurts Erlebnisse vor, der durch den Bruder unserer Organistin, die allerdings nicht mehr in Hagen wohnt, hierher von Süddeutschland mitgebracht. Datiert war er aus dem Mai vergangnen Jahres aus einem "Hotel Mohren" aus einem württembergischen Dörfchen. Darunter in Klammern die Tübinger Anschrift. Da der Inhalt ganz unzweideutig auf Kurt schließen ließ, so hatte ich nicht die mindesten Zweifel, daß Kurt nicht zuhaus sein könnte. Inzwischen weiß ich, daß Martin Niemöller schon von Berlin aus versucht hatte, einen Amerikaner auf Kurts Spur zu setzen. Ferner tauchte hier kürzlich ein Freund von Kurt auf, der während des Krieges mit ihm zusammen gewesen war. Er wußte noch zu berichten, daß Kurt Martin Niemöllers Koffer aus Berlin heraus gebracht hatte und in Annaberg hatt stehen lassen müssen. Diese Nachricht ist inzwischen an Martin Niemöller weitergegeben, auch dies, daß Kurt sich dann weiter nach Tübingen gewandt habe und dicht bei T. in französische Gefangenschaft gefallen ist. Zweifellos wird Martin Niemöller versucht haben, durch franz. kirchl. Stellen mit Kurt Verbindung zu bekommen. Martin Niemöller wohnt Büdingen bei Gießen. Schreiben Sie ihm ruhig.- Die Anfrage aus Dahl wird wohl auf den gleichen Bericht zurückgehen, der mir vorlag.- Ich bin von keiner alliierten Dienststelle wegen Kurt gefragt. Ich habe nur bei der hiesigen englischen Dienststelle vor 3/4 Jahren einen Bericht eingereicht, daß, falls Kurt in ihre Hand gefallen sein sollte, ich jederzeit bezeugen könne, daß er gegen die SS Greuel alles Menschenmögliche unternommen habe. Dann habe ich dar etliche Dinge aufgezählt, die Kurt mir in diesen Jahren erzählt hatte.- Nun wünsche ich Ihnen von Herzen baldige gute Nachricht! Ihnen, Ihren Kindern, Ihrem Manne sin der Ferne- ein herzliches " Gott befohlen!" Ihr

Pastor Rehling

Letter by Pastor Hecklinger, 15 February 1961



EVANG. PFARRAMT
ROTTWEIL A.N.

Rottweil a. N., den 15.Febr.1961.

Bescheinigung.

Hiedurch bescheinige ich, daß Herr Gerstein etwa Mitte Mai 1945 auf meiner Schreibmaschine einen Bericht über seine Tätigkeit als Spitzel innerhalb der SS und seinen Verkehr mit ausländischen Stellen niedergeschrieben hat. Er hielt sich damals in Rottweil unter französischem Gewahrsam auf, bis er auf ungeklärte Weise verschleppt wurde. Die Schreibmaschine war wahrscheinlich dieselbe, mit der diese Zeilen geschrieben wurden - Marke Mercedes Prima, etwa aus dem Jahr 1935 stammend. Es könnte aber auch meine alte Schreibmaschine Orga Privat aus dem Jahr 1925 gewesen sein, die ich in jener unruhigen Zeit wieder hervorholte, aber heute nicht mehr vorhanden ist. Leider kann ich nicht mehr mit Bestimmtheit sagen, welche Schreibmaschine ich damals in Benützung hatte; aber daß Herr Gerstein bei mir und auf meiner Schreibmaschine mindestens den größten Teil seines Berichtes niedergeschrieben hat, kann ich mit Bestimmtheit versichern.

EVANG. PFARRAMT ROTTWEIL

Z.B.: Pfarrer Hecklinger

Statement by Elfriede Gerstein on her Husband's "Confessions"

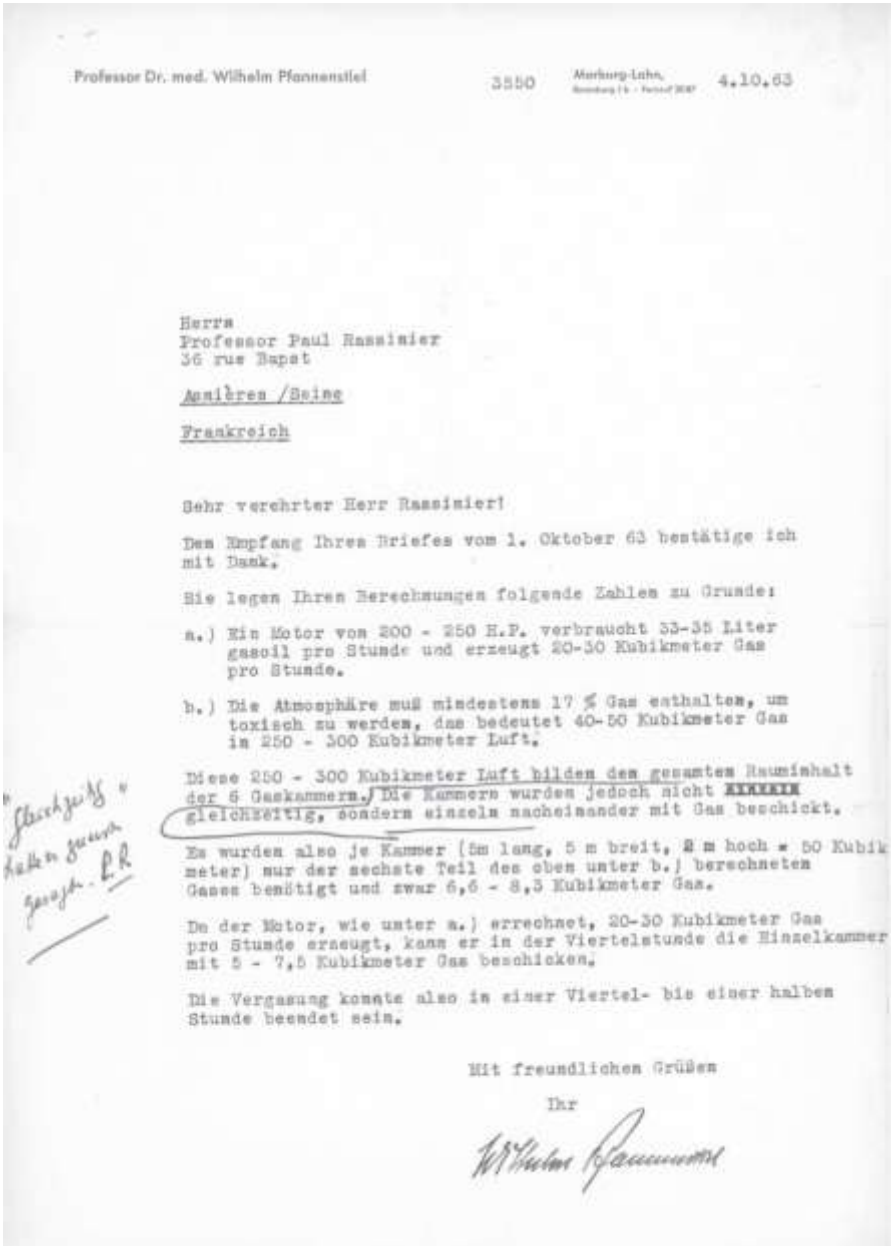
Zu 1.): Was ist Frau Gerstein über des Zustandekommen des französischen (Rottweil, 26. April 1945) und des englischen Teils (5.5.45!!!, nicht 43) bekannt?

Mein Mann hatte sich am 22. April 1945 freiwillig auf der französischen Kommandantur in Reutlingen gemeldet und war über Tübingen nach Rottweil gebracht worden. (In Tübingen hat er seine Familie nicht angetroffen, da wir kurz vorher die Wohnung hatten räumen müssen.) Es dürfte ihm sehr bald klar geworden sein, daß er nicht bei jedem westlichen Alliierten die Kenntnis der deutschen Sprache und die Bereitwilligkeit, sich ihrer zu bedienen, voraussetzen konnte, und daß es angebracht sei, seinen Bericht während der Rottweiler Wartezeit in französischer Sprache zu Papier zu bringen. Ihn auch in englischer Sprache ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ niederzulegen, war ihm nicht möglich, da er die englische Sprache nicht in der Schule gelernt, sondern sich nur selbst im Laufe der Jahre einige Worte angeeignet hatte.

Ob er noch Gelegenheit finden würde, mündlich zu berichten, dürfte für ihn in den ersten Nachkriegs-Chaos außerdem recht ungewiß gewesen sein. Es konnte manch einem daran gelegen sein, ihn zum Schweigen zu bringen, und es will mir scheinen, daß sein Tod in dieser Richtung noch Geheimnisse birgt.

Dem letzten Brief meines Mannes an mich (handschriftlich), den ich auszugsweise folgen lasse, lag auch ein handschriftlicher französischer Bericht - ohne Unterschrift - bei, mit dem er mir vermutlich die Übersetzung ~~xxx~~ seines deutschen Berichtes zwecks Vorlage bei der französischen Militärregierung erleichtern wollte; er trägt das Datum des 6.5.45.

Letter by Wilhelm Pfannenstiel to Paul Rassinier, 4 October 1963



Professor Dr. med. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel 3550 Marburg-Lahn, 4.10.63

Herrn
Professor Paul Rassinier
36 rue Bapst

Asnières /Seine

Frankreich

Sehr verehrter Herr Rassinier!

Den Empfang Ihres Briefes vom 1. Oktober 63 bestätige ich mit Dank.

Sie legen Ihren Berechnungen folgende Zahlen zu Grunde:

a.) Ein Motor von 200 - 250 H.P. verbraucht 33-35 Liter gasoil pro Stunde und erzeugt 20-30 Kubikmeter Gas pro Stunde.

b.) Die Atmosphäre muß mindestens 17 % Gas enthalten, um toxisch zu werden, das bedeutet 40-50 Kubikmeter Gas in 250 - 300 Kubikmeter Luft.

Diese 250 - 300 Kubikmeter Luft bilden den gesamten Raumin halt der 6 Gaskammern. Die Kammern wurden jedoch nicht gleichzeitig, sondern einzeln nacheinander mit Gas beschickt.

Es wurden also je Kammer (5m lang, 5 m breit, 2 m hoch = 50 Kubikmeter) nur der sechste Teil des oben unter b.) berechneten Gases benötigt und zwar 6,6 - 8,3 Kubikmeter Gas.

Da der Motor, wie unter a.) errechnet, 20-30 Kubikmeter Gas pro Stunde erzeugt, kann er in der Viertelstunde die Einzelkammer mit 5 - 7,5 Kubikmeter Gas beschicken.

Die Vergasung konnte also in einer Viertel- bis einer halben Stunde beendet sein.

Mit freundlichem Grüßen

Ihr

W. Pfannenstiel

Letter by Wilhelm Pfannenstiel to Paul Rassinier, 15 October 1963



Herrn
Professor Paul Rassinier
36 rue Rapet.

Asnières /Seine

Frankreich

Sehr verehrter Herr Rassinier!

Den Empfang Ihres Briefes vom 8.10.63 bestätigend kann ich Ihnen nur erklären, daß ich außerstande bin, an meinen mündlichen Aussagen etwas zu berichtigen. Ich habe diesen auch nichts hinzuzufügen. Daß meine Erinnerung mich in irgend einem Falle täuscht, halte ich für ausgeschlossen. Ihre Fragen 1 und 2 beantworten sich meines Erachtens von selbst, wenn Sie bedenken, wie klein die Ausmaße der ganzen Anlage tatsächlich gewesen sind.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Ihr

Wilhelm Pfannenstiel

Letter by Suzanne de Winter to Paul Rassinier, 4 October 1963



Ce 4 octobre 1963

Cher Ami,

J'ai reçu ce matin votre conclusion et vous la renvoie par même courrier, sous pli recommandé. Tapée évidemment!

Ce que je pense de votre témoin? De deux choses l'une, ou bien il dit vrai, ou bien c'est quelqu'un qui vous a été envoyé. Allez vous y reconnaître!!!
J'écarte cette hypothèse parce que, je vous l'ai déjà dit, il m'étonne que l'ON n'ait pas encore essayé de vous atteindre physiquement.
De toute manière, ce que vous avez écrit à propos de cet ultime témoignage est très adroit et excellent.
Mais au fait, après le bouquin fait à propos de vos livres antérieurs, comment se fait-il que l'homme en question n'ait pas pris contact avec vous plus tôt? Vous le dites " distingué ", " présentant bien " et d'une " exquise politesse ". Généralement, les personnes qui appartiennent à cette catégorie en Allemagne, connaissent le français. Surtout s'il s'agit d'un ex-officier. Donc il aurait pu être au courant de vos oeuvres même si toutes ne sont pas encore traduites?
C'est un peu cela qui me chiffonne.

Au reste, vous m'en direz peut-être davantage le jeudi 10 OCTOBRE. Je viens à Paris entre deux trains, c'est-à-dire que je débarque vers 10h20 pour repartir à 20h40.

Vous seriez gentil de m'envoyer un chèque au porteur que j'irais encaisser au Crédit Lyonnais comme l'autre fois. Cela m'évitera de changer de l'argent belge.
Ensuite, on pourrait se voir en fin d'apr_s-midi? Dites-moi quoi.

Je vais profiter de mon passage pour voir si je puis me faire ouvrir un compte, ce qui supprimera pas mal de mes embêtements. Le système Halliwin fonctionne bien mais comme vous dites, ce n'est pas commode pour tout le monde.

Au fait, Riv. de la semaine dernière a sorti un très bon papier sur les 6 millions. Dommage que ce ne soit pas dans un organe moins " orienté " si j'ose dire et où la plupart des lecteurs mangent du rabbin à tous les repas.

Je serai heureuse de vous revoir. J'ai quelques problèmes dont je dois vous parler.

A JEUDI donc, j'espère.

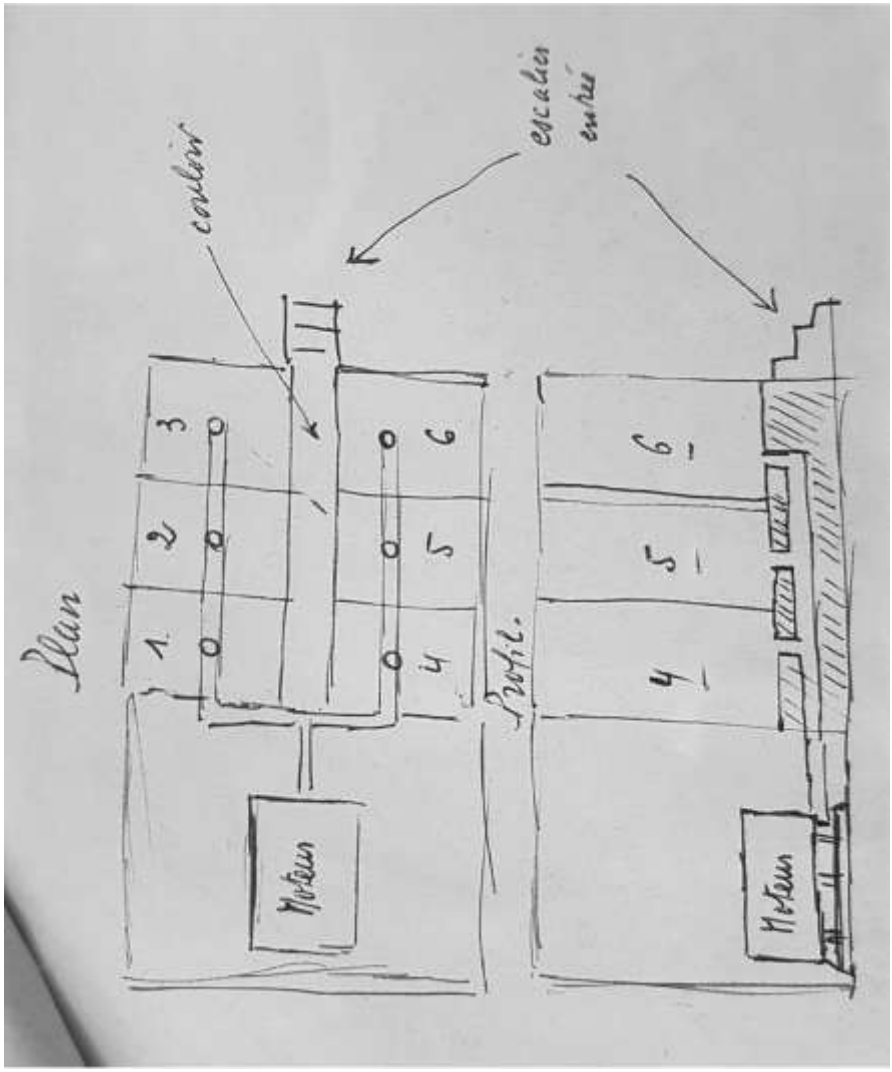
Très cordialement,

S. de W.

B. Ex. Mat 135,42 NF

Sketch of Belzec Gas Chamber

Found in the manuscript to Rassinier's book *Le drame des juifs euopéens*.



Appendix II: Kurt Gerstein in Life and Literature

11 August 1905: Born in Münster (Westphalia). Father president of the regional court (died 1954). Mother: née Schmemann (died 1931).

1911-1919: Father posted to Saarbrücken. Kurt Gerstein attends primary and secondary school.

1919-1921: Expelled by the French, Kurt's father moves to Halberstadt (near Magdeburg). Kurt continues his high-school studies there.

1921-1925: Continuation and completion of secondary education in Neuruppin (Berlin region).

Easter 1925: Abitur (university-prep high-school diploma).

1925: Entry into the evangelical youth movement and the Bible circle of the Hautes Écoles.

1925-1931: Mining trainee and student at Marburg, then Berlin and Aachen Technical Colleges.

June 1931: Passed the engineer's diploma examination in Berlin (specializing in mining and chemistry).

1931-1935: Practical training in mines.

2 May 1933: Joins the National-Socialist party (NSDAP).

October 1933: Enlistment in the SA (*Sturmabteilung*).

30 January 1935: At the Hagen theater, a pagan play, *Wittekind*, is performed on the second anniversary of Adolf Hitler's accession to power. Gerstein expresses his disapproval. He is manhandled by the National Socialists present.

November 1935: Passed the *Bergassessor* exam (mining assessor).

November 1935: Engagement to Elfriede Bensch, a pastor's daughter.

May 1936 to 27 September 1936: Employed at Saarland Mines, he prepares the "Miner's Day" to be held in Saarbrücken on 30 November 1936. He sent out invitations accompanied by flyers referring to train compartments reserved for rabid dogs (!) and contagious people (!). The police, alerted, searched his home and found seditious religious brochures ready to be sent to notables throughout Germany. He was arrested on 24 September 1936 and imprisoned in Saarbrücken. He was released in the second half of October 1936.

15 October 1936: Excluded from NSDAP for activities hostile to the State. Suspended from his position as mining assessor.

December 1936: Starts studying medicine in Tübingen.

9 February 1937: Loses his position as a mining official.

May 1937: Banned from speaking on Reich territory.

31 August 1937: Civil, then religious (2 November 1937) marriage to Elfriede Bensch.

14 July to 28 August 1938: Second arrest. Interned at Welzheim Camp.

September 1938: Investigation opened for high treason (involvement in an alleged monarchist plot).

October 1938: Dismissal order.

July 1939 to June 1940: Works for the Wintershall Company in Merkers.

25 October 1939: Birth of his son Arnulf.

from October 1940: Works for Limon Fluhme & Co. in Düsseldorf, where his mother's family has interests.

March 1941 to May 1941: Voluntary entry into the SS, and military training (Hamburg, Arnhem, Oranienburg).

June 1941: Assignment to the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute.

September 1941: Birth of daughter Adelheid.

1 November 1941: Promoted to Untersturmführer F (specialist second lieutenant).

January 1942: Appointed head of the "Sanitary Engineering" department.

8 June 1942: Reportedly ordered to supply an extermination camp in Poland (Belzec) with hydrogen cyanide.

17, 18, 19, 20 August 1942: Meets SS General Globocnik in Lublin. Visits Belzec and Treblinka camps.

20 August 1942: Meets Baron von Otter, a Swedish diplomat stationed in Berlin, on the Warsaw-Berlin train.

December 1942: Birth of a second son, Olaf.

20 April 1943: Promoted to Obersturmführer F (specialist lieutenant).

Between September 1942 and March 1945, we have no information on Gerstein's military activity, apart from his promotion to a higher rank.

early 1944: Gerstein claims in his account that Günther asked him for a very large quantity of hydrogen cyanide (8,500 kg). However, a letter dated 8 January 1946 from Degesch to its sales manager G. Peters mentions unpaid invoices from Gerstein amounting to 17,000 Reichmarks, corresponding to deliveries made between 30 June 1943 and 31 May 1944 (Doc. NI-115028). These 17,000 Reichmarks represent around 3,400 kg at the

price mentioned on the invoices handed over by Gerstein to the Allies. Hence a total of around 3,400 kg for 11 months, which works out at around 310 kg per month. This is a far cry from the 8,500 kg Gerstein claims.

5 March 1944: Gerstein writes a letter to his father, which has now been found. He is hospitalized in Helsinki, Finland.

Autumn 1944: Gerstein writes another letter to his father, his last. At this time, he is hospitalized again, this time in Berlin. Did these two hospitalizations mean a worsening of Gerstein's diabetes or of his nervous breakdowns?

1944 – early 1945: Gerstein meets various people, either at their homes or his own. These included Dr. G. Peters, Pastor Mochalsky, the Swiss consul, Dr. Hochstrasser and H. Franz, a friend from his youth.

End March 1945: Abandons his post in Berlin and joins his family in Tübingen.

April 1945: On a hastily scribbled sheet of paper kept at LKA, we read

Montag [Monday] *15*
Dienstag [Tuesday] *16*
Mittwoch [Wednesday] *17*

In fact, Gerstein got the day wrong, which is understandable at such a distressing time for the Germans; 15 April 1945 fell on a Sunday. Gerstein was wrong all the way, but curiously enough, he returns to accuracy by mentioning Di [*Dienstag*, i.e. Tuesday] 24. Between the 18th and 24th, we read:

Donnerstag [Thursday] *18 gefahren*[1]
Freitag [Friday] *19 Ulm*
Samstag [Saturday] *20 11 am. Zrück*[2] [in margin:] *Metzingen*
Sonntag [Sunday] *21 in Metzingen*
Montag 22 von [from] *Metzingen bis* [to] *Rottweil* [in margin, French:] *Prison*
Dienstag 23 Rottweil. Stecken[3]
Dienstag 24 Rottweil

Monday, 22 April 1945: *Fleeing German troops, Gerstein surrendered to the French 1st Army.*

26 April to 6 May 1945: Interned at the Hotel Mohren in Rottweil, he was granted privileged prisoner status, where he wrote his "confessions."

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1 "driven, meaning traveled by vehicle. In Gerstein's case, it's a train to Ulm.

2 Zrück, dialect = *zurück*, meaning "return." Words to the right of the day indicate daytime; words to the left of the day indicate nighttime.

3 The word is not very legible. It must mean watched [during the night].

5 May 1945: At the Mohren Hotel, he meets two Allied investigators, to whom he gives his typed "confession" in French dated 26 April 1945 (T II), together with some invoices from the Degesch firm and a short note in English.

26 May 1945: Taken to Langenargen, near Constance, then to Paris by French officers of the Organe de recherche des crimes de guerre (ORCG).

until 5 July 1945: Kept at ORCG headquarters, 48 rue de Villejust, Paris (16th arrondissement).

26 June 1945: Interrogated by Commandant Beckhardt at the ORCG. No trace of this commandant was found after the war.

5 July 1945: Remanded to the Cherche-Midi military prison and charged with murder and complicity.

19 July 1945: Questioned by Commandant Mathieu Mattéi, examining magistrate at the 2nd Military Tribunal in Paris (Judge Mattéi died in 1952).

20 July 1945: Isolated in a cell.

25 July 1945: Found hanged in his cell.

31 July 1945: Autopsied at the *Institut médico-légal* by Professor Piedelièvre, who concludes it was suicide.

3 August 1945: Buried in Thiais cemetery (Val-de-Marne).

7 August 1945: Baron Lagerfelt, a Swedish diplomat in London and colleague and friend of Baron von Otter, then stationed in Helsinki, drafts an aide-memoire and delivers it to the Reconstruction Department of the Foreign Office (see our chapter on von Otter's testimony starting on page 389).

9 October 1945: Professor Charles Sannié, Director of the Criminal Identification Department of the Préfecture de Police, certifies that: – firstly, he has prepared four copies each of thirteen documents left by Gerstein after his death photographed; – secondly, a fourteenth document sent by the investigating magistrate has not reached him.

10 October 1945: Major Mattéi places in two sealed envelopes: – the original documents; – their photographs, in four copies each.

10 November 1945: The Directorate of Military Justice forwards the complete file on Kurt Gerstein to Professor Charles Gros, France's delegate to the War Crimes Commission in London. Presumably subsequently sent to Warsaw for use by the Poles, the file disappeared for almost twenty-six years.

January 1946: The typed French "confession" of 26 April 1945 (T II) is found in the American archives of the Nuremberg International Military

Tribunal, under the symbol PS-1553. The Americans did not mention this document, which should logically have been the most sensational document of the trial. At the insistence of the French, use is simply made of the invoices for Zyklon B, which were annexed to the "confession." It should be noted that these invoices prove nothing, and would merit a special study as to their authenticity. Moreover, it is strange to note that in the various versions of his "confessions," Gerstein never spoke of Zyklon B, but of prussic acid or hydrogen cyanide.

June 1948: Gerstein's widow is informed for the first time of her husband's death. She was never given any information about the circumstances of his death or his burial place.

1950: Tübingen denazification chamber refuses to rehabilitate National Socialist Gerstein.

1951: Léon Poliakov publishes *Bréviaire de la haine* with a preface by François Mauriac. It contains an extract from PS-1553 (T II) marred by serious errors and distortions.

April 1953: In Germany, Hans Rothfels publishes in *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* the text of the "confession" written in German, dated 4 May 1945 (T III). He informs his readers that he made omissions and did not reproduce eight half-pages of supplements (*Ergänzungen*) which, in his opinion, do not deserve to be qualified as eyewitness accounts.

1955: Léon Poliakov reprinted the German journal's text in his book *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*. The French translation, titled *Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs*, appeared in 1959. This translation contains a number of distortions of the original text, which cannot simply be translation errors.

1960: First reprint of Léon Poliakov's *Bréviaire de la haine*. The partial reproduction in PS-1553 (T II) is even more unfaithful than in 1951. New editions of 1974 and 1979 were identical to the 1960 edition.

1961: The PS-1553 (T II) version of Gerstein's "confession" is used at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem.

1961: Paul Rassinier publishes *Ulysse trahi par les siens*. For the first time, he discusses Gerstein's "confession" (T II), which he finds implausible.

1962: German Protestant Rolf Hochhuth releases a theater play, *The Deputy*, in which he attributes an important role to Gerstein, and uses it to attack the attitude he attributes to Pope Pius XII during the war.

1962: Paul Rassinier publishes *Le Véritable Procès Eichmann ou les Vainqueurs incorrigibles*. For the first time, he criticizes L. Poliakov for his treatment of the text of Gerstein's "confessions."

1964: Saul Friedländer, in his book *Pius XII and the Third Reich*, uses Gerstein's testimony against the Vatican.

1964: Paul Rassinier, in his book *Le drame des juifs européens*, compares two very different reproductions of the PS-1553 (T II) offered to his readers by Léon Poliakov.

1964: Helmut Franz publishes a book in German about his friend Kurt Gerstein.

1965: Paul Rassinier, in his book *L'Opération Vicaire*, declares once again that Gerstein's account is not credible.

1965: The minister president of Baden-Württemberg and future German Chancellor, Kurt Kiesinger, has Gerstein rehabilitated.

1967: Saul Friedländer publishes *Kurt Gerstein ou l'Ambiguïté du bien*.

1969: Pierre Joffroy publishes *L'éspion de dieu. La passion de Kurt Gerstein*.

3 August 1971: The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs returns to the Directorate of Military Justice the Gerstein file, finally found after having disappeared in November 1945. It is incomplete: two sealed envelopes containing documents found after Gerstein's death are inexplicably missing.

21 February 1979: *Le Monde* newspaper publishes a declaration signed by thirty-four historians on Hitler's extermination policy. The declaration's editors, Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, inserted an extract from Gerstein's testimony, from version PS-1553 (T II).

8 March 1979: L. Poliakov and P. Vidal-Naquet reply in *Le Monde* to readers who had written to the newspaper, after the publication of 21 February, to express their astonishment at learning that, according to the Gerstein "report," seven to eight hundred people were crammed into the Belzec gas chamber with a floor area of just twenty-five square meters. The two historians point out that they consider Gerstein's account to be "essentially indisputable"; consequently, in their view, certain details can be discussed (sic). They also believe that the SS officer's errors are easily explained for the following two reasons:

– precision in figures was not his strong suit (which may come as a surprise for an engineer);
– his visit to Belzec in August 1942 had upset him to such an extent that he had still not come to his senses by April-May 1945.

September 1982: François de Fontette publishes *Histoire de l'antisémitisme* in the "Que sais-je?" collection of Presses universitaires de France. He reproduces forty-three and a half lines of Gerstein's account

from its 4 May 1945 version (T III). In the middle of the reproduction, an amputation of thirty-five lines removes the actual gassing operation.

1983: In Germany, a 350-page book titled *NS-Massentötungen durch Giftgas* is published, with pages 171 to 174 devoted to the "Gerstein Report" ("*Gerstein-Bericht*"). The author of these three and a half pages is the Israeli Yitzhak Arad, with Eugen Kogon,[4] Hermann Langbein and Adalbert Rückerl vouching for the work as a whole. A partial reproduction of T III is presented: a total of forty-seven lines, interspersed four times by omission ellipses that eliminate sixty-six lines, and at the same time eliminate a large number of implausibilities. The description of the gassing is absent from the book, so readers are not aware of it. They are confronted with what might be called "pious cuts."

1984: The German book *NS-Massentötungen durch Giftgas* is published in French under the title *Les chambres à gaz, secret d'état*. The cover reproduces a photograph of a can of Zyklon B, a well-known disinfestant used worldwide.

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[4] See the English edition *Nazi Mass Murder: A Documentary History of the Use of Poison Gas*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven/London, 1993. As No. 4 of the *Annales d'histoire révisionniste* reminds us, p. 63: "Irony of times. Eugen Kogon died in December 1987. Curiously, no obituary in the press reported this sad event, and official historians and associations guarding memory remained surprisingly silent. Eugen Kogon is the classic author on the concentration camp system. He wrote *Der SS Staat* (*The SS State*), republished by Le Seuil in a falsified version, notably amputating the central chapter on the attitude of the Communist Party in the internal management of the camps, and he collaborated on the book *NS-Massentötungen durch Giftgas* (*Les chambres à gaz, secret d'état* [Nazi Mass Murder]), which was intended to destroy revisionism. This silence is probably explained by the revelation that appeared in the columns of the *New York Times* on 26 December 1987. Eugen Kogon, whom Paul Rassinier had pointed out in *Le Mensonge d'Ulysse (Ulysses's Lie)* held a very privileged position in the camp hierarchy as secretary to SS doctor Ding-Schuler, appears in the files of the United Nations War Crimes Commission, recently opened for consultation, as a suspect in collective executions as part of medical experiments carried out at Buchenwald. These accusations prove nothing, and we do not endorse them. The contempt in which we hold Eugen Kogon is based solely on his attitude as a censor-avenger after the war. It's nevertheless interesting to note that, of the three main authors of the book *Nazi Mass Murder*, one, Eugen Kogon, was suspected of crimes against humanity, the other, Adalbert Rückerl, was Führer of the Hitlerjugend until 8 May 1945, before becoming a fierce Nazi hunter, and the third, Hermann Langbein, was private secretary to Dr. Eduard Wirths, head doctor at Auschwitz. Thanks to this privileged position, he lived like a rooster, with his own room, bed and sheets, which were changed regularly at the *Stammlager* (Auschwitz 1) […]."

Appendix III: Von Otter, or the Prudence of a Diplomat

By Henri Roques

After his short visit to Belzec and Treblinka, Gerstein took a train from Warsaw to Berlin on the evening of 20 August 1942. There, he struck up a conversation with a stranger whom he may have learned, from the ticket inspector, was a Swedish diplomat, Baron Göran von Otter, Secretary of the Swedish Legation in Berlin. With extreme nervousness, as Baron von Otter would later say, Gerstein made his confidential revelations at once. Loudly, without taking any precautions, he recounted what he claimed to have seen at the Belzec Camp: the mass extermination of Jewish men, women and children. He cried, he hid his face in his hands, he was at the height of an agitation that seemed to worry rather than convince von Otter. Was Gerstein aware of this mistrust? Was he afraid of not being taken seriously, or worse, of being considered a provocateur? In any case, Gerstein mentioned as a reference Dr. Otto Dibelius, a friend of Pastor Niemöller and leader of the Protestant Church's opposition to National Socialism. All the Baron had to do, he told him, was to go to the address he indicated, and Dr. Dibelius would give him the most favorable information on Gerstein, whom he knew well… But above all, von Otter had to alert his government as soon as possible, and denounce to Germany's adversaries the incredible crimes taking place in the German wartime camps. To put an end to these horrors, an international scandal was needed. Gerstein insisted, he begged, and this went on for several hours on a summer's night, in a train corridor, since he, like von Otter, did not find a free place in a sleeping car.

Was von Otter surprised? It doesn't seem so, because on 21 December 1966, more than twenty-one years after the end of the war, the diplomat, who was then stationed in London, told Pierre Joffroy, the author of the aforementioned hagiography:

> *"At the time, I was very cautious. I was wary of provocateurs…* [Gerstein's] *revelations paralleled rumors I had heard about the massacre."* (*God's Spy*, p. 17)

P. Joffroy's account of von Otter is very imprecise. It gives the impression that von Otter had only a vague recollection of his long conversation with Gerstein. At no point in the conversation did the Swede mention the name Belzec. Did he forget it? He stated that the SS officer had told him "a terrible thing: how, when the convoy arrived, the people were thrown out, how they undressed, how they lined up in front of the gas chambers" (*op. cit.*, p. 16). Had they not simply stood in front of a gas chamber for disinfesting the clothes they had just stripped off? Or a shower room? Von Otter continued:

> *"He probably also told me about the gas he was delivering, the sabotage he was doing."* (*ibid.*)

Note the adverb "probably." The Gerstein affair does not seem to have been very much on the Swedish diplomat's mind between 1942 and 1966… Von Otter even added that he met Dr. Otto Dibelius, a figure given as a reference by Gerstein to the diplomat, by chance at the Swedish Church in Berlin in the autumn of 1942. However, the latter admitted that he did not think it worthwhile to tell Dibelius about his unusual meeting the previous August on the Warsaw-Berlin train. To justify his "discretion," he told Pierre Joffroy that he had already been convinced by Gerstein's story (sic).

The most insane and least verifiable war "lies" abounded in all the countries of war-mad Europe. The Anglo-American propaganda services, among others, stopped at nothing to discredit their adversaries, and they often demonstrated their imagination and talent. A case in point was their dissemination in Germany of a letter they claimed had been sent to a Catholic priest in Stettin by Colonel Werner Mölders, a hero of the German fighter air force, a few days before his accidental death on 22 November 1941. In this letter, which is attributed to him, Mölders, with a feigned moderation that makes its terms all the more persuasive and truthful, presented himself as a propagator of defeatism and a defender of the Christian ideal against Hitler's paganism. The text was a masterpiece of writing, and had a great impact throughout Germany in 1942. Protests and official denials were to no avail: everyone believed in the authenticity of the letter attributed to Mölders, until, long after the end of the war, Sefton Delmer revealed that he was the author. But who was Sefton Delmer? An English journalist of Australian origin who headed the "Psychological Warfare Section for Germany." He knew the German language perfectly, having learned it in Berlin, where he had lived for many years.

Atrocity campaigns are also part of psychological warfare: the enemy must be seen as a monster in the eyes of public opinion. Already during the 1914-1918 war, the fable of Belgian children having their hands cut off by Teutonic barbarians had its moment of glory, and unleashed storms of indignation! In 1939, the Allies returned to their habits of the previous war.

Von Otter undoubtedly knew this, which explains his skepticism about Gerstein's "revelations." However, as a conscientious diplomat, and perhaps impressed by the fact that his "confidant" was an SS officer, he informed his superiors. But the Swedish Foreign Office did not see fit to react.

Was von Otter's report written or oral? This important point was clarified only recently. For years, books and newspapers had claimed that the diplomat von Otter had submitted a report to the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Friedländer and Joffroy, among others, asserted this in their books. More recently, Walter Laqueur admitted that he had found no written report in Swedish archives. It was only in March 1983 that von Otter was clearly asked the question, during a television program by historian Alain Decaux (broadcast by the French TV station Antenne 2 on 24 March 1983). We reproduce the text of the interview, as it appears in Alain Decaux's book (*L'Histoire en question, 2*):

"AD: Have you shared [Gerstein's revelations] *with your government? Did you do so in writing or orally?*

VO: So, I went back to my legation in Berlin and, first of all, I had started to make a report the next day, because I was naturally quite overwhelmed by my experience. I reported to the ambassador in some detail, asking if I should make a written report. He told me not to make a written report, but to report on the events during a visit to Stockholm, which I did a few weeks later.

AD: And the Swedish government kept no record of your oral report at that time?

VO: No, no.

AD: Did you make a written report afterwards?

VO: No, no.

AD: Never?

VO: No. To my recollection, I never made a report or even a memorandum on this episode. And I've asked myself many times why. And I think it's because I was aware at the time that the same things were told by our consul in Stettin and, by a curious coincidence, his written report arrived in Berlin on the same day that I had met Gerstein. The Stettin consul's report is in the archives in Stockholm. I hadn't seen it in Berlin, but I did last year, here in Stockholm."

We have photocopies of the Stockholm archives. The Stettin consul's report exists. It is rather long, and devotes only a short paragraph to a report that 40,000 Jews were gassed in the Lublin area under the pretext of delousing. No further details are given. Clearly, the Swedish consul is merely reporting a persistent but unverifiable rumor. Swedish archives show that Baron von Otter, probably unconvinced himself, failed to convince his superiors of the exceptional importance of the information provided by the Obersturmführer. Perhaps it was thought in Stockholm that Gerstein was being manipulated, and that he was "preaching falsehoods in order to get to the truth."

But the same Swedish archives also provide evidence that von Otter would not have mentioned his talks with Gerstein after the war, had he not been urged to do so by one of his colleagues stationed in London in 1945.

This colleague, Baron Lagerfelt, who was also a personal friend of von Otter, was informed by the UN War Crimes Commission that there was a Gerstein "report," in which von Otter was named as a key witness.

Von Otter, stationed in Helsinki at the time, was asked by his friend to urgently confirm the essence of what Gerstein had said in his report. Von Otter complied in the last days of July 1945. Under these conditions, Lagerfelt was able to draw up an aide-memoire dated 7 August 1945.[1] This document confirms Gerstein's talks with "a foreign diplomat from a neutral country" stationed in Berlin. It is interesting to note that, in this aide-mémoire, the name of the Swedish diplomat does not appear, nor that of the neutral country. Diplomatic prudence is not a meaningless expression!

In fact, von Otter seems above all to have been disturbed by Gerstein's extravagant behavior in the corridor of the Warsaw-Berlin train. We deduce from von Otter's confidences to those who interviewed him after 1945 that the diplomat did not seek to see the SS officer again, even though Gerstein had given him his Berlin address. It was Gerstein who lurked around the Swedish Legation in Berlin, hoping to meet von Otter again. One day, he found himself in front of him on a street near the legation. Von Otter reported that his interlocutor was in a state of agitation that suggested an imminent depression. "He could barely formulate a sentence," he said. Gerstein wanted to know whether the Swedish government had been informed, and what it planned to do about his revelations. Von Otter dispensed a few soothing words, and the strange Obersturmführer disappeared, never to be heard from again. In this connection, a perhaps minor but significant contradiction appears between Gerstein's statements and

[1] See the two document translations further below.

those by von Otter. In versions II, III, V and VI of his "confessions," Gerstein claims to have seen the Swedish diplomat twice. Von Otter recalled seeing him only once (according to his statement to the Paris court on 29 May 1981). Was the third meeting imagined by Gerstein to heighten the dramatic intensity of his story?

Should von Otter be regarded as a key witness attesting to the veracity of Gerstein's account? We'd like to think so, but the reality seems very different.

By 1942, the young Swedish diplomat stationed in Berlin was used to hearing war bunk. He said himself that Gerstein's words contained nothing new. Von Otter was therefore incredulous and reluctant to see this singular SS officer again, whose behavior worried him.

In the months following the German surrender, Allied propaganda was in full swing, with the atrocities, real or imagined, of the National-Socialist wartime camps as its almost only theme. Von Otter was asked to contribute by confirming the veracity of Gerstein's account. The Swede complied willingly, providing a kind of character reference for the "good SS man" he had known, who might, at the time, have found himself in a difficult position.

The aide-memoire of 7 August 1945 states:

> *"His grief and indignation at what had happened in the extermination camps seemed to be as genuine as it was profound, and his wish to share this knowledge with the outside world so that it could be brought to an end appeared sincere enough."*

Note the use of the restrictive verbs "seem" and "appear" to describe Gerstein's attitude. Diplomatic language is full of nuances…

After the Obersturmführer's rehabilitation in 1965, von Otter was approached in his various diplomatic posts by Gerstein's biographers, then by journalists; finally, his testimony was sought in court. It's not impossible that the Swedish diplomat was gradually seized by remorse. He had met "God's spy," and had not recognized him. Perhaps he now felt confusedly guilty, as should all those who still doubt that Gerstein was telling the truth?

The Lagerfelt Correspondence

Translation of *aide-mémoire* signed by Lagerfelt and dated London, 7 August 1945:

* * *

Memo concerning Kurt Gerstein, civil engineer, member of the SS-Sanitätsabteilung, Giesebrechtstrasse, probably born in Braunschweig in 1907 (?), domiciled in 1943 at Bülowstrasse 49, Berlin.

London, 7 August 1945

In August 1942, Gerstein contacted a member of a neutral legation in Berlin and related the following. He had just returned from a short mission to the Belsec extermination camp near Lublin. He gave a detailed account of what happened there (the gas chambers, the reaction of SS personnel, the recovery of gold teeth, etc.). He also showed documents, identity cards and delivery orders for hydrogen cyanide issued by the camp commandant. Gerstein said his concern was to bring these events to the attention of neutral observers. He was firmly convinced that, if knowledge of this extermination was spread among the German population, and if the facts were confirmed by impartial outsiders, the German people would not for a moment longer maintain their support for the Nazi regime. He also claims to have discussed the matter with a high-ranking German church official belonging to the opposition, Superintendent Dibelius (this was later confirmed by Dibelius himself, who vouched for Gerstein's reliability).

The motives behind Gerstein's actions were later clarified. Gerstein, who had never been involved in political activities of any kind and was not a Nazi, had applied to the SS for an assignment in the Sanitätsabteilung – the special branch that organized the extermination camps – because he was anxious to confirm his suspicions about the abnormal mortality rate in German psychiatric asylums in the years 1941-42. It was at this time that a close relative of Gerstein's, whom he loved dearly, had also died in such an asylum. What he subsequently learned in the extermination camps convinced him that his suspicions had been only too well founded. Six months later, Gerstein visited the same neutral diplomat to ask if anything could have been done. That was the last time he was heard from. His grief and indignation at what had happened in the extermination camps seemed to be as genuine as it was profound, and his wish to share this knowledge with the outside world so that it could be brought to an end appeared sincere enough.

Signed: Lagerfelt

* * *

Translation of letter from Lagerfelt to his friend and colleague von Otter dated 14 August 1945.

* * *

London, 14 August 1945

Strictly Confidential

Colleague,

Further to your letter of 23 July 1945 concerning SS man Gerstein, I would like to inform you that, after careful consideration, I have given my counterpart in rank at the Foreign Office an aide-memoire on the case (in which your name is not mentioned, however), with the request that this document be forwarded as soon as possible to the Reconstruction Department of the Foreign Office,* which has jurisdiction over, among other things, matters of war crimes. I hope that in this way justice will be done.

[signed] Lagerfelt

To the First Legation Secretary, Baron G. von Otter, Helsinki

* * *

* The Reconstruction Department of the Foreign Office was a temporary post-war body that dealt with political and military matters, such as peace treaties, the UN, etc. It had nothing to do with war crimes, particularly those alleged to have been committed on foreign soil. All embassies and legations had a Foreign Office directory listing the responsibilities of its various departments. If Lagerfelt had taken the matter seriously, he would have informed either the Polish authorities or the War Crimes Commission directly. Already an experienced diplomat, Lagerfelt seems to have been less concerned with "serving justice" than with letting his aide-memoire get lost in the immense London bureaucracy of the immediate post-war period.

Appendix IV: The Pfannenstiel Case

A Reticent Witness but Cooperative as to Essentials

By Henri Roques

One of the many documents of the United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC), dating from 1945, contains a list of the main culprits sought by the French delegation. It includes the names of seven "war criminals." They are, in the following order:

– Hitler Adolf
– Himmler Heinrich
– Eickmann (Eichmann), senior civil servant at the RSHA.
– Guenther, SS Sturmbannführer – RSHA employee.
– Pfannenstiel – SS Obersturmbannführer – Chair of Hygiene at the University of Marburg
– Linden Herbert, Dr. – Advisor to the Ministry of the Interior
– Grawitz, Dr. – SS Gruppenfuehrer, President of the German Red Cross.

Pfannenstiel, who comes fifth in this list, owes this unexpected and totally unjustified "honor" to Gerstein: the latter cites him in his "confessions," along with Günther, Linden and Grawitz. He also quotes Eichmann, which he spells Eickmann. And that's the only reason why the French prosecutors are interested in these individuals, some of whom are otherwise complete strangers! The astonishing composition of such a list of "war criminals" leaves one wondering how "seriously" it was compiled. What does Professor Pfannenstiel have to do with it? He was totally harmless, but had the misfortune to accompany (by chance!) Gerstein when he went to Lublin and, according to Gerstein's own account, witnessed a homicidal gassing there (also by chance!)?

Wilhelm Pfannenstiel was born in Breslau on 12 February 1890. Professor of hygiene at the University of Marburg/Lahn and director of the Institute of Hygiene between 1930 and 1945, he died in Marburg on 1 November 1982, at age 93, after a life full of unforeseen misadventures.

Pfannenstiel, a reserve medical officer in the Wehrmacht, had also been SS Chief Medical Officer since 1937. At the end of 1939, he was appointed hygiene adviser to the Waffen SS, rising to the rank of Sturmbannführer,

then Obersturmbannführer. As a sanitation inspector, he traveled extensively during the war: to Poland, the Balkans, Norway and France. He made his first trip to Lublin, Poland, on 17 August 1942. Since he didn't have a car to make the trip from Berlin to Lublin, he used Gerstein's car, which Gerstein claimed had to deliver hydrogen cyanide to the Belzec Camp near Lublin. Pfannenstiel, commenting on Gerstein's mission, said on 9 November 1959:

> *"Gerstein was commissioned by Globocnik to take care of the disinfection of the large quantities of clothing that were in Belzec."*

The role Globocnik assigned to Gerstein should come as no surprise, since disinfection in the camps was one of the duties of this officer assigned to the Waffen-SS Hygiene Institute.

Did Gerstein carry out the requested disinfection? He says nothing about it in his "confessions."

As for Pfannenstiel, what was the purpose of his trip? According to his statements to the German courts on 9 November 1959, his task was to improve Lublin's drinking water supply and ensure better sewage disposal.

In terms of hygiene, Poland was a backward country, and the Germans feared epidemics all the more, as they had set up a vast concentration camp at the gates of Lublin, still poorly equipped with sanitary facilities.

On 18 August 1942, Pfannenstiel was at Belzec with Gerstein and, according to Gerstein, was invited to witness "top-secret" gassing operations, which the executioners forbade him to divulge. But why threaten him with death if he reveals what he saw, when all it took to keep the operation secret was not to invite him?

Pfannenstiel is the only surviving witness to Gerstein's macabre story. Although his role was merely that of a bystander, his testimony is therefore of the utmost importance.

Years passed, and the Belzec episode seemed forgotten. In October 1944, Pfannenstiel was assigned to the 6th Army as a medical officer. He took part in the Ardennes offensive in December 1944, then was sent to the Hungarian front. Finally, he was taken prisoner by the Americans in Austria. A surprise awaited him… We wrote earlier that Pfannenstiel was listed as the fifth war criminal in an UNWCC document. At war's end, these research services were beginning to deal with Pfannenstiel, to interrogate him, basing their accusations on Gerstein's "revelations." At this time, Pfannenstiel was interned in the Darmstadt Camp. At first, he denied everything: the story was absurd, and he had never witnessed a homicidal gassing. Questioned for the first time in 1947, he admitted having gone to

Lublin with Gerstein, which he considered harmless. When asked "Do you know the Belzec Camp?," he replied that he had heard of it. As for the Treblinka Camp, he didn't know it; even the name was unknown to him. "Did you witness the massacre?" What massacre? Pfannenstiel asks himself, and he answers with an energetic "Nein!"

But he soon realized that he had adopted a very dangerous defense strategy. If, like so many others, he didn't want to be handed over to the Poles and end up on a gallows, it was in his interest to be "cooperative" with the American investigators and their German auxiliaries.

In the interrogation minutes of 30 October 1947, we read a strange remark by the investigating judge. As Pfannenstiel had just acknowledged his trip to Lublin, and pointed out his ignorance of the use of prussic acid, the judge told him bluntly:

> *"The beginning of your story is good, then it gets worse. Would you like to go over your story one more time?"*

It could hardly be clearer that Pfannenstiel was not expected to provide accurate answers, but only to confirm Gerstein's assertions.

This is how Pfannenstiel described his misadventures on 9 February 1951, in Marburg, in the presence of the state prosecutor, a certain Straube:

> *"Until the end of June 1947, I remained a prisoner in various camps, the last of which was Garmisch. There, on the orders of the Americans, I was sent to the hospital as a political prisoner, with automatic arrest, to work as a doctor. I stayed there until September 1948. I was almost released. As I learned in an interview with the president of the denazification chamber, my procedure was well under way. Then came a request from the head of the Hessian Health Office (Prof. von Drygalski) to transfer me to the Hessian denazification chamber, where there were more charges against me. I was then moved to the Darmstadt camp, where I was remanded in custody for the denazification chamber proceedings…"*

In the end, the legal proceedings against him were dropped. The court acknowledged that Gerstein had "exaggerated" in his statements about Pfannenstiel. But Pfannenstiel lost six years of his life because of this dubious testimony!

On 6 June 1950, Pfannenstiel finally gave "satisfactory" answers, precisely what was expected of him. Wasn't this the reason why he was released five weeks later, on 12 July 1950, when he was no longer considered a war criminal?

In short, Pfannenstiel's fate is comparable to that of many of his compatriots in post-war Germany, victims of a demented and tragic purge. His

case is exceptional, however, because Gerstein's extravagant account made him a "privileged" witness to the homicidal gassings at the Belzec Camp.

Few Germans were able to withstand the harassment and persecution carried out with almost religious zeal by "victor's justice" of 1945. Pfannenstiel was one of these victims: he had a wife and five (still very young) children to feed. He was no longer a young man: he was 55 at the end of the war. What could you do at that age, other than try to make a deal with the devil? For him, it was better to try to practice his trade again than to vegetate in prison for an indeterminate number of years. The man was under threat: he was a fairly well-known member of the SS, and the fact that he had only belonged to the scientific branch of the "black order" did not guarantee him absolution – quite the contrary. He was also accused of having been more or less complicit in medical experiments on cold-water resistance carried out on inmates of the Dachau Concentration Camp by Dr. Rascher. He denied this, but true or false, the accusation could have had serious consequences for him.

Therefore, he preferred to confess what he had been asked: yes, he and Gerstein were present at the gassing of a convoy of Jews at the Belzec Camp. He stated: "They brought into the camp, several railway cars, in which there were about 500 Jews, men, women and children" (interrogation of 9 November 1959).

Gerstein, it should be remembered, claims that the cars numbered forty-five, and contained 6,700 people….

Pfannenstiel explained that these Jews were taken to a facility with six gas chambers, of which only four were used, with an average of 125 people per chamber. After gassing, the corpses were thrown into a large pit, where they were burned (which couldn't have been easy!). It should be added that Gerstein's account makes no mention of this incineration, but that's about as plausible as it gets.

Pfannenstiel denied having uttered certain phrases at Belzec, generously attributed to him by Gerstein and later reproached by his purgers: he did not say that the Jews crammed into the gas chambers wept "like in a synagogue." Contrary to Gerstein's claims, he never encouraged the SS in Belzec or Treblinka to continue their "useful" work, nor did he speak of the "beauty" of the work they were doing. Pfannenstiel considers Gerstein's account to be full of inaccuracies and implausibilities. For example, the figure of 25 million gassed, put forward by the psychic, seemed to him obviously delusional. A hesitant, reticent witness, Pfannenstiel often gave the impression of being unsure of himself. He recited the lesson imposed

on him by his accusers rather poorly. He contradicted himself, his memory failed him… However, repeatedly called as a witness in the trials of camp guards, he did not seek to accuse the defendants: in July 1960, at the trial of the Belzec guard Josef Oberhauser, he declared:

> *"In all conscience, I did not see the defendant either in Belzec or elsewhere. In any case, he is not the leader of the guard unit… The latter differed quite markedly from the defendant in his appearance and in his character…"*

Was he trying to save a fellow victim, or was he simply telling the truth? And how was it possible to remember a face seen only once more than eighteen years earlier? Pfannenstiel was considered a "providential" witness by the Allied and later German courts: He testified at the trial of I.G. Farben executives on 30 October 1947, at that of J. Oberhauser in Munich in 1960, in Hamburg in 1963, in Frankfurt/Main in 1966…

During interrogations in 1950, 1951 and 1959, he repeated his slim account, which contained no decisive elements on the gas chamber issue. He was also invited to testify before several German courts in trials in 1960, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1966… In 1970 (at the age of 80!), he had to give one last deposition before the Marburg court. Poor judges! If they continually called on him and listen to him with such patience, it was because his testimony, however attenuated, inconclusive and of highly questionable spontaneity, still "essentially" confirms the existence (however ephemeral) of the homicidal gas chambers. Are the accusers so lacking in witnesses to the crime they denounce?

According to Pfannenstiel, gassings were merely deplorable local and personal initiatives, targeting only a small number of inmates. While imaginative thugs did carry out gassings in some camps, he claimed that there were no orders from higher authorities prescribing such operations. In support of his claims, he recounted how, after his visit to the Belzec Camp, he informed Professor Dr. Grawitz (Reich SS Chief Medical Officer) of what he had seen there. Outraged, Grawitz told him he would put an immediate stop to the gassings. Pfannenstiel asserted that this was the case as of November 1942, and that it was definitive.

While far from clear, this version of events cannot be dismissed without examination: it defies plausibility less than the "confessions" written in Rottweil by a psychopath, religious fanatic and mystifier. Indeed, it is increasingly used as evidence that Gerstein was "essentially right." It is perfunctorily suggested that, if the indisputable National Socialist Pfannenstiel was forced to acknowledge the reality of homicidal gassings, however limited, it is because they did indeed take place. We accept that Gerstein gave

implausible figures, that his character led him to exaggerations, that he was unfamiliar with arithmetic (applying this argument to an engineer, it may come as a surprise!) and that he had been deeply upset by his visit to Belzec. However, the visit took place in 1942, and the report is from 1945. Was Gerstein then still writing in a state of upheaval? As for Pfannenstiel, he doesn't want to tell the whole truth about the homicidal gassings, the existence of which he confirmed, but which were far more extensive than he lets on. In spite of himself, Pfannenstiel has really done the opponents of the victorious camp a great service. It took an honorable and sensible man to "confirm" Gerstein's extravagant account, even if only partially. Pfannenstiel was that man!

Gerstein, Wirth, Globocnik and Günther died in 1944 and 1945. But Pfannenstiel, the last witness, survived for a long time: he was even able to regain a place in society worthy of him. The Federal Republic of Germany showered him with titles and honors – probably well-deserved, but nevertheless surprising for a man who had been a dignitary in the SS and whom the Allies included, for no good reason, in fifth place on one of their lists of National-Socialist "war criminals"!

Was his professional success in postwar West Germany the reward paid to Pfannenstiel for his "docility"? We think so.

Transformed into a permanent witness to the existence of the gas chambers, perhaps he finally tired of the role he was being made to play: this is suggested by a letter he wrote to Paul Rassinier on 3 August 1963. In it, he deplores the fact that mention of his name has

> *"on many occasions caused completely unjustified interpretations which are not only false but which have also caused me many injuries,"*

adding that

> *"*[…] *I insist at all costs in avoiding any recurrence of a public debate concerning me personally, which could give rise to new negative interpretations and aspersions on the part of scandal mongers."*

We can excuse this evasion: in 1963, he was 73 years old, and his respectability as a West German *grande bourgeois* had to be preserved. Recently, we wrote to Mrs. Pfannenstiel to ask her what we should really think of the repeated testimonies provided by her husband, which seemed to partially authenticate Gerstein's assertions. Her reply was brief: she wishes to be left in peace with this story, which has troubled her and her husband's lives for so many years…

Such an attitude is understandable, but it is likely to discourage the historian who is looking, if not for the impossible truth, then at least for a plausible explanation.

A True (or False) Witness to the Gas Chambers Received by Paul Rassinier in 1963.

In addition to the chapter on the Pfannenstiel case, we feel it would be useful to recount a strange story that occurred to Paul Rassinier in 1963, which he wrote about in his book *Le drame des juifs européens*.

We remind the reader that Rassinier did not believe in the existence of mass gassings, methodically ordered by the leaders of the Third Reich. But he did admit the possibility of individual initiatives, taken here and there by a few madmen. Then he searched the whole of Europe for a single piece of evidence or a single witness to these gassings. All in vain. And the honest historian, himself a former Buchenwald and Dora deportee, moved on to denying any homicidal gassing.

Then, in June 1963, he received a curious visit at his home in Asnières. A man introduced himself; he said he was a patriotic German, an admirer of Rassinier's books, but that he had decided to warn the French historian against the temptation to deny any extermination by gas. "I was at Belzec with Gerstein, I entered Globocnik's office behind him," declared the mysterious figure, who made Rassinier promise not to reveal his identity.

Rassinier listened to this German, who gave him a version of Gerstein's story very close to that of Pfannenstiel. Indeed, the visitor clearly sought to identify himself with Pfannenstiel. "He looked to be in his sixties," says Rassinier, "but I learned in conversation that he was much older" (Pfannenstiel was 73 at the time); he had held a high rank in the SS, as a member of an important civilian service requisitioned during the war (Pfannenstiel held the chair of hygiene at the university in Marburg, and was assimilated to the rank of Obersturmbannführer, *i.e.* lieutenant-colonel). In 1945, he had narrowly escaped the Nuremberg Tribunal, and by the end of the war, he had five children, all young, who needed their father to bring them up and look after their education (which was exactly the case for Professor Pfannenstiel).

So, was the unexpected visitor Pfannenstiel? In France, Georges Wellers and Pierre Vidal-Naquet said so; we thought so for a while. Until our research uncovered two letters from Pfannenstiel to Rassinier, one dated 3 August 1963, the other 18 September 1963, which readers will find reproduced and translated below.

We have already mentioned the staggering letter of 3 August, an extract of which we have already given, in which the following lines can be read:

> *"*[…] *I shall be very happy to meet you personally. At that time, I shall willingly describe to you the impression made on me by Kurt Gerstein.*
> *Your suppositions in regard to the origin of his report, which really is a highly incredible fabrication in which the story is completely beyond belief, as well as the circumstances of his death, all seem – equally in my opinion – to be suppositions well justified."*

For example, Pfannenstiel was not present at Rassinier's home in June 1963, as he declared on 3 August of the same year that he would be delighted to make his acquaintance. What is more, Pfannenstiel confirms ("for the most part," we might be tempted to write) Rassinier's suppositions about Gerstein and his story.

But what did the French historian of the time think about all this? For him, the Gerstein "report" was either a forgery or the work of a madman, which any man with a modicum of common sense would have to reject out of hand. As for the SS officer's death, it seemed suspicious to him, and he hardly believed in suicide.

In his letter, Pfannenstiel seems to have let his heart speak for itself: this is a far cry from the testimony he had to give during the many interrogations he was subjected to between 1947 and 1970.

Pfannenstiel's second letter, dated 18 September 1963, is handwritten and contains practical information to enable Rassinier to visit him in Marburg before 27 September.

What did the two men say to each other? We don't know. However, we can assume that Pfannenstiel could hardly have used any different language from that which had enabled him to be released on 12 July 1950, and to maintain relative tranquility since that date, on the imperative condition of not changing his statements. As for Rassinier, who had instigated the meeting, he was able to realize that his June visitor was not his September 1963 interlocutor (see the two letter's translations by Ronald V. Percival on the next pages).

But then, who was the stranger who presented himself to Paul Rassinier under the unsettling guise of the Professor of Marburg? By whom and why was he sent? We'll probably never know.[1]

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[1] Rassinier had not researched the Gerstein affair in depth. In contrast to us, he didn't have access to the texts of the six versions of the story, nor to the minutes of Pfannenstiel's successive interrogations. It was therefore not obvious to Rassinier that his mysterious visitor was trying to impersonate the Marburg professor. He only had a hunch. Pfannenstiel only agreed to receive Rassinier at his home in September 1963 on

Translation of Wilhelm Pfannenstiel's First Letter to Paul Rassinier, Dated 3 August 1963

Dear Monsieur Rassinier,

I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of 29 July 1963.

As our mutual friend Grabert has already informed you, I shall be very happy to meet you personally. At that time, I shall willingly describe to you the impression made on me by Kurt Gerstein.

Your suppositions as to the origin of his report, which really is a highly incredible fabrication in which the story is completely beyond belief, as well as the circumstances of his death, all seem – equally in my opinion – to be suppositions well justified.

In light of the fact that the involvement of my name in this trumpery has on many occasions caused completely unjustified interpretations which are not only false but which have also caused me many injuries, you will understand that I insist at all costs in avoiding any recurrence of a public debate concerning me personally, which could give rise to new negative interpretations and aspersions on the part of scandal mongers.

For these reasons, I shall be especially grateful to you for your guarantee to treat my evidence with the maximum of discretion.

It is true that I still continue to be often away on travel. Unfortunately, there is no particular occasion in the near future for me to travel to Paris or nearby to that magnificent city, which I visited for the first time in November of last year.

If you should have an opportunity to come to Marburg, a visit from you would be most welcome. From mid-August to the end of September, I shall be at home most of the time.

Kindly write to me what approximate time I might be able to expect you here. We could then finalize an exact date for a meeting.

Sincere regards … (signed) Wilhelm Pfannenstiel

Translation of Wilhelm Pfannenstiel's Second Letter to Paul Rassinier Dated 18 September 1963

Dear Monsieur Rassinier,

I am replying by return mail to your kind letter of 18 September,[2] to inform you that I shall be in Marburg from today until 27 September.

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condition that the meeting would not be recounted by the historian in any of his works. Honest Rassinier promised this, and of course kept his word.

[2] Evidently, a slight error of date.

If therefore you wish to meet me on a weekday during this period, you are welcome. Your train leaves Frankfurt at 15:31 and arrives at Marburg at 16:52. I shall await you at the central gate on whichever day you say is most convenient for you. Should I reserve a room for the night or will you be returning the same evening? I look forward with pleasure to making your acquaintance.

Sincere regards … (signed) Wilhelm Pfannenstiel

Addendum

In his critical and rather hostile book on Paul Rassinier,[1] Florent Brayard revisits Rassinier's "mysterious visitor". For him, this character is none other than Pfannenstiel, and he explains why. New elements confirm the version he proposes.

Here is part of what F. Brayard has to say on the subject:

"Through a mutual friend, Herbert Grabert [here, F. B.'s note on Grabert]*, Rassinier made contact with Professor Pfannenstiel at the end of July 1963* [F. B.'s note: *Pfannenstiel's letter to Rassinier dated 3 August 1963 (André Chelain,* La Thèse de Nantes et l'affaire Roques*,* op. cit*., p. 473)*]*. Rassinier told him what he was working on, and convinced his correspondent to receive him. The latter did, however, set one condition for the visit: 'I would be particularly grateful if you would give me your guarantee to treat my testimony with the utmost discretion* [note: Ibid.]*.' Rassinier accepted this request on 18 September, and indicated that he would travel to Germany at the end of the same month: the journey would be by train, with a change in Frankfurt. Pfannenstiel then informed Rassinier that he would be in Marburg 'until 27 September'. The Frankfurt-Marburg train arrives at 4:52 p.m., and Pfannenstiel will be waiting for him at the main station. He asked about whether or not he should reserve a room* [note: *Pfannenstiel's letter to Rassinier dated 28 September* [sic]*,* ibid*., p. 474*]*. On 26 September 1963, Rassinier arrived in Germany, where he was to stay for another lecture tour, as indicated in an article in* Rivarol [note: Rivarol*, January 2, 1964, reprinted in* Ulysse trahi par les siens*,* op. cit*., p. 147*[2]]*. Rassinier undoubtedly met Pfannenstiel on 26 September 1963, at 4:52 pm, at Marburg's main railway station.*

In the days that followed, Rassinier wrote an account of his conversation. To preserve the anonymity of his interlocutor, he had the idea of transposing it geographically and temporally: 'One day in June 1963, I received a

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1 Florent Brayard, *Comment l'idée vint à M. Rassinier. Naissance du révisionnisme*, Fayard, Paris, 1996. On the question at hand, see pages 355-361.

2 This is the 1980 edition published by La Vieille Taupe. In the edition currently available (La Sfinge, Rome, 2006), see p. 96.

> *strange visit* [note: Le drame des juifs européens*,* op. cit*., p. 79*]*'. But as he took precautions with his interlocutor, he also took precautions with his reader: 'He introduced himself and told me the purpose of his visit, which he wanted to be absolutely confidential. I promised to do so, and that is why both the circumstances of this meeting and the presentation of the character are only given here in such terms as to make it absolutely impossible to identify him* [note: Ibid*. Emphasis added*]*."*

A few remarks, to begin with, on the above. In his letter of 18 September 1963, Pfannenstiel doesn't yet seem quite sure of the day when he and Rassinier will be able to meet ("I'll be waiting for you at the main station on the day you tell me"). So it is possible that Rassinier sent him another letter to specify the day of his arrival.

Did they only meet on 26 September? In his account in *Le drame des juifs européens*, Rassinier speaks of a "long story" (p. 81). Further on, referring to a controversial technical detail, he writes: "we discussed it for a long time and came back to it often"; at the end of his account, he declares: "I will spare the reader the other subjects on which we forked off: the Treaty of Versailles responsible for German National Socialism and, consequently, for the Second World War, the foolishness of capitalism responsible for the Treaty of Versailles and the expansion of Bolshevism, the war, wars, etc., etc..." All this to say that it cannot be ruled out *a priori* that the conversation continued on the following day, 27 September. But this is a detail of little importance.

According to the *Rivarol* article quoted by Brayard, Rassinier stayed in Germany from 26 September to 6 October 1963. In his letter to the German ambassador in Paris dated 19 December 1963, in which he protests against being turned back by the German border police, Rassinier states that his last stay in Germany was from 26 September to 5 October. Neither in the *Rivarol* article nor in Rassinier's letter is there any explicit mention of a lecture tour during this period. This point needs to be verified.

As Brayard assumes, Rassinier wasted no time in writing an account of his visit to Pfannenstiel. Was he still in Germany at the time? We don't know, but on 4 October, Suzanne de Winter[3] (a Belgian citizen probably living in Brussels) received the text of this report, which she was asked to

[3] Suzanne de Winter (née Suzanne Rougefort; 1918-1975), wife of Belgian journalist Noël de Winter (1920-2003). Also a journalist (notably at the *Journal de Charleroi*), she contributed to at least two books (*Je parle anglais* and *Je parle italien* [main author: Julien Tondriau]). Born of a Jewish father of German origin (if we are to believe what she wrote in her letter to Rassinier dated 11 November 1964), S. de Winter typed the text of *Le drame des juifs européens* and *L'opération "Vicaire"*: *Le rôle de Pie XII devant l'histoire* (published by La Table ronde in August 1965).

type up.[4] We translate below the letter in which Suzanne de Winter acknowledges receipt of Rassinier's letter. Specifically, she acknowledges receipt of Rassinier's "conclusion". This is obviously the conclusion to Chapter II of *Le drame des juifs européens*, a "conclusion" which deals precisely with the "visit" of the "mysterious" figure.[5]

We alluded above to a "controversial technical detail" discussed in the conversation between Rassinier and Pfannenstiel. Specifically, it concerned the duration of a homicidal gassing using a diesel engine.[6] It "must have been horribly long", according to Rassinier. "A quarter of an hour," replied his interlocutor, who refused to budge. Probably even before he left Germany, Rassinier wrote Pfannenstiel a letter on 1 October, in which he returned to the subject. We don't have Rassinier's letter, only Pfannenstiel's reply, which provides us with a kind of written record of the two men's conversation. See below for a translation of Pfannenstiel's letter dated 4 October. The contents of this letter perfectly confirm the version proposed by F. Brayard. Rassinier wrote again to Pfannenstiel on 8 October. Here again, we do not have the text of his letter, only Pfannenstiel's reply (see below for a translation of this letter).[7]

As for the testimony that Madame Rassinier confided to Henri Roques in the summer of 1986, twenty-three years after the alleged "visit" (or twenty-two years after the publication of *Le drame des juifs européens*), we have to make do with the little that Roques tells us about it.[8] Either Mme Rassinier has mistaken her story for that of another person who did visit her husband, or she has simply been the victim of a "false memory". When it comes to testimony and "reconstructed" memories, anything is possible.

One last point: according to Mrs. Rassinier, who "retained a vivid and very unpleasant memory of the man who barged into their apartment that day", when the alleged visitor entered their home, she felt "as if evil waves were spreading through the apartment. My husband was also very dis-

4 The accompanying letter from Rassinier to de Winter has not been preserved.

5 P. Rassinier, *Le drame des juifs européens*, La Vieille Taupe, Paris, 1985 (1st ed., 1964), pp. 78-91.

6 In the manuscript version of *Le drame des juifs européens* (available in the Paul Rassinier archives at *La Contemporaine*, Nanterre (new name of the former *Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine*) is a sketch (not published in *Le drame...*) of the alleged gas chambers at Belzec. It is reproduced below, p. 381.

7 The two letters from W. Pfannenstiel, dated 4 and 15 October 1963, and the letter from S. de Winter, dated 4 October, are reproduced in Appendix I starting on p. 378; the originals can be found in the Paul Rassinier archives, as well as in the Henri Roques archives held at the Institut Emmanuel Ratier in Niherne (Indre).

8 See below, pp. 412, 462, 466.

turbed." This testimony is in total contradiction with Rassinier's own account, which states that his interlocutor was "of extreme distinction and exquisite politeness" and that he, Rassinier, was "far from trying to conceal the pleasure and interest [he had] taken in his conversation." It's difficult to imagine why Rassinier would have "disguised" the attitude of the "visitor."[9]

Translation of Wilhelm Pfannenstiel's Third Letter to Paul Rassinier dated 4 October 1963

"Dear Sir,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 1 October 1963, for which I thank you.

You base your calculations on the following figures:

a. *A 200 to 250 HP engine consumes 33 to 35 liters of diesel per hour and produces 20 to 30 cubic meters of gas per hour.*
b. *The atmosphere must contain at least 17% gas to become toxic, which represents 40-50 cubic meters of gas in 250-300 cubic meters of air.*

These 250-300 cubic meters of air represent the total spatial volume of the 6 gas chambers. However, the gas was not sent into all the chambers at the same time, but into one chamber after another. [Handwritten note on margin: *"at the same time" he said at first. P.R.*]

Thus, only one-sixth of the gas calculated under b.) above was needed per chamber (5 m long, 5 m wide, 2 m high = 50 cubic meters), i.e. 6.6 to 8.3 cubic meters of gas each time.

Since the motor generates 20 to 30 cubic meters of gas per hour, as calculated under a.), it can deliver 5 to 7.5 cubic meters of gas to a single chamber in a quarter of an hour.

Gassing could therefore be completed within a quarter to half an hour.

With best regards

Wilhelm Pfannenstiel"

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[9] In the handwritten text of the conclusion (Rassinier archives), we find this passage, which should have appeared at the end of the chapter but was not retained in the printed version:

"I repeat that, apart from the minor errors of detail that I have deliberately introduced for the sole purpose that, if it provoked a police investigation whose aim would be to find its author in order to punish him, he could not be found, I have reported it as faithfully as possible. And I would add that, should I ever be certain that the author will be questioned without any risk to himself, I am authorized to make his name public: he will not shirk. And, for the greater good of historical truth, he will surely inspire others a little more acceptable than those to which we have so far become accustomed, and with which we have been inundated beyond measure. It's up to you, inquisitors."

Translation of Wilhelm Pfannenstiel's Fourth Letter to Paul Rassinier dated 15 October 1963

"Dear Sir,

Acknowledging receipt of your letter of 8 Oct. 1963, I can only assure you that I cannot correct my oral statements in any way. Moreover, I have nothing to add to them. I absolutely rule out any failure of memory on any point whatsoever. In my opinion, questions 1 and 2 are self-explanatory, if you consider how small the actual dimensions of the entire installation were.

With best regards

Wilhelm Pfannenstiel"

Translation of Letter by Suzanne de Winter to Paul Rassinier dated 4 October 1963

"October 4, 1963

Dear Friend,

I received your conclusion this morning and am sending it back to you by registered post. Typed, of course!
What do I think of your witness? Either he's telling the truth, or he's been sent to you. Go figure!!!
I make this assumption because, as I've already told you, I'm surprised that THEY haven't tried to get to you physically yet.
In any case, what you've written about this ultimate testimony is very clever and excellent.
But by the way, after all the fuss about your previous books, how come the man in question didn't get in touch with you sooner? You describe him as 'distinguished,' 'well-presented' and 'exquisitely polite. ' Generally speaking, people in this category in Germany know French. Especially if he is an ex-officer. So he could have been familiar with your work, even if not all of it has yet been translated?
That's what I'm getting at.
Incidentally, you may be able to tell me more on Thursday, 10 October. I'm coming to Paris between two trains, which means I get off at around 10.20 a.m. and leave again at 8.40 p.m.
*Would you be so kind as to send me a bearer cheque** [handwritten at page's end: ** 175.72 NF*] *that I could cash at Crédit Lyonnais like last time. That way I won't have to change Belgian money.*
Then, could we meet in the late afternoon? Let me know.

I'm going to take advantage of my visit to see if I can get an account, which will remove a lot of my hassle. The Malliavin system works well, but as you say, it's not convenient for everyone.
By the way, last week's Riv[arol] *had a very good article on the 6 million. Too bad it wasn't in a less 'oriented' organ, if I may say so, where most readers eat rabbi at every meal* [sic].
I'll be glad to see you again. I've got some problems I need to talk to you about.

Until THURSDAY, I hope.

Sincerely yours

[signed: Suzanne de Winter]*"*

Appendix V: A Polemic with *Le Monde Juif*

CDJC Magazine *Le Monde Juif* Takes up the Roques Affair

In Issue No. 121, January-March 1986, *Le Monde juif* published a ten-page article with eight appendices (pp. 1-18). The author is Georges Wellers, director of the publication. The title: "On an 'explosive' PhD thesis on the Gerstein Report" ("À propos d'une thèse de doctorat 'explosive' sur le 'rapport Gerstein'").

In the interests of objectivity, the editor of this book would have liked to reproduce Georges Wellers's entire critical study for our readers, and sent him a written request. At first, Mr. Wellers gave his authorization. Then he went back on his agreement and forbade the publisher [Polémiques] to reproduce his article. We regret this.

We reproduce only the text in right of reply, which Henri Roques obtained for publication in Issue No. 122, April-June 1986.

We are also submitting to readers a reply by Henri Roques to G. Wellers's reply. This is an unpublished text, since *Le Monde juif*, to which it was sent under the legal conditions of the right of reply, refused to publish it.

First Right-of-Reply Text

In writing my thesis on the different versions of Kurt Gerstein's story, I set myself two main goals:

1. "to offer historians a solid basis, on which to express and compare their opinions" (see my Conclusions);
2. to dispassionate a debate that cannot progress with invective, but must be treated with the utmost objectivity.

Perhaps Mr. Wellers concedes that I have achieved my first goal, since he acknowledges that I have done a job that he describes as both "considerable" and "painstaking." On the other hand, looking at Mr. Wellers's style, I evidently have failed when it comes to the second goal I set myself. My response to the main points of his critique is as follows:

I. Concordant Testimony?

a. The Pfannenstiel Case.

In October 1947, Pfannenstiel testified that he had been to Lublin with Gerstein and had simply heard about Belzec! In June 1950, after five years of internment, Pfannenstiel, who had not seen his wife and five children since 1945, gave evidence similar to that reproduced by Mr. Rassinier. He was released on 12 July.

As for the visitor Rassinier received in June 1963, it was certainly not Pfannenstiel.[1]

> *"A particularly happy circumstance,"* writes Mr. Wellers, *"one day he spontaneously introduced himself to Paul Rassinier* […] *with whom he had a friendly conversation in a place and on a date unknown for reasons of 'discretion' demanded by Pfannenstiel and respected by Rassinier."*

In 1977, Mr. Wellers was better informed, having reproduced Rassinier's sentence: "One day in June 1963, I received a strange visit…" ("La solution finale et mythologie néo-nazie," *Le Monde juif*, April-June 1977, p. 59). So, the month and year are known. The place is Rassinier's home in Asnières. Indeed, the historian's widow still has a vivid recollection of this visit, which greatly disturbed her husband.

The mysterious character borrowed Pfannenstiel's personality. He put his age in harmony with that of the professor (Rassinier gave him the age of sixty, whereas Pfannenstiel was 73 at the time). He spoke of his five children, all of whom were infants in 1945 (the professor had five children, four of whom were born between 1933 and 1939). He mentioned his personal relationship with Dr. Grawitz, SS-Gruppenführer and President of the German Red Cross (Pfannenstiel said that he had intervened with Grawitz after his visit to Belzec), and so on. After his visitor's departure, Rassinier, determined to get to the bottom of the matter, asked German friends for the professor's address, and wrote to him. Pfannenstiel's reply was dated 3 August 1963. In it, Pfannenstiel says he would be delighted to meet Rassinier, and suggests a meeting at his home in Marburg. He refers to Gerstein's story as a "highly incredible fabrication," and asks Rassinier to treat it with the utmost discretion.

In a handwritten letter dated 18 September 1963, Pfannenstiel gave Rassinier directions to Marburg. The meeting took place a few days later: Pfannenstiel was not the visitor of June. So who had come to ring Rassinier's doorbell that day? (The photocopies of Pfannenstiel's letters to Rassinier quoted above are at your disposal).

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[1] Editor's remark: See the Addendum to Appendix IV, starting on p. 405.

b. "Eyewitness" Rudolf Reder.

Italian researcher Carlo Mattogno analyzed Reder's Polish-language testimony. C. Mattogno demonstrates that this witness follows Gerstein's account too closely not to have plagiarized it, while at the same time "improving" it. Reder is said to have arrived at Belzec on 17 August 1942, the same day as Gerstein. He mentions the engine failure, but specifies that it was a gasoline engine consuming 80 to 100 liters per day. On this point, Reder contradicts Gerstein and Pfannenstiel, who saw a diesel engine. The latter is highly ineffective for gassing, since it essentially gives off carbon dioxide, which asphyxiates only very slowly.[2] Not having looked up, he didn't see the mountain of shoes and clothes (35 to 40 meters, or ten to twelve stories). But having looked down, he saw thirty pits each containing 100,000 corpses. By the time of his escape, at the end of November 1942, the thirty pits were full and would therefore have contained three million victims! (C. Mattogno, *Il Rapporto Gerstein*, Sentinella d'Italia, 1985, p. 136). Mr. Wellers says that in 1945-1946 the Gerstein document "was not yet known to the general public." This is true, but it was known in circles close to the United Nations War Crimes Commission. In France, on 10 November 1945, the Directorate of Military Justice sent the SS Gerstein file to Professor Charles Gros, the French delegate in London, for forwarding to the Polish authorities. This is how R. Reder may have become familiar with the file in Poland. At the same time, there were several other "fortunate circumstances." In addition to R. Reder's Polish-language publication, a handwritten text dated 25 March 1943 was "discovered" in the Netherlands, hidden in a chicken coop (*sic*) near the burnt-out house of a resistance fighter. This anonymous document, written in Dutch, summed up Gerstein's story in summary form. In Germany itself, at the Hotel Mohren in Rottweil, where Gerstein stayed at the start of his captivity, a German-language version was "discovered," which the SS officer had apparently left for his widow.

c. Testimonies of a Polish Civilian and Four Former SS Men.

Of these five testimonials, only one actually describes a homicidal gassing. All five refer to judicial sources, not historical ones. Judicial sources, like eyewitness accounts of homicidal gas chambers, are not in short supply, even in camps where no one maintains that such chambers existed. We will mention just one testimony, that of Dr. Franz Blaha, former director of a Czech hospital. This deportee is the author of a sworn report bearing the

[2] Friedrich P. Berg, "The Diesel Gas Chambers: Myth within a Myth," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Volume 5, Number 1, Spring 1984, p. 24.

number PS-3249 (IMT, Vol. XXXII, pp. 56-64), which was read into the record of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg on 11 January 1946 (IMT, Vol. V, pp. 168-175). It states that this doctor had to examine the first victims of the homicidal gas chamber at Dachau. However, it is now accepted that no one was gassed at Dachau.

II. The Wooden Doors of the Gas Chambers

I described the doors of the Belzec gas chambers, which, according to Gerstein and Reder, were made of wood. "Ridiculous!" exclaims Mr. Wellers, who claims that "in the gas chambers of all the extermination camps, the doors were made of wood." However, according to the Dutch document mentioned earlier, the doors were made of iron ("*een ijzeren deur*"). At the Majdanek Camp, too, the doors are said to have been made of iron or steel. Indeed, in *Nazi Mass Murder*, p. 175, we read: "The iron doors with their rubber packing [gaskets…] were furnished by the firm of Auert in Berlin. In its judgment the Düsseldorf court mentions 'at least three concrete rooms, provided with tight-fitting steel doors,' […]."[3]

To demonstrate the inconsistency of the accounts of Treblinka, I have referred to Nuremberg Document PS-3311, which establishes the existence in this camp of steam chambers, not gas chambers. On this point, Mr. Wellers strongly attacks my thesis and goes so far as to question the competence of the members of the jury. He says that PS-3311 is "an example of a useless fantasy document" (on this point I won't contradict him), signed "by a certain Tadeusz Cyprian" and "left in the [Nuremberg] archives like many other unused papers."

The reality is that Dr. Tadeusz Cyprian was an official: "Polish Deputy Representative on the United Nations War Crimes Commission in London" (IMT, Vol. XXXII, p. 154). His document was presented in evidence on 14 December 1945 (Exhibit US-293) by Major Walsh, Deputy US Attorney General; the following sentences were read at Nuremberg before the IMT:

> *"Late in April 1942 erection was completed of the first chambers in which these general massacres were to be performed by means of steam.* […] *Af-*

[3] Editor's remark: Initially, Soviet and Polish propagandists claimed seven homicidal gas chambers for the Majdanek Camp. Three of the rooms thusly labeled had air-raid shelter doors made of steel, the rest had wooden doors, if any. By the year 2005, all homicidal-gas-chamber claims about rooms with wooden doors or no doors at all had been dropped by the orthodoxy. Only two of the three steel-door chambers are still claimed to have been used for homicide. Documents prove them to have been simple disinfestation chambers. For details, see Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek*, reprint of 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2016.

ter being filled up to capacity, the chambers were hermetically closed and steam was let in." (IMT, Vol. III, pp. 567f.)

In application of Article 21 of its statutes, the IMT was obligated to consider Document PS-3311 as authentic, indisputable evidence.[4]

Mr. Wellers expresses the implausibilities of Gerstein's account as follows: Gerstein would have learned the figures only by "hearsay, second-hand"; it would be "at most the transmission of information whose source remains unknown (*sic*) and received by a deeply troubled man." We already knew that Gerstein was mistaken (or lying, or making it up) when he claimed that Hitler and Himmler had been present at Belzec on 15 August 1942 to ensure that the extermination process was sped up, as well as when he recounted Pfannenstiel's presence at Treblinka, where the professor was said to have given a speech, and so on. If, on top of this, the very heart of the story contains accounts of things learned from hearsay or second hand, what remains of his testimony?

That is the question I asked in my thesis, and that is the question that needed answering.

Second Right-of-Reply Text

In issue 122 of Le *Monde juif*, I read Mr. Georges Wellers's comments on my first right of reply dated 27 May 1986 and published in the same issue of your magazine. Here is my reply, as brief as possible:

1. Mr. Wellers paid me a few compliments at the beginning of his otherwise very hostile article published in No. 121 of your magazine. By way of reciprocation, I'd like to say that Mr. Wellers is the only one to have the merit of attempting to criticize my thesis on the "Gerstein Report" using some arguments and not just a stream of invective. That said, in his reply, Mr. Wellers continues to set himself up as a professor of morality, referring to my friends as "accomplices." The Larousse dictionary defines "accomplice" as "one who participates in a reprehensible, secret action." This definition does not apply to our action, which is legal and takes place in broad daylight. For my part, I have never said or written publicly that, on 30 May, Mr. Wellers, who chaired a round table at the *Institut d'histoire du temps present* to solemnly condemn my thesis, was surrounded by his "accomplices."

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[4] IMT, Vol. I, p. 15, confirmed by IMT, Vol. XXXII, p. 154, where, just before Dr. Cyprian's signature, followed by his title, appears the expression in English saying that this document "is hereby officially submitted by the Polish Government to the International Military Tribunal by the undersigned under the provisions set forth in Article 21 of the Charter."

2. The reminder of my intermittent collaboration with a Belgian periodical a quarter of a century ago has little to do with my thesis, defended in 1985.

3. *Pfannenstiel affair*: Mr. Wellers prefers his "novel" to mine, which is his right. My point of view on the meeting between Mr. Rassinier and a mysterious interlocutor in June 1963 is based on letters written and signed by Professor Pfannenstiel and on the testimony of Mr. Rassinier's widow. I note that Mr. Wellers refuses to read these letters and this testimony. As for his own interpretation of the famous meeting, it dates from 1977, ten years after Paul Rassinier's death. Mr. Wellers therefore ran no risk of being contradicted by the historian.

4. Is the researcher (Mr. Wellers puts the word in quotation marks) Carlo Mattogno an Italian Henri Roques? Or is Henri Roques a French Mattogno? The question will always remain unanswered. The important thing is that two researchers (without quotation marks) who were unaware of each other's existence until the beginning of 1985 have come to very similar conclusions about the "Gerstein Report."

5. *Gas chambers at Majdanek?* Obviously, I don't recognize the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek. If I did, I would be more of an "exterminationist" than Dr. Martin Broszat, Director of Munich's *Institut für Zeitgeschichte*. Mr. Wellers, during the *Découvertes* program on 23 May on the TV channel Europe 1, must have heard, as I did, the following statements by one of my opponents: "Mr. Broszat is absolutely right […]. The gas chambers only existed in Poland. There were five extermination camps: Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Chelmno. Right. And that's where the people were gassed." As you can see, the Majdanek Camp is missing from the list.

6. *Hitler and Himmler on 15 August 1942 at Belzec?* I never claimed that Gerstein was the author of this statement. Mr. Wellers is invited to refer to page 237 of my thesis (here on p. 207), which reads: "Was the SS general boastful? Some have claimed so. Impossible, it would have been quickly discovered by Gerstein's conversations with the Belzec Camp leaders."

7. Mr. Wellers maintains his opinion of my thesis, to which he denies any scientific value.[5] This eminent historian, whom the rules of the right of

[5] Let's not forget that Wellers didn't have a single degree in the humanities, that he was a researcher in physiology and couldn't even list his qualifications in that discipline. The contrast with Dean M. de Boüard, who supported Roques, is striking. See, on this subject, R. Faurisson, "Une correspondance Wellers-Faurisson," *Écrits révisionnistes* (*1984-1989*), Vol. II, La Sfinge, Rome, 2020, pp. 514-517; Editor's remark.

reply forbid me to name, wrote in the newspaper *Ouest-France* (France's leading daily newspaper) dated 2 and 3 August 1986:

> *"Had I been a member of the jury, I probably would have given Mr. Roques's thesis a 'very good' rating."*

Appendix VI: Michel de Boüard, I

The Position of Dean Michel de Boüard, Historian, Member of the Institute, Former Deportee to the Mauthausen Camp

Michel de Boüard was a member of the French Committee of World War II History (*Comité d'histoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale*) from 1946 to 1981, and is currently a member of the Commission on Resistance and Deportation of the Institute for Contemporary History (*Institut d'histoire du temps present*). In early May 1986, Michel de Boüard expressed his solidarity with his colleague, Professor Jean-Claude Rivière. He did so in a personal letter, the full text of which was published in *La Tribune de Loire – Atlantique* (7 August 1986). We reproduce it on the next page. In early August 1986, two articles published by the French newspaper *Ouest-France* caused a sensation: the first, by Jacques Lebailly, was headlined "Who was Kurt Gerstein? A Saint? A pathological liar?" ("Qui était Kurt Gerstein? Un saint? Un mythomane?") The second article, by the same author, was essentially an interview with Dean de Boüard. The journalist begins by pointing out that the historian, a former Resistance deportee to the Mauthausen Camp, cannot be considered a Sunday school researcher or a nostalgic National Socialist. Mr. de Boüard begins bluntly by declaring:

> *"Had I been a member of the jury, I probably would have given Mr. Roques's thesis a 'very good' rating."*

Then he continues:

> *"Mr. Roques's thesis is defined by its title: The Confessions of Kurt Gerstein. Comparative study of the different versions. Critical edition. Gerstein's testimony had been known since 1947. There were several versions. It is an important text, since all those who have spoken about the concentration camps have proffered this testimony. It was not well known and used with a casualness that a historian cannot tolerate. (Unlikely passages have been cut, different versions have been mixed up, etc.) The thesis is a good critical edition. It's true that a certain… bias can sometimes be felt, but what thesis is without it? A thesis is debatable, and if I had been a member of the jury, I would have discussed it with the author. I don't agree with everything, but a critical study was needed. It's been done, and I'd like to thank Mr. Roques. In any case, it is inaccurate that this is a thesis which, for the reader that I am, denies the existence of gas chambers."*



«Monsieur et cher collègue»

Michel de BOUARD
Professeur émérite
à l'Université de Caen
Ancien Combattant
de la Résistance
(Front National)
Déporté à Mauthausen

Monsieur et cher collègue,
J'ai lu l'article que M. Wellers a publié dans "Le Monde Juif" à propos de la thèse de M. Roques. Il témoigne de la hargne qui anime certains, indignes dès lors du nom d'historien, lorsque l'on se permet de toucher à l'un de leurs tabous. Les termes dans lesquels il ose mettre en cause l'honnêteté et l'autorité d'un jury universitaire me semblent particulièrement inacceptables et odieux.

Pour ma part, je m'efforce depuis bien longtemps de faire admettre qu'il est grand temps d'engager enfin, à propos des camps de concentration, une recherche de caractère scientifique dont les résultats s'imposeraient à tous ceux qui s'affrontent aujourd'hui: «exterminationnistes» et «révisionnistes». Il faudrait avant tout recenser toutes les sources utilisables, écrites, orales et matérielles, puis les passer au crible de la critique. C'est, je pense, ce qu'a tenté de faire M. Roques concernant les six rédactions du «rapport Gerstein»; il a montré que ce document d'importance majeure, a été jusqu'ici utilisé de manière imparfaite et parfois tendancieuse. J'ai lu attentivement sa thèse; on peut, certes, en contester tel ou tel point, et j'imagine que le jury a dû le faire lors de la soutenance; mais on se disqualifie en lui opposant des insinuations injurieuses.

Dans cet esprit, si une cabale devait être ourdie, je puis vous assurer que je serais parmi ceux, nombreux je l'espère, qui y feraient front. Dès que vous aurez pu me communiquer le texte de l'article paru dans «Ouest-France», j'écrirai à la direction nantaise du journal, et aussi à la direction générale, à Rennes, qui m'a demandé à plusieurs reprises, ces dernières années, des articles. Dès maintenant, j'écris au «Monde Juif» pour protester contre le ton employé par M. Wellers.

Veuillez croire, Monsieur et cher collègue, à mes meilleurs et bien dévoués sentiments.

Michel de BOUARD

Further on, the eminent professor explains how, in good faith, deportees such as himself were able to help propagate a myth. Let's listen to him:

> *"In the monograph on Mauthausen that I published in the* Revue d'histoire de la Seconde Guerre mondiale *in '54, I twice mentioned a gas chamber. When the time came to reflect, I said to myself: where did I acquire the conviction that there was a gas chamber at Mauthausen? It wasn't during my stay in the camp, because neither I nor anyone else suspected that there might be one; so it was 'baggage' I received after the war, it was accepted. Then I noticed that in my text – although I support most of my assertions with references – there were none concerning the gas chamber* […]. *Now, I was a member of the French command of the camp's International Re-*

> *sistance Organization, and we were fairly well informed about what was going on there."*

After saying that he was torn between his conscience as a historian and his attachment to his comrades, former deportees, M. de Boüard concludes:

> *"I'm haunted by the thought that 100 years from now, or even 50, historians will be asking questions about this aspect of the Second World War, the concentration camp system, and what they'll discover. The file is rotten. There are, on the one hand, a huge number of fabricated stories, inaccuracies, stubbornly repeated, particularly in numerical terms, amalgamations, generalizations and, on the other hand, very succinct critical studies to demonstrate the inanity of these exaggerations. I fear that these historians will conclude that the deportation must have been a myth after all. That's the danger. This idea haunts me."*

It's easy to understand the work being done on the consciences of academic historians after the exceptionally courageous support given to Henri Roques by that great and universally respected academic, Michel de Boüard.

Appendix VII: From the Gerstein Affair to the Roques Affair

Paper Presented to the Eighth International Revisionist Conference[1]

On February 21, 1979, the newspaper *Le Monde*, the Paris daily, published a text titled "The Hitler Policy of Extermination: A Declaration by Historians." This declaration, whose style was intended to be solemn and whose conclusions were meant to be irrefutable, had been drafted by two persons:

– Léon Poliakov, former director of research at the C.N.R.S. (National Center for Scientific Research), an author of widely distributed books translated into several languages and often republished, all devoted to the questions of anti-Semitism and the persecutions suffered by the Jews under the Third Reich (for example: *The Breviary of Hate*, *The Third Reich and the Jews*, *The Trial at Jerusalem*);
– Pierre Vidal-Naquet, a professor at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences at Paris, a specialist in ancient Greek history but at the same time the chief of a group of university academics who, at the time, had decided to oppose vigorously the Revisionist theses expounded in France by Professor Robert Faurisson. Pierre Vidal-Naquet published in 1980 a work under the title: *The Jews, Memory and the Present*.

Poliakov and Vidal-Naquet had obtained, in order to support their text, the signatures of thirty-two other historians. Among the latter, who worked or taught at the College of France, at the National Center for Scientific Research, in the French universities, at the School for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences and at the Practical School of Advanced Studies, one could identify the names of some academics very well-known in France as historians. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there was only a small minority of specialists in contemporary history and, more particularly, in the history of the Second World War. The declaration began as follows:

> *"Since the end of the Second World War, it has happened on several occasions that publicists, sometimes taking the title of historians, have cast*

[1] First published in English translation in, and here taken from, *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, spring 1988, pp. 5-23.

> *doubt on the veracity of the evidence of the Hitler policy of extermination. This evidence had, in 1945, a glaring obviousness. The great majority of the deportees today are dead. There remain their writings and the archives of the Third Reich, but this documentation does not always prevent reactions which are in the form of a 'critique' in appearance only."*

The declaration ends with the following bewildering phrases:

> *"It is not necessary to ask oneself how, technically, such a mass murder was possible. It was possible technically because it took place. Such is the obligatory point of departure for all historical inquiry on the subject. It is our concern simply to recall this truth: there is not, there cannot be, any debate on the existence of the gas chambers."*

In addition, in the fourth paragraph of this text, bearing the subtitle "The Evidence," one can read the following: "A witness, a document, can always be suspected. The criticism of texts is one of the fundamental rules of our profession." Personally, I have always remembered very specially this last sentence and I asked myself: "Has there been any critical textual evaluation of sufficient substance to deal with the rare written accounts which claim to attest the existence of homicidal gas chambers in the Nazi concentration camps?"

To this question, I have replied in the negative. Now, in this declaration of the historians, an evidence in writing was partially reproduced; it came from what was customarily called the "Gerstein Report" (in German, Gerstein-Bericht). The writers of the declaration, Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, presented it in these terms:

> *"From amongst so very much evidence, which obviously cannot come from those who have been killed, is it necessary to recall that of the SS* [officer] *Gerstein, who tried in vain to alert, as early as 1942, the civil and religious authorities on what was happening in these camps? Written by himself, 26 April 1945, for the French authorities, in hesitant French, his account, indisputable in its essentials, of what he had seen at Belzec is only the more moving."*

This preamble was followed by an extract of the Gerstein report in its most widely known version, which carries the reference PS-1553, a total of 55 lines spread over two columns of the newspaper *Le Monde*, on page twenty-three. Why was this evidence chosen "from amongst so very much evidence"? Apparently because Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet believed it to be the most convincing of all the written evidence relating to the problem of the homicidal gas chambers. Léon Poliakov had long experience of this evidence because he had utilized it very often in his writings. As far as Pierre Vidal-Naquet was concerned, he put his trust in Léon

Poliakov who was considered to be one of the best specialists, perhaps even the best specialist, on this question in France. As for the thirty-two cosignatories to the declaration, it is very probable that the Gerstein report was hardly known to them, and that the reputations of the two initiators of the declaration sufficed to obtain their signatures.

* * *

The Gerstein evidence has a unique character: it is the only evidence to have been given spontaneously by a German officer who had been a member of the Waffen SS. Gerstein was described by his hagiographers as "a saint astray in our century," as "God's spy." For Poliakov, this German was "a righteous Gentile."

However, the Gerstein report began its career badly: it was, in fact, rejected as proof by the Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, which had called for the document during its session of 30 January 1946. Subsequently, the Gerstein account was used in legal proceedings, notably in the Doctors' Trial of November 1947 and, later, in the Eichmann Trial at Jerusalem in 1961.

If a critical review of the various published versions of the texts was indispensable, it seemed clear to me that it was necessary to begin by a critical review of the texts left by Gerstein or which were attributed to him. I am neither an academic nor an historian. My career has been spent in administration in the private sector, and I took my retirement in 1981. It happens that, since 1945, I have been greatly interested in several historical questions relating to the Second World War; in this way I have cultivated for a very long time what you Americans, I believe, call a "hobby."

I was a friend of the historian Paul Rassinier, whom we all recognize as the spiritual father of Holocaust Revisionism. I often have to explain Paul Rassinier's work to audiences who are not fully aware or whose knowledge of his work is poor. It is, for me, an immense pleasure to speak of the great and honest man who was Paul Rassinier. But I believe that here it is quite unnecessary to recall at length the historian whom you know well and whom you admire.

I had read, during the 1950s and the 1960s, the works of Rassinier; I had long conversations with him at his home in the Paris suburbs between 1962 and 1967, which was the year of his untimely death. Rassinier certainly mentioned the Gerstein story; in regard to the witness Pfannenstiel, he even pointed out to me that his name meant "handle of the frying pan." Unaware that one day I should write a thesis on the Gerstein texts, I did not pay sufficient attention to Paul Rassinier on this subject.

I did, however, have a record in a comparative presentation made by Rassinier in his book *The Drama of the European Jews*. On ten to twelve pages, he presented side by side:

– on the one hand, the French version of the document attributed to Gerstein by Léon Poliakov in 1951 in his book *The Breviary of Hate*;
– on the other hand, the French version of the document attributed to Gerstein by the tribunal at Jerusalem in 1961 and printed by the same Poliakov in *The Trial at Jerusalem.*

Paul Rassinier pointed out important and inexplicable differences between these extracts of the same original document. Moreover, a remark made by the historian stayed always in my memory: "Of all the evidence relating to the homicidal gas chambers," Rassinier had said to me, "the craziest, the most extravagant, is that of Gerstein."

Then, in 1979, almost twelve years after the death of my friend, I found once more the evidence he had described as crazy and extravagant in a declaration by historians, signed by thirty-four French academics.

I informed Professor Robert Faurisson, with whom I was already in contact, of my stupefaction. He shared my indignation, the more so because he possessed a solid documentation on this subject. The idea of bringing matters out into the open progressively imposed itself on me; I reread the books of Rassinier, those of Léon Poliakov, of Saul Friedländer and of Pierre Joffroy. In 1981, I took my professional retirement and began my work of research and study. In the course of this same year 1981, a trial confronted Robert Faurisson with Léon Poliakov; the former having written, in one of his works, that the latter was a manipulator and fabricator of texts, precisely *à propos* the Gerstein story.

Poliakov, urged by his followers, brought a complaint of defamation against Faurisson. At the request of Professor Faurisson and as witness at this trial, I prepared for the attention of the judges a memorandum which showed very clearly the manipulations and fabrications of Gerstein's texts by Poliakov. But the Advocate-General recalled to the attention of the court in his summation that there was defamation in regard to a person from the moment that injurious remarks were made as to his reputation, even if those remarks were true. As a consequence, Professor Faurisson was found guilty.

Now quite determined to prepare a university thesis in order to present a critical evaluation of the "confessions" of Kurt Gerstein, I succeeded in obtaining the agreement of a professor of literature to his becoming director of studies for my thesis.

On February 5, 1982, I registered myself in the correct manner at the University of Paris IV–Sorbonne.

* * *

My research was basically undertaken in two places:

1. In the Archives of the Evangelical Church of Bielefeld in Westphalia, which possesses a unique file concerning Gerstein; the majority of these documents have been sent to the archives by the widow of the former SS officer. It was in these archives that I discovered a sixth version of the "confessions," thus adding to the five versions already known but never published in full.
2. At the Direction of Military Justice in Paris, where the file on the war criminal Kurt Gerstein, accused of murder and complicity in murder on 5 July 1945 by a military examining magistrate, is preserved. The Gerstein file had mysteriously disappeared from the French military archives from November 1945 until August 1971. On the latter date, it was rediscovered "by chance." It seems that, before me, no one had sought seriously to study the documents contained in this file.

When I had collected an important number of these documents, often unpublished, I began the writing of my thesis. My director of studies at the Sorbonne advised me; I had great need of his advice, for I was not familiar with the academic methods applicable to textual criticism. I had visualized devoting one chapter to the cuts in the text made in the published versions, to the substitutions of words and figures, to the amalgams made in utilizing extracts from different versions, etc. My director of studies did not approve of this project; such a chapter would have brought into question the integrity of authors known for their exterminationist works. I then opted for another method: throughout the length of my thesis, I have noted the inexplicable anomalies in the numerous alleged reproductions of Gerstein's texts.

My work thus took the following form

– Introduction
– Chapter One: Establishing the Texts
– Chapter Two: Authenticity of the Texts
– Chapter Three: Veracity of the Texts
– Chapter Four: The Perception of Gerstein's "Confessions" by Their Readers

At the end of Chapter One, I have drawn up large tables which permit the reader to compare the principal extracts of the "confessions" of Gerstein according to the six versions, or even the eight versions, since version

number five has two different texts in French and a translation in English. My study of the authenticity of the texts led me to doubt the authenticity of the two versions written in German; I consider, in fact, that these two German texts have been fabricated, at least partially, from the texts in French which themselves appear to have been composed by Gerstein. One of these two texts, the one dated 4 May 1945, was moreover rediscovered in the spring of 1946, in circumstances which are unclear, at the Hotel Mohren of Rottweil in the Württemberg region, where Gerstein had been interned as a prisoner of war by the French army.

In regard to the veracity of the texts, the most remarkable aspect is to be found in the enumeration of the improbabilities and unrealistic assertions which are scattered throughout the account of the SS officer. I have enumerated 29, but I am fully aware that my list is incomplete. I shall not burden you with a recital of these twenty-nine improbabilities; some are moreover very well known.

According to Gerstein, in three small camps in Poland, named Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor, sixty-thousand persons were exterminated every day. Now, for these three camps, the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* gives the following statistics, which are not, however, based on any scientific foundation, one million, six-hundred thousand persons, which is already hardly credible. According to Gerstein, the total of the victims would be twenty-eight millions, by reason of the sixty-thousand daily deaths during the periods when officially the camps were functioning. In addition, in the version of his "confessions" which carries the code PS-1553, Gerstein himself gives the figure of twenty-five million victims.

This strange SS officer, who did not lack imagination, saw piles of shoes or clothing that reached a height of thirty-five to forty meters, which is the equivalent of a building of ten to twelve floors. Was he not aware of the absurdity of such a statement? How could anyone climb such a height to deposit his shoes? Additionally, these mounds of shoes would have been visible from a very considerable distance, while at the same time Gerstein tells us that the exterminations in the camps had to be effected with the utmost secrecy.

Again, Gerstein tells us in each of the versions of his story that seven-hundred to eight-hundred persons were packed into a room of twenty-five square meters. A simple arithmetical division permits us to question the possibility of packing thirty persons or thereabouts into one square meter.

Finally, Gerstein boasts of having made his cargo of hydrogen cyanide disappear by burying it twelve-hundred meters before the camp entrance. One can already believe that the operation could not have been easy.

But, to crown the improbabilities, the SS officer pretends that no one asked him for a report on his mission when he returned to Berlin. Was it customary in the German army, or in any other army in the world, to assign an officer to an ultra-secret mission and then not bother to inquire whether this mission had been fulfilled? The conclusion of my thesis specifies the results I had proposed to attain:

1. to offer to historians, by my critical edition of the texts commonly called the "Gerstein Report," a solid base on which these historians could form their opinions;
2. to demonstrate that the SS officer's story does not have the value one should require of a historical document;
3. to encourage my readers to ask questions, and in particular the following question: "Why have the exterminationists considered a text so extravagant and so crammed with improbabilities as being major evidence, as one of the best proofs of the existence of the gas chambers?"

I ended my conclusion with a saying borrowed from a French writer of Jewish origin, Raymond Aron: "The fertile spirit of doubt." This expression is very fine: it explains simply the necessity of exercising our critical intelligence in every scientific study, including, naturally, the study of history.[2]

* * *

My work was finished at the beginning of April 1984; on that date I sent a copy of my thesis to the professor at the Sorbonne who had agreed to direct my studies.

Normally, I should have formally argued my thesis in the following weeks, at all events before June 30, 1984. But a jury composed of three professors was necessary; my director of studies, who was a professor of letters, thus had to find two colleagues, one of whom at least had to be a historian, in order to constitute this famous jury. He had warned me: by reason of the "explosive character" of this thesis, it would be imperative to have a jury "above all suspicion."

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[2] Translator's note: In French, the word *scientifique* is used to describe any subject of academic study, including history; whereas the Anglo-Saxons tend to apply the word only to objective sciences such as chemistry, biology, etc. However, in the sense of a logical and systematic study, a literal translation seems perfectly clear.

I had myself proposed as members of the jury the three professors who, the following year, constituted the jury at the University of Nantes. But the professor of Paris-Sorbonne objected to them. In effect, my director of studies in Paris was a victim of the intellectual terrorism which is rife throughout France as in the other European countries and even North America. He was frightened at the possibility of underwriting a thesis which would support Revisionist opinions. The months passed by with the situation unresolved.

At the beginning of 1985, I requested the Paris professor to withdraw and with much delight I accepted the offer of a courageous professor of the University of Nantes to become my new director of studies for the thesis. The jury was then rapidly formed. It is a pleasure for me to give you the names of the members of this panel. They are:

– Professor Jean-Claude Rivière, who teaches literature at the University of Nantes;
– Professor Jean-Paul Allard, who teaches German language and literature at the University of Lyon-III;
– Professor Pierre Zind, who teaches modern history at the University of Lyon-II.

The oral argument of my thesis took place on June 15, 1985, in full accordance with all the established regulations.

In the autumn of 1985, a communique was sent to the press and to a certain number of historians to inform them of the success of my thesis and of my duly being awarded a doctorate for research, in the Faculty of Letters. With the exception of some brief reports in some friendly newspapers, a great silence supervened until April 1986.

On April 18, 1986 (the date is worth noting), a letter was sent to me by the University of Nantes informing me that the certificate of my diploma was at my disposal; the letter suggested either that I should go personally to collect it or that I should send the small sum of money required so that the diploma could be mailed. My mind and my conscience both being quite untroubled, I did not make the journey to Nantes. Now, to be sure, I regret my decision, because the diploma would then have been handed to me and I could have shown it to you today.

About the twenty-fourth of April, that is to say some days later, Professor Jean-Claude Rivière telephoned me to tell me of his consternation about the fact that the issue of *Le Monde juif* [The Jewish World] for the first quarter of 1986 had just been profusely distributed at the University of Nantes, principally by dropping free copies into the postboxes of the teach-

ing staff and other key personnel. This issue contained a lengthy article by Georges Wellers, who is the editor of *Le Monde juif* and, at the same time, a principal member of the managing committee of the Center for Jewish Documentation in Paris.

The Wellers article did not address itself properly to the issues raised in my thesis: academically, or historically, it was insignificant. But it was a well-calculated and quite persuasive *propaganda* attack; and we have to bear in mind that the vast majority of the persons who read it – in all innocence – had not read my thesis, which was then unpublished, and were thus unaware of the basic facts.

So, to give the Devil his due – or rather, in this case Georges Wellers – his article was a clever and well-planned propaganda effort. The primary purpose, obviously, was not to refute my thesis on matters of fact or interpretation but to embarrass the University: and, in this context, it succeeded. From this issue of *Le Monde juif*, the scandal of the Roques Affair exploded, though for a further three weeks the scandal was confined to the region of Nantes.

The scandal of the Roques Affair reached Paris and the whole of France on May 22-23, 1986.

One evening, a so-called debate was organized, during a peak listening period, on a major radio channel. In the guise of a debate, it was rather more an attempt at a lynching party. I had beside me my friend and lawyer Maître Eric Delcroix. Thus, we were two, confronting six adversaries who, for the most part, were experienced in radio phone-in debates. In the course of the broadcast two ministers, one of whom, Alain Devaquet, was the Minister of Research and Higher Education, intervened by telephone. Madame Simone Veil, a member of the European Parliament and a former president of that institution, also a former deportee to Auschwitz, likewise intervened.

Maître Delcroix and I came out of this pre-arranged ambush fairly well; our adversaries lost their self-control to the extent of offering us insults. The following day, the twenty-fourth of May, all the national press was writing of the "affair," often on the front page.

On the twenty-eighth of May, a demonstration was held in Paris in front of the Jewish Memorial, with the participation of several government ministers and other political personalities. On the same day, the affair was discussed with indignation at the National Assembly in Paris, as well as the Knesset in Jerusalem.

On the thirtieth of May, several persons reputed to be historians met together in front of the press at the Institute of Modern History, in order to declare my thesis "completely invalid." This round table was composed entirely of exterminationist theoreticians. This is the first occasion in the history of French universities that a thesis accepted by a properly constituted university jury was then rejected by a sort of extra-mural and self-appointed anti-jury, not qualified by any sort of university authority and, moreover, in the absence of the doctoral candidate! For what reason did these learned critics believe it was not necessary to invite me to be present to defend my thesis? It is obvious that they had no wish to hear me cite the irrefutable fact in my favor, namely, the palpable unreliability of Gerstein's evidence.

Throughout the whole of the month of June 1986, that is to say one year after the success of my thesis, the rector of the University of Nantes was obliged to complete a strange and laborious task. Charged by the Minister of Research and Higher Education to undertake an administrative inquiry, he examined with a magnifying glass my registration at the University of Paris IV–Sorbonne, the transfer of my file to the University of Nantes, and the circumstances in which the oral argumentation on my thesis had been held. In fact, it was absolutely imperative for him to produce for his minister a report of his inquiry making it appear that these had been some error in the formalities.. You are all aware that if you look carefully enough you can always arrive at finding some error in some formality or other; failing which, an error in the formalities can also be fabricated. In this way, a fictitious signature, one which even if authentic would have been perfectly useless, was "discovered" on the report on my oral defense for the thesis. I shall not say more on this ridiculous affair for the moment, but if a question is put to me on this matter, I shall give you every possible explanation in my reply.[3]

On July 2, 1986, in the course of a noisy press conference, the minister, Alain Devaquet, flanked by the rector of the Academy of Nantes and the administrator of the University of Nantes, announced to all the media the cancellation of my successful defense on the thesis.

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[3] Translator's note: The forged "signature" in question was that of a lecturer at the University of Nantes who had been invited to participate in the oral argument of the Roques thesis as an expert witness. This lecturer had no authority to sign any document relating to the thesis, nor was he permitted to sit in on the jury's deliberations. He was not even present at the public hearing of the thesis on June 15, 1987. Whoever forged the signature, which had no bearing on the original approval of the thesis, was clearly no friend of Henri Roques.

The moral of this story is summed up in a French proverb which probably has its equivalent in the English-speaking countries: "When someone wants to drown his dog, he says it has rabies."

When questioned that same evening by the reporters on French radio, my essential words were:

> *"I receive the ministers decision with a great outburst of laughter. Since it is impossible to attack the thesis itself, a pretext has anxiously been sought regarding some pretended error in the formalities. This course of action is ridiculous and scandalous. But my thesis exists and there are innumerable people willing to read it. As of now, I am beginning proceedings before the Administrative Tribunal of Nantes in order to regain my doctorate."*

The media earthquake whose epicenter was, at the end of April 1986, at Nantes had, by July, reached your "neighbors" in Los Angeles; that is to say the famous Simon Wiesenthal Center. Upon the announcement of the annulment of my thesis, this Center published a communique particularly insulting to France. I quote this statement:

> *"This measure shows that France recognizes not only its responsibility towards the victims of Nazi Germany, but also the menace threatening university standards and historical truth raised by those who attempt to deny the crimes of the Third Reich or to exonerate them."*

The same day, the French prime minister, Jacques Chirac, let it be known through his spokesman that "solemnly and personally he was outraged." Do not imagine that Monsieur Chirac was outraged by the insolent communique of the Simon Wiesenthal Center! Not at all. He was outraged "by the subject of my thesis, its lack of seriousness and the attitude adopted." Surely it is superfluous to inquire whether Monsieur the Prime Minister had read or had had someone read my thesis for him, even in part. Certain attitudes and declarations by the "great ones of this world" are often dictated by conditioned reflexes.

* * *

Exactly four weeks after this absurd ministerial decision, I held in my turn a press conference in a large Paris hotel. The association SOS-Racism, which, with powerful private and public support, militates for a French "melting-pot," sent twenty or thirty of its members to prevent me from holding this conference. These troublemakers succeeded only in delaying the conference for about an hour and a half: when the police, who had been alerted at the start, decided to intervene, the rowdies disappeared within a few seconds and the press conference proceeded in the normal way. Paradoxically the most attentive listeners were the foreign journalists, in partic-

ular the Arabs and the Chinese. My alleged "racism" does not seem to have shocked them. My press conference had been chaired by a young Swiss lady, a teacher of French and history at a high school in Lausanne; her name is Mariette Paschoud. She had been one of the first to pay respect to the seriousness of my thesis, in an article published by a periodical in Lausanne. Upon her return to Switzerland, Mariette Paschoud was the target of a campaign of calumny conducted by the press in her country and stirred up by certain very influential personalities, notably the Grand Rabbi of Lausanne. For more than six months the Paschoud Affair developed, at the end of which Mariette Paschoud had to resign her position as teacher and accept a transfer to an archives department; thus, no longer in contact with the students or teaching colleagues, she no longer risks "polluting them ideologically."

Happily, the Roques Affair included some encouraging events.

On August 2-3, 1986, the newspaper *Ouest-France*, which is the regional daily with the widest distribution in France, published two articles in support of my thesis. In particular, it printed an interview with an academic of great repute, Michel de Boüard, who is an historian and a member of the Institute of France. Monsieur de Boüard was deported to the concentration camp of Mauthausen for acts of resistance during the occupation; in this respect, he holds many decorations and, as a historian, is a member of the Institute of Modern History. With great intellectual honesty and great courage, in view of the climate surrounding the Roques Affair, Monsieur de Boüard declared principally: "The thesis of Monsieur Roques is a good critical publication. If I had been a member of the jury, I should probably have accorded the grade 'Very Good' to this thesis." This statement of his position by an academic as respected and as competent as Monsieur de Boüard has greatly troubled the consciences of many of his colleagues.

One other expression of support was especially precious to me: that of an historian very well known in France, Alain Decaux, a member of the Académie Française. Alain Decaux, in a letter published by a Paris daily on September 13, 1986, expressed himself clearly on the matter. He said essentially that, after having read through the complete thesis, he maintained what he had already written on the subject, namely, that he believed Henri Roques to be the best-informed man on the subject of Gerstein and that future historians of the subject of gas chambers would have to take Henri Roques's work into account. He even described my work as "remarkable." He makes clear, however, that he does not share all my conclusions.

Everyone knows that one can judge a thesis to be a good thesis even if one disputes its conclusions. Additionally, in the interview which I have previously quoted, Monsieur de Boüard states clearly: "A thesis is not a catechism. A thesis is to be discussed…"

In the last months of 1986 and the first months of 1987, there were still frequent articles and mentions of my thesis in the newspapers, on the radio and even on television.

My critical evaluation of the texts of the "confessions" of Kurt Gerstein had been done with a view to serving historical science in a Revisionist spirit and to accord it a university label. This action, judged to be scandalous by conformists of all kinds, has given rise to a tornado in the media and in certain political circles not only in France but overseas as well, most especially in Israel.

It is appropriate to study the reactions caused by my thesis among academics, and more especially historians, with careful attention. The first academic requested to give his opinion was Dean Paul Malvy, Provisional Administrator of the University of Nantes. Monsieur Malvy is a professor of medicine. On May 5, 1986, he made the following statement to the daily *Ouest-France*:

> *"I wish only to point out that the matters expressed in a thesis commit only the author of that thesis and do not commit the university in which that thesis is submitted in any way at all. I have looked through this work. There is not, alas, any ambiguity about the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the texts studied… Personally, this perusal has disturbed me deeply; everyone will easily understand the reasons why; I was twenty years of age in 1942 and, in 1945, I was in Poland. I held in my hands, wrapped in twists of newspaper, with or without a label, that which has a name: ashes."*

Those are the exact terms used by Dean Malvy. I should explain that Monsieur Malvy, a student of medicine in 1945, was a member of a mission charged with the repatriation of deportees; and it was for this reason that he visited the concentration camps in Poland shortly after the war. The statement of the Nantes academic is, taken as a whole, honest. He points out that my analysis of the texts led me to conclude that Gerstein's evidence has no historic value; he adds that reading through my thesis has deeply disturbed him. He recalls, at the end, a personal memory: he has held in his hands twists of newspaper containing ashes. Thus, there is no mention of the homicidal gas chambers in the remarks of the Dean Malvy; he has simply seen ashes which came from the incineration of bodies in the crematoriums.

On May 6, 1986, the following day, the national press in France reproduced Dean Malvy's statement and, naturally, the reproduction was often inaccurate. So we have sometimes been able to read that Dean Malvy had seen, in the Polish camps, "the gas chambers functioning" [*sic*]; we have even been able to read that Dean Malvy had held in his hands twists of newspaper containing "the ashes of his relatives" [*sic*]. Here we have a fine example of misinformation by the media!

The second academic who made his feelings known was the Minister of Research and Higher Education, Alain Devaquet himself. Strangely, the minister chose to present himself in the context of a radio phone-in program to which I had been invited on the twenty-third of May, a program that I have previously mentioned.

What did Alain Devaquet say on this evening? He addressed his remarks to the program moderator, Jean-Pierre Elkabach, in the following terms:

> *"You know, Monsieur Elkabach, that the offense of freely expressing an opinion does not exist in our society. You know that the liberty of expression is a rule of French universities. But in this particular case, this freedom leads to a pseudo-science. It is genuine science which should reply, and I believe, for my part, that the only true sanction, whether it be intellectual, or whether it be above all moral, is the overwhelming repudiation, the overwhelming disapproval, the overwhelming indignation of the whole scientific community. In particular, I believe that the true historians should rise as one man."*

As you will notice, the minister's tone was imbued with passion and solemnity. On that day, he called for a general mobilization against the Revisionists.

Now, it is about eighteen months since the minister launched this call to arms and, in France, we still await any authentic disapproval, any repudiation by the scientific community, solely excepting the grotesque round table of which I have just now spoken. From the historians acknowledged for their competence in regard to the problems of the Second World War, we have heard nothing but total silence! And this silence still endures.

During 1987, we have well noticed a general mobilization against the Revisionist school of historians and especially French Revisionists; this mobilization was solely a mobilization of the media; it was unleashed for the great spectacle of the Klaus Barbie trial and accompanied, on the last days of the hearings, by an evening TV transmission of the serial film *Shoah*.

I shall add a detail for those of my listeners who are not fully conversant with the ups and downs of French politics: as of early December 1986, Alain Devaquet is no longer a minister. He was obliged to resign in face of the student demonstrations against his plans for change in the universities.. His enforced leisure should have eased the ex-minister's task of bringing to fulfillment his mobilization against the Revisionist movement in France. If he has tried to act to this effect then it has been almost certainly without result, as no one has heard anything further.

* * *

In the last days of May and the first days of June 1986, the petitions and communiques condemning my thesis flooded in. From among these petitions and communiques, I shall mention only two:

– the communique from the Scientific Committee of the University of Nantes which "disassociates itself from the teacher responsible for processing the thesis," meaning their colleague at Nantes, Professor Jean-Claude Rivière, the tutor for my thesis;
– the petition of a certain number of the teaching staff at the university of Paris-VII, in the midst of whom was Professor Pierre Vidal-Naquet, who certainly instigated this feeble petition.

As for the Israeli ambassador to France, he took the liberty of giving a lesson in morality to the French university community. The weekly magazine, *Tribune juive* [Jewish Tribune] (edition of June 6, 1986) published a declaration by him in which one reads principally:

> *"The duty of the democracies and of the scientific community is to struggle against all forms of destabilization of the free world. Those establishments of higher learning which lend themselves to the games of ignorant students cooperate with the destroyers of civilization and liberty."*

Afterwards, there was the great turn in the tide in the month of August 1986, when the historian Michel de Boüard, a former deportee, gave his support to my thesis. Latterly, Monsieur de Boüard had waged an intensive campaign among his historian colleagues and we are already noticing some happy results. There exists in France a very official and very conformist Association of Professors of History and Geography which publishes a journal titled *Historiens et géographes* [Historians and Geographers]. In the edition of July-August 1986, the professors of history gave free rein to their indignation against the "scandalous" thesis of Nantes; in the readers' letters columns, one found a letter written by the professors of the Academy of Nancy-Metz having as its heading "Against an untenable 'thesis'"; another letter, composed by the professors of Tulle in the south of France

proclaimed: "Shame on the falsifiers of history." Let us recall that these various reactions violently hostile, were precedent to the courageous position adopted by Dean Michel de Boüard, who is unanimously respected in the French university world. I exercised my right of reply in respect to the journal *Historiens et géographes* and my letter was published in the issue of December-January 1987.[4] "Who are these alleged falsifiers of history among whom I am numbered?" I asked. I recalled that the French courts have made their position known very clearly in regard to Professor Faurisson, who was accused, some years ago, of the falsification of history. Refusing to pursue the accusation, the Court of Appeal of Paris, in its judgement of April 26, 1983, declared that by reason of the seriousness of the work undertaken by the professor, "the validity of the conclusions he defends belongs solely to the appraisal of experts, of historians and of the public." I then emphasized that the objective of my thesis was defined exactly by its title; I mentioned the support of Professor Michel de Boüard and of the academician Alain Decaux; I pointed out that Georges Wellers himself, although very hostile, recognized that my study of the texts was "punctilious" and that I had accomplished a "considerable work."

The editors of the magazine accompanied my letter with a commentary which began as follows:

> *"Our friends Alain Decaux and Georges Wellers have in fact acknowledged the merits of the literary work of Monsieur Roques, who has assembled, compared and evaluated all the reports concerning Gerstein. That is indisputable. But Georges Wellers and Alain Decaux do not agree with the conclusions of this study."*

It is easy to notice how the tone has changed in respect to my work. There are no more insults or uncontrolled indignation. Even the merits of my "literary" work are acknowledged. There is, as yet, no mention of my "historical" work. But let us not be too hasty. There is also no mention so far of the supportive views of the distinguished historian Michel de Boüard. Patience! Truth progresses slowly, but it does progress.

Another French scientific journal is called the *Révue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* [Review of Modern and Contemporary History]; it is written by teachers of history who work in the French universities. The issue for the first quarter of 1987 is devoted to a study with the title "Histo-

[4] Translator's note: In France there is an actual law which obliges, as in this instance, an editor to publish replies to personal attacks. Like most laws anywhere, it does not function perfectly; but it is a good law nevertheless. It does help to restrain the owners and editors from manipulating the media entirely in their own political or sectarian interests.

ry, Discipline and the Media. A Propos the Roques Affair." The authors of the study recapitulate, by a concise documentation, the essentials of the development of the affair; they note that my work supports Revisionist opinion. To be sure, they do not take sides in favor of my thesis; but this time they refer on several occasions to Dean Michel de Boüard, even reproducing as an appendix the whole of the interview which the historian accorded to the daily newspaper *Ouest-France*.

From this, I can remark great progress achieved by the Revisionist school among French historians within the space of a few months. There remains one last step to accomplish: to obtain from the Administrative Tribunal of Nantes a decision in my favor for the restoration of my diploma. So long as I maintain the respect of persons whose opinions I value, the title of "Doctor," however pleasing it is, does not matter too much to me. But I do believe, with all sincerity, that the scandalous insults offered to me, the three professors on my jury, as well as my friends and associates, should be expunged. They and I should be exonerated; and the only correct way to do this is to restore my doctorate.

My application is still under review by this tribunal, and I am awaiting, with a certain confidence, the result of this application. It has already been firmly decided that if the Administrative Tribunal of Nantes does not annul the unjust action taken by the ex-minister, Devaquet, the case will be taken before the Council of State, the highest legal authority in France, equivalent to the American Supreme Court or, in Britain, to the legal committee of the House of Lords.

* * *

It is now almost eighteen months since the Roques Affair exploded; and so it is now possible to analyze the cases and the developments with a certain perspective and detachment. How do we explain that a thesis on the critical evaluation of texts, devoted to a subject as limited as the evidence of one SS officer on killings by gas in a small concentration camp in Poland, could have set off such a tidal wave in the media and in a certain number of political circles anxious not to displease the centers of international Zionism?

The so-called "Gerstein Report" represents a fundamental proof of the homicidal gas chambers, say the exterminationists. Let us assume this to be true. Nevertheless, these same exterminationists affirm that they possess an abundance of proofs of these gassings. In such circumstances, why do they give way to a veritable panic when only one of these allegedly very numerous proofs is seriously challenged? The story written by Gerstein was

not even accepted by the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg as evidence against the defendants; this "Gerstein Report" was in fact rejected by the Tribunal in the course of its session of 30 January 1946.

An explanation for the behavior of our adversaries can only be found if we fully recognize that their behavior is, in effect, religious. A religion is founded on a dogma; a dogma has an imperative need of support from holy scriptures. Thus, the "Gerstein Report" is taken to be Holy Writ. Consequently, the exercise of my critical faculty in regard to the "Gerstein Report" had appeared to them as a sort of sacrilege or profanation. The ideal image of Obersturmführer Kurt Gerstein has been assembled religiously by Léon Poliakov, by Rolf Hochhuth, by Saul Friedländer, by Pierre Joffroy. For Poliakov, Gerstein is a "righteous Gentile"; for Hochhuth, a militant of the Confessional Church, Gerstein is a pure Christian faithful to the Gospel; the Gospel which Pope Pius XII betrayed by his political realism, interpreted by Hochhuth as treachery; for Friedländer, the SS officer is a "saint astray in this century"; for Joffroy, Gerstein rises even higher in this celestial hierarchy: he becomes "the spy of God"; the writer-hagiographer even subtitles his book "The Passion of Kurt Gerstein," as though referring to a new Jesus Christ. The personage of Gerstein, as remodeled by his worshippers,[5] could quite well sustain the double role projected for him:

1. to lead us, without any intellectual defenses, into the "magical gas chambers," to use the expression of a very great French writer, Louis-Ferdinand Céline;
2. to make us admit the universal culpability of all those, such as Pope Pius XII, who have kept silent before the greatest crime in the history of the world.

It is not impossible that my thesis, which is based on simple common sense, may have pulverized the ideal image of Saint Gerstein. In fact, over the past eighteen months, neither Poliakov, nor Hochhuth, nor Friedländer, nor Joffroy have stood up to defend the memory of their hero. They have been silent, with only one exception, that of Saul Friedländer. This Israeli professor, who teaches history at the University of Tel Aviv and at the Institute of European Studies in Geneva, had the chance to express himself

[5] Translator's note: It is unfortunate that many accurate and descriptive French expressions cannot be fully translated into English This small gloss has to suffice. The original word in French (*thuriféraires*) denotes the cleric who incenses/sanctifies the altar – at a High Mass, for instance. That is one meaning. A second meaning, in popular use, is "sycophant" or "flatterer." Yet a third meaning arises from the fact that a thurifer (incense-bearer) uses a thurible; and a thurible was the vessel also used by the alchemists allegedly to turn base metals into gold. Hence a triple-entendre. "Worshippers" seems to be the best explanatory compromise.

on May 30, 1986. We should recall that Friedländer is the author of a book titled *Kurt Gerstein, or the Ambiguity of Goodness*. So, on May 30, 1986, Friedländer was in Paris, where he participated at the famous round table formed, as I have said earlier, as an anti-jury in order to proclaim the invalidity of my thesis. When reading a report of this stupefying conference, I learned that Saul Friedländer declared: "Gerstein was a very fragile man, scarcely prepared to be a witness." What an admission!

It is easy for me to reply that the precise objective of my thesis was to demonstrate that a very fragile witness such as Gerstein could only give evidence that was, by the same token, very fragile.

* * *

To conclude this lecture, it remains for me to thank the Institute for Historical Review for having invited me to this Eighth International Revisionist Conference. This is an honor that certainly cannot be attributed to the wide range of my researches, as I have concentrated on one individual, Gerstein, and, in effect, one camp, Belzec. If one wishes to acknowledge any qualities, I would admit two: patience and tenacity.

Patience? I have exercised patience for forty years, while waiting for the chance to denounce a fraud perpetrated by those who, motivated by the need for propaganda at all costs, have exploited the inevitable obscurity, the inevitable anarchy of war.

Tenacity? I have needed a little tenacity to arrive at the accomplishment of this thesis; I have needed a great deal of tenacity in order to succeed in finally constituting a university jury; perhaps I have needed even more tenacity in keeping my head throughout this affair, against certain powerful forces in the world, unleashed against me personally.

As for my study, I have restricted it to one subject, and I have made only a critical evaluation of the texts. Nevertheless, our adversaries have made my work known to the entire world by use of the media, of which they have almost a monopoly.

For the historical revision of the Second World War, France is the country where, side by side, we have the worst and the best. It was a Frenchman, Paul Rassinier, who, a quarter of a century past, laid the foundations of Holocaust Revisionism. But his struggle was a lonely one, and rare were those of his countrymen who offered him their support. It is in France that Professor Robert Faurisson, taking over the task from Paul Rassinier, was dragged before the courts, convicted, and overwhelmed with fines. But it is also in France that the courts have refused to convict Robert Faurisson for falsifying history, even admitting the seriousness of

his work. France is now a country where, since the judgement of the Court of Appeal of Paris on April 26, 1983, everyone has the right to believe, to deny or to doubt the existence of the gas chambers.

Similarly, it is in France that we have been able to find three university professors courageous enough to constitute the jury at Nantes before which I was able to argue my thesis. The pitiful and illegal decision of an ephemeral minister must not allow us to forget the moral courage of my professors. Perhaps we shall be able to acknowledge our respects, at some time, to the professional honesty of the judges of the Administrative Tribunal of Nantes, if these judges concur in the validity of my appeal that the minister acted in excess of his authorized powers.

I am proud to belong to the French Revisionist school, a school which has, moreover, now become Franco-Italian thanks to a young researcher, Carlo Mattogno. I hope that Mattogno will soon have the opportunity to reveal to you the results of his very extensive researches into the myth of the extermination of the Jews on this same platform from which I address you today.

On June 15, 1985, in the oral argument of my thesis, I stated that the Revisionist school should open its doors wide to all those who have questions to ask, to all those who have reason to distrust the Manichean interpretations applied to the Second World War. Those who doubt cannot find their spiritual home among the exterminationists because these latter refuse all debate which challenges their dogma. In France, our adversaries persist in trying to pour scorn upon us by treating us as a "sect of negators," as "a wretched little group who deny the Holocaust."

Our reply is simply that of the scientist, and in accord with the humanist tradition, which is based on a simple axiom since the truth is not historically established, men not only have the right to doubt, but they also have the duty to doubt

Appendix VIII: Alain Decaux

When Alain Decaux Tells the Story of SS Man Kurt Gerstein*

Introduction

Alain Decaux has written a four-volume series titled *This was the 20th Century* (*C'était le XXe siècle*). Volume III, published in 1998, is titled *The Total War, 1940-1945* (*La guerre absolue, 1940-1945*).[1] One of the ten chapters is devoted to the "SS man who cried out against genocide" (pp. 123-164). This SS man could only be Gerstein.

The author has reprinted a chapter headlined "Obersturmführer Gerstein" from one of his books published in 1983.[2] However, he has made a number of alterations to the original text, including deletions and additions.

Both in 1983 and 1998, this academician objectively characterized the revisionist reading of Gerstein's "confessions" (pp. 149-152), even adopting the word "confessions," which he felt was more appropriate than "report."[3] For several decades, proponents of the official reading spoke deferentially of the "Gerstein Report," in German *Gerstein Bericht*.[4]

Alain Decaux does not share the conclusions of the revisionists, but he is a courteous adversary.[5] He uses neither insults nor anathemas, never employing the contemptuous, even insulting terms of "negationists" or "falsifiers of history." For him, those whom Pierre Vidal-Naquet elegantly calls

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* Reproduction of the brochure by Henri Roques (with the collaboration of Vincent Reynouard), *Quand Alain Decaux raconte l'histoire du SS Kurt Gerstein*, Éditions Vincent Reynouard, [Saint-Gildas-des-Bois], 1998.

1 Alain Decaux, *La guerre absolue, 1940-1945*, Perrin, Paris, 1998, 375 pp.

2 The title of the book was: *L'Histoire en question 2* (Éditions Perrin, Paris, 1983, 416 pp.). The chapter in question was on pp. 280-329.

3 A. Decaux speaks of the "confessions – the term is more appropriate than reports – that he [Gerstein] wrote, in 1945, for the French military authorities" (p. 141).

4 See, for example, Léon Poliakov: *L'envers du destin. Entretiens avec Georges Elia Serfati* (Éd. de Fallois, Paris, 1989), p. 114: "[Gerstein] succeeded in penetrating a Polish extermination camp in the summer of 1942, and wrote a report"; Pierre Joffroy (alias Maurice Weil): *L'espion de dieu* (Seghers, May 1992, first published in 1969 by Grasset), p. 398: "It's understandable that the *Gerstein Report*, an SS witness to the gas chambers, should have made a dent in their [the revisionists'] flattened landscape."

5 Although courteous in his book chapter, A. Decaux, I'm told (as I didn't listen to the program), expressed his absolute hostility to revisionists in a recent radio interview with J. Chancel. This is hardly surprising, since an invitation to a mainstream radio broadcast requires a sacrifice to the Holy Taboo.

the "assassins of memory"[6] are people of good faith, who sometimes even present serious works which it is honest to take into account.

In his book, Alain Decaux recalls the interview he had with me at his home in February 1983. He acknowledges that I "considerably enriched [his] information" and "thanked me for it" (p. 149). He replaced some of the complimentary phrases in his previous text with a new one that was particularly flattering for me:

> *"I admired the perfection of the true chartist's work in which* [M. Roques] *had engaged."* (*ibid.*)

Isn't this an excessive compliment?

I am sure that, when the historian mentioned chartist's work, he remembered Dean Michel de Boüard, former student at the *École des Chartes*, member of the *Institut*, former NN (*Nacht und Nebel*) concentration camp inmate deported to Mauthausen Camp, and member of the *Comité d'histoire de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale* since its creation. Dean de Boüard unreservedly supported my thesis on the "Gerstein Confessions."[7] In the summer of 1986, the two academics had met to discuss my academic work, which, thanks to the magic of the media and the complicity of the Minister of Higher Education at the time (Alain Devaquet), had just given rise to the "Nantes Thesis Scandal."

On the subject of my "case," Decaux writes soberly in a footnote on page 150:

> *"This thesis enabled him to obtain a doctorate with honors. This degree was withdrawn following protests raised by the author's conclusions."*

As you can see, Alain Decaux is undeniably courageous. He is also lucid, as he rejects the hypocrisy of the false reasons invoked for the cancellation of my thesis, namely dubious administrative irregularities.[8] He simply refers to the protests raised by my conclusions. Courageous, then, but not

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6 See also Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Les assassins de la mémoire. "Un Eichmann de papier" et autres essais sur le révisionnisme*, La Découverte, Paris, 1987, 232 pp.

7 See Appendix VI starting on p. 418.

8 The State Councilors invoked the fact that H. Roques had enrolled at the University of Nantes on 17 April 1985, when enrolment had been closed since 15 December 1984, and that half the thesis jury (including the president) was made up of professors from outside the university (see Conseil d'État Decree Nr. 96 124, 10 February 1992, p. 3). This last argument was captious, as can be seen from the words of a teacher at the University of Nantes, hardly suspected of revisionism, who, following the cancellation of a thesis defense, declared: "If we have to cancel all the bogus theses, on dubious subjects, defended before juries of convenience, we have to cancel at least three hundred of them right away" (see p. 17). As for late registration, it should be pointed out that university presidents' requests to the rectors for waivers (the latter acting on behalf of late candidates) are practically never refused.

foolhardy. Indeed, he fails to add that this annulment for "historically incorrect" conclusions is a sad first in the long history of French universities. Nor does he question the origin of the protests and enormous pressure exerted on both Minister Devaquet and the University of Nantes.

Be that as it may, I shall endeavor, with equal courtesy, to point out to Alain Decaux on the one hand inaccuracies, and on the other points which I feel he should have dealt with differently or in greater depth in this chapter of his latest book.

II. A Few Inaccuracies

a. Is the Catholic Church Guilty?

The first inaccuracy appears in the very first line of the chapter. In his confessions, K. Gerstein states that, after his visit to the Belzec Camp, he went to the Papal Nunciature in Berlin to alert the authorities to what was happening in the extermination camps. A. Decaux writes (p. 125):

> *"Before the priest, who stares at him with growing distrust, the man* [Gerstein] *stands."*

Yet Gerstein wrote of his visit to the Berlin Nunciature only this:[9]

> *"My attempt to refer all this to the head of the Holy Father's legation met with little success. I was asked whether I was a soldier. Then they refused to talk to me."*

The officer had come in civilian clothes, since he was asked whether he was a soldier. Moreover, in the six known versions of his confessions, K. Gerstein, never stingy with details, did not mention a priest.

If memory serves me well, the television screen[10] showed Kurt Gerstein in uniform before a scowling clergyman in cassock. In reality, there is every reason to believe that Gerstein was greeted in the entrance hall of the Nunciature by a simple receptionist. The receptionist had instructions and simply carried them out. The television director couldn't resist the temptation to present a striking image, even if it wasn't the truth.[11]

Kurt Gerstein was a militant member of the Evangelical Confessing Church. After the war, he was used by a number of German and interna-

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[9] See, p. 66 (T I), p. 74 (T II), p. 84 (T III), p. 104 (T V), p. 119 (T VI). [H. Roques corrected Gerstein's mistakes in the French versions].

[10] *L'Histoire en question*, a program by A. Decaux broadcast on Antenne 2 on 24 March 1983.

[11] This kind of historical untruth persists. In 1994, Martine Gozlan did not hesitate to write that K. Gerstein had been received, in person, by the Pope's nuncio in Berlin, who had shouted at him: "Get out" (see *L'Événement du jeudi*, week of June 2 to 8, 1994, p. 77: "Then Gerstein tried to meet the Pope's nuncio in Berlin, César [Cesare] Orsenigo, who shouted at him: 'Get out, get out!'").

tional cliques to discredit the Catholic Church and its spiritual leader during the Second World War, Pope Pius XII.[12] The Pope came to be seen as an accomplice of the National Socialists, because of his alleged "silence" in the face of the Holocaust. But, as I wrote in my thesis (see here on p. 218):

> *"Could* [Pius XII] *have* [denounced the existence of homicidal gas chambers] *on the basis of reports that, like those of Kurt Gerstein, were full of implausibilities? As nuncio to Bavaria in 1914, he had heard similar rumors from Allied war propaganda. (It should be noted that neither Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, nor any governmental authority of the countries opposing the Third Reich spoke of homicidal gas chambers)."*

Read Paul Rassinier's *L'Opération Vicaire* (La Table ronde, Paris, 1965).

It is true that many members of the NSDAP were Catholics, starting with Adolf Hitler himself, who paid his annual contribution to his childhood church right up until his suicide. German law gave every citizen the option of refusing to pay his dues to one of the state-recognized churches, but the Führer never asked to take advantage of this right. It's also true that a concordat was signed with the Vatican on 20 July 1933, and that, on 23 March of the same year, the Catholic Church put an end to its earlier opposition to Catholics joining the National-Socialist Party.[13]

At the same time, however, the vast majority of Lutherans supported the regime of the Third Reich. There was even an independent Church of "German Christians," whose leader, Ludwig Müller, held the title of Reich Bishop, Plenipotentiary for the Evangelical Churches (A. Decaux rightly mentions this). In December 1933, L. Müller and Protestant Bishop Oberheidt visited Baldur von Schirach, then head of the Reich Youth, and proposed to him "to incorporate the Protestant youth organizations into the Hitler Youth."[14] L. Müller also wrote a book for the German soldier (IMT, Vol. XI, p. 464).

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[12] On this subject, see in particular Protestant Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Deputy*, which caused a scandal in 1962/1963, and Saul Friedländer's *Pie XII et le IIIe Reich*. Hochhuth imagined Gerstein at the Vatican, informing Pius XII of what he had seen at Belzec. The Pontiff was incredulous, and Hochhuth concluded: "This Pope is a criminal."

[13] See IMT, Vol. IV, pp. 500f. The first article of the concordat stipulated: "The German Reich guarantees freedom profession and public practice of the Catholic religion. It recognizes the right of the Catholic Church, within the limits of the laws which are applicable to all, to manage and regulate its own affairs independently and, within the framework of its own competence, to publish laws and ordinances binding on its members."

[14] See also IMT, Vol. XIV, p. 405; the words are those of Baldur von Schirach: "In 1933 or 1934-but I think it was as early as 1933-Reich Bishop Müller and the Protestant Bishop Oberheidt approached me on their own initiative and proposed that I incorporate the Protestant youth organizations into the Hitler Youth. Of course I was very happy about

In any case, to contribute in any way to tarnishing the image of the Catholic Church (and only the Catholic Church!) and of Pope Pius XII, by casting serious suspicion on both, is, in my opinion, to howl with the wolves.

b. Pastor Niemöller, Gerstein's Friend?

In 1938, after a few weeks in a concentration camp for involvement in a monarchist plot, Gerstein was released. Alain Decaux writes (p. 132):

> *"He is free, but painfully afflicted* […]. *His own persecuted Church can no longer help him* […]. *Pastor Niemöller has been thrown into a concentration camp."*

Could Gerstein have counted on the support of his Church and, in particular, that of Martin Niemöller? Nothing is less certain. At the time, the pastor was indeed in the Dachau Camp, not because he was a Protestant, but because he had been engaged in propaganda against the state. Moreover, as a "personal prisoner of the Führer," he was given preferential treatment, including permission to continue his scientific research.[15] After the war, in 1946, Elfriede Gerstein, wife of the former SS officer and a pastor's daughter, wrote to Pastor Niemöller. Little did she know that her husband had been dead for around ten months. Kurt Gerstein had introduced himself in some of his confessions as a "friend of Niemöller."[16] Frau Gerstein asked the famous pastor for help in finding her husband and testifying on his behalf, as he was being brought before a denazification chamber. Here

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that proposal and accepted it. […]. Even today I still believe that with the voluntary incorporation of the Protestant youth into the Youth State, Müller acted in accordance with the will of the majority of the Protestant youth themselves; and in my later activity as Youth Leader I frequently met former leaders from the Protestant youth organizations, who had leading positions with me and worked in my youth organization with great enthusiasm and devotion." A. Decaux is therefore mistaken in writing that, as National Socialism was "fundamentally anti-Christian," "all independent youth movements" were dissolved (by implication: by authority) and that, as a result, "800,000 young Christians" would "automatically" find themselves "integrated into Hitler's Youth" (p. 128).

[15] Replying to Alfred Rosenberg, who had asked him about the affair, Adolf Hitler declared: "I have asked only one binding statement from Niemöller – that he, as a clergyman, will not challenge the State. He has refused to give that and hence I cannot set him free. Apart from that, I ordered that he receive the most decent treatment possible, that he, being a heavy smoker, receive the best cigars, and that he have the means for carrying on all learned studies, if he wants to do this." (IMT, Vol. XI, p. 514). [Martin Niemöller was a theologian. The reference to "scientific research" is obviously the result of a mistranslation. On Niemöller and his imprisonment during the war, see Frédéric Rognon, *Martin Niemöller, prisonnier personnel de Hitler*, éditions Ampelos, Maisons-Laffitte, 2020; editor's remark].

[16] See, for example, in version T VI of his "Confessions," Kurt Gerstein speaks of Dr. Dibelius from Berlin, "a close friend of my friend Pastor Niemöller" (see p. 119).

is an excerpt from Niemöller's cautious reply to the justifiably grieving wife:[17]

"Budingen/Hessen, 24 May 1946

Dear Mrs Gerstein,

[…] *Personally, I cannot do anything in this matter, because I lack any impression of your husband's evolution since 1937. I could not, with any chance of success, validly present my impression as my personal persuasion* […]*."*

It is easy to conclude that Kurt Gerstein lied when he claimed to be a friend of pastor Niemöller. Perhaps he had approached him a few times before the war? On the other hand, in 1938, Gerstein, interned and ill, received effective and unexpected support from… the Gestapo. Alain Decaux is correct to write:

"[…] *a Gestapo agent took pity on him. Following his intervention, Kurt was released six and a half weeks after his arrest."*

Was it pity that motivated this Gestapo agent? Or was it the desire to manipulate a confused and fragile man?

On 26 June 1945, Major Beckhardt of the ORCG (*Office de recherche des criminels de guerre*) interrogated prisoner Gerstein:[18]

*"**Q:** How were you able to join this organization* [Waffen SS]*, after having been yourself arrested several times by the Gestapo?*
***A:** All I did was accept the offer made to me by the subalterns of the Gestapo when I was arrested for the second time."*

Assuming that Kurt Gerstein was telling the truth, we can deduce that "God's spy" (Pierre Joffroy's words) had "acquaintances" in a wide variety of circles…

c. Euthanasia

On 1 September 1939, the government of the Third Reich promulgated an order giving full powers to the head of the Führer's Chancellery, Philipp Bouhler, and to the Reich Commissioner for Public Health, Dr. Karl Brandt:[19]

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[17] See the facsimile of this letter reproduced on p. 372.

[18] A reproduction of this interrogation protocol starts on p. 347.

[19] See IMT, Vol. XXVI, p. 169 (Document PS-360) and Vol. IV, p. 55. See also Raul Hilberg, *La Destruction des Juifs d'Europe*, Fayard, Paris, 1988, p. 756. The author states that this order was "predated to 1 September 1939," which is confirmed when we read Hans Lammers's deposition in Nuremberg on 8 April 1946; he stated that "this idea occur[r]ed to Hitler in the autumn of 1939 for the first time," i.e. after 1 September (see IMT, Vol. XI, p. 61).

> *"of enlarging the authority of certain physicians to be designated by name in such a manner that persons who, according to human judgment, are incurable can, upon a most careful diagnosis of their condition of sickness, be accorded a mercy death."*

This order particularly concerned the mentally ill. Of course, it's legitimate to have differing convictions on this very serious subject (remember that in France, the issue of euthanasia is on the agenda: several left-wing parliamentarians are calling for a debate in the National Assembly). In any case, it cannot be settled by government decree, even in wartime. But the question must be asked without *preconceived ideas*. In Germany, the religious authorities protested, and the order was rescinded on 24 August 1941.[20]

Alain Decaux writes:

> *"Kurt Gerstein finds himself directly affected by this horror: one of his sisters-in-law has been committed to a mental institution. The family learns of her unexpected death, and receives the urn containing her ashes."* (p. 135)

Bertha Ebeling, as she died, was not Kurt's sister-in-law, but that of his brother Karl.[21] I wrote to Frau Gerstein about this young girl, and she simply replied that Bertha had been committed since puberty, and that she was incurable.

On his way back from the cemetery, Kurt Gerstein rants, "And they kill in cold blood!", before adding, "as if by a logical sequence," writes A. Decaux: "I'm going to join the Waffen SS […] I'll be able to find out what's true about these rumors and what's really going on in the SS" (we are in February 1941).

This is a surprising story: the Waffen SS divisions' mission was to fight on the front line. They were elite units that had nothing to do with the implementation of the euthanasia decree, even though auxiliary services to the Waffen SS existed, such as, for example, the hygiene service to which

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[20] As for the protests, A. Decaux rightly mentions those of Pastor Braume and Bishop von Galen of Münster (pp. 134f.). See also the letter from the Bishop of Limburg to the Minister of Justice, dated 13 August 1941, which reads: "The population cannot understand that systematic actions which, under article 211 of the German Penal Code, are punishable by death […] should be pursued in this way" (see IMT, vol. XXVI, p. 167, Document PS-615). On the discontinuation of the euthanasia program, see François Bédarida, *Le Nazisme et le génocide. Histoire et enjeux*, Éd. Nathan, Paris, 1989, p. 23. According to the author, however, euthanasia of the incurably ill continued, albeit on a smaller scale…

[21] A. Decaux will probably have been misled by… K. Gerstein himself, who, in four versions of his confessions (T IV: 90; T V: p. 94; T VI: 111), then on 26 June 1945, before Major Beckhardt, declared: "My sister-in-law, Bertha Ebeling, was among the victims" (see p. 135). As we can see, K. Gerstein was accustomed to fabricating even the most minor details. [In T III (p. 77), he correctly states "a sister-in-law by marriage"; editor's remark.]

Kurt Gerstein was assigned after his enlistment (he had engineering skills and, above all, suffered from a serious diabetic condition that excluded him from bearing arms). It's also worth noting that at Nuremberg, while the judges charged the SS with numerous crimes, they did not claim that the SS had taken part in any program to euthanize the terminally ill.[22]

It is therefore hard to understand why Kurt Gerstein would have reacted to Bertha Ebeling's death by joining the Waffen SS.

In his book, moreover, A. Decaux notes that "the circumstances of Gerstein's involvement in the SS are more complex than he himself has expressed" (p. 136). This scholar recalls that Kurt Gerstein joined the NSDAP "as early as May 1933" (p. 127), and that, following his arrest in 1936 for distributing religious pamphlets hostile to the state, he wrote to the party's supreme court (pp. 130f.):

> *"I feel deeply bound to the movement, and have the ardent will to serve it, as well as the work of Adolf Hitler, with all my strength, with all my means and even at the cost of my life."*

A. Decaux does not reject the hypothesis that this letter was sincere.

Decaux then notes that Gerstein then published, at his own expense, religious pamphlets containing "no criticism of the regime" (p. 131); that he gave "numerous lectures" in National-Socialist Germany (p. 131); that, after the Munich Conference in late September 1938, he wrote to his father (p. 133):

> *"Since 1936, I have considerably modified my circle of friends to count as such only those who fundamentally approved of National Socialism."*

Decaux mentions that Gerstein asked to be reinstated in the NSDAP in August 1940 (p. 133); that the Hitler Youth "did not underestimate [his] qualities as a leader and trainer," so much so that they offered to write "under their aegis, books for teenagers" (p. 134)…

These facts don't fit in well with the thesis of "God's spy," the anti-Nazi who joined the Waffen SS to denounce its crimes. Yet A. Decaux wants to believe it. He writes (pp. 136f.):

> *"Gerstein joined the SS in order to be able to testify. A letter provides decisive proof of this. He enlisted on 10 March 1941. As early as 26 April, he wrote to his wife: 'It's a peculiar existence I have to lead… Many things remind me strangely of Welzheim* [camp where he had been interned before the war]*... However, I don't regret having come here. The vistas are wider now, the inner clarity greater. I often think of Nietzsche's well-known phrase, which I used to quote frequently* ['Living dangerously'…]*... More clearly than before I now distinguish the essential."*

[22] See IMT, Vol. I (judgment), p. 247.

Personally, I don't see how this letter could prove that its author had joined the Waffen SS in order to testify about crimes. Rather, it seems to me to have been written by a man in search of an inner truth ("inner clarity"), and who seems to have found an organization likely to help him in his quest. In the Waffen SS, recruits didn't just learn how to fight; they were also given more general courses in history, politics, ethnology…

d. What Was the Final Solution?

On 31 July 1941, Hermann Göring ordered Heydrich "to make all necessary preparations to organize the complete solution of the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe."[23] A. Decaux writes (p. 138):

> *"As you can see, the words used – you have to examine them with a magnifying glass – are a complete solution. Already, it's a lot. Soon, a more radical adjective will be used."*

Obviously, the historian suggests the adjective "final." Final solution! Let me point out that in all German-language dictionaries published before, during and after the Second World War, we read: *Endlösung* = final solution.[24] There is no murderous connotation in the German word.

The complete, final or definitive solution advocated by Hermann Göring was the forced relocation of European Jews to the Polish-Soviet area, from which at least some of them originated.[25]

We can be indignant about the wartime deportation of people suspected of hostile intentions towards the German army, but it's a risky extrapolation to see in these measures a desire for physical extermination.

To convince his readers that this was indeed a physical extermination, A. Decaux cites the recent discovery of a German researcher, Christian

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[23] See IMT, Vol. XXVI, Document PS-710, pp. 266f.

[24] See, for example, the *Dictionnaire allemand-français* by F. Bertaux and E. Lepointe, revised edition by Pierre Bertaux, professor at the Sorbonne. (Hachette, Paris, 1968, p. 338).

[25] At Nuremberg, for example, the former head of the Reich Chancellery, Hans Heinrich Lammers, testified that he had never heard that the final solution of the Jewish question meant the extermination of the Jews. Here, for example, is the dialogue that took place between him and Alfred Rosenberg's lawyer. Dr. Thoma (IMT, Vol. XI, p. 53):

> *"Dr. Thoma:* […] *I am now putting this question to you: Did Himmler ever tell you that the final solution of the Jewish problem would take place through the extermination of the Jews?*
> *LAMMERS: That was never mentioned. He talked only about evacuation.*
> *DR. THOMA: He talked only about evacuation?*
> *LAMMERS: Yes, only about evacuation.*
> *DR. THOMA: When did you hear that these 5 million Jews had been exterminated?*
> *LAMMERS: I heard of that here a while ago."*

Gerlach. He unearthed Himmler's diary from the Moscow archives. On 18 December 1941, it reads:

> *"Jewish question. To be exterminated as partisans* [*Judenfrage / als Partisanen auszurotten*]*"*

C. Gerlach hypothesizes that the order to exterminate the Jews was given by Hitler on 12 December 1941, during a meeting with the most important leaders of the NSDAP.[26] In support of this, we recall that, in his diary, Joseph Goebbels wrote on 13 December:[26]

> *"As far as the Jewish question is concerned, the Führer is determined to make a clean sweep. He prophesied* [in January 1939] *that if, once again, the Jews succeeded in starting a world war, it would be they who would be annihilated. These were not empty words. The world war is here, so the annihilation of the Jews must be the necessary consequence. This question must be treated without sentiment. Our compassion is not for the Jews, but for our German people. If the German people have to sacrifice another 160,000 victims on the Eastern Front, then the instigators of this conflict must pay with their lives."*

For my part, I'll leave it to those who wish to quarrel about these remarks. Mere remarks, however violent, prove nothing except the irritation of those who made them. On 12 December 1941, Germany had been forced to fight on two fronts for several months. A few days earlier, moreover, the United States, with its colossal military potential, had entered the war alongside England and the USSR. All this did not augur well for the future. As for the influential Jews, who had made no secret of their responsibility for starting the war, they were constantly preaching the destruction of the Reich, including its population.[27] So it's understandable that, at a conference with senior National Socialist dignitaries, Hitler should have made some harsh remarks about the Jews.[28] But it's a huge leap to deduce that on

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[26] See Nicolas Weill's article "L'ordre d'exterminer les juifs d'Europe aurait été donné par Hitler en décembre 1941" (*Le Monde*, 24 January 1998, p. 10).

[27] The 1941 book by American Jew Theodore N. Kaufman, titled *Germany Must Perish*, advocated, in addition to the dismemberment of Germany, the elimination of Germanism and its carriers through forced sterilization of the population. On the Jewish declarations of war on Germany, see Friedrich Lenz, *Zauber um Dr. Schacht* (self-published, 1954). F. Lenz's work was partially reprinted and published in French in Wilhelm Stäglich's *Le Mythe d'Auschwitz* (La Vieille Taupe, Paris, 1986). See also *Le Mensonge d'Auschwitz par l'illustration* (VHO, Antwerp, 1998), Vol. II: "Explanation des illustrations," pp. 1-3.

[28] As early as 1946, Julius Streicher, whom the Nuremberg judges reproached for his violent anti-Semitic editorials published in *Der Stürmer*, had declared: "But still I admit that when I saw lying before me on the table declarations from the Jewish front, many declarations saying, 'the German nation has to be destroyed; bomb the cities, do not spare women, children, or old men' – if one has declarations like these in front of one, it

12 December 1941, Hitler ordered the physical extermination of Europe's Jews. We need to distinguish between words that may have been spoken at a conference or written in a newspaper, and a far-reaching goal that would have been achieved by any means, including the most criminal.

As far as Joseph Goebbels is concerned, and since we're in the realm of diary entries, we can quote what he wrote on 30 May 1942, five months after December 1941. After explaining that Hitler shared his view that sending the Jews to Siberia was a mistake, because the Spartan life they would lead there would make them a virile race, the propaganda chief wrote:[29]

> *"This is why* [Hitler] *would prefer to settle them in Central Africa.* [The Jews] *would live in a climate that would not make them an energetic and dynamic people* […]. *In any case, it is the Führer's aim to empty Western Europe of all Jews."*

This proves that, for Goebbels, the "definitive solution" to the Jewish problem did not mean physical extermination. This fact, moreover, is confirmed by the testimony of Hans Fritzsche, former head of department at the Ministry of Propaganda. Asked in Nuremberg whether he had known where the deported Jews were being transported, he replied:

> *"Dr. Goebbels told me that they were taken to reservations in Poland. The suspicion that they were taken to concentration camps, or that they were even being murdered, never arose."* (IMT, Vol. XVII, p. 177)

Later, when the Russians, having retaken Kharkov, organized a show trial against several Germans on charges of murdering Jews with gas vans, Fritzsche again went to Dr. Goebbels for information (*ibid*., p. 181):

> *"*[…] *Dr. Goebbels explicitly informed me that the gas vans mentioned in the Russian legal proceeding were pure invention and that there was no actual proof to support it."*

As you can see, when you stay within the realm of what is said, it is possible to make someone say whatever you want…

Based on Himmler's diary, it is claimed that the National Socialists exterminated several million Jews in what was the greatest planned crime in history. Hundreds of documents (projects, budgets, orders, etc.) should therefore remain, attesting to its preparation, and enabling a precise chronology to be established. Yet more than fifty years after the fact, conformist authors are reduced to quoting four words (*Judenfrage* / *als Partisanen*

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is possible that things will come from one's pen such as I have often written." (IMT, Vol. XII, p. 377)

[29] See also Jean-Marie Boisdefeu, *La Controverse sur l'extermination des Juifs par les Allemands. Corrigenda et addenda*, VHO, Antwerp, 1998, p. 10.

auszurotten) written in a diary, the meaning of which is not clearly defined (N. Weill speaks of a "coded phrase"), in order to declare that they allow us "to find the beginnings of an answer" (so said N. Weill) to the agonizing question of chronology. Proof that, when it comes to genocide, historians are faced with a total void.

e. Hair and Slippers

Cutting the hair of women and girls on arrival at the concentration camp was a humiliating measure. But it was also a necessary measure in times of epidemics, when the population in and around the camps was ravaged by typhus, of which lice are the main propagator. "One louse – Your death!" ("*Ein Laus – Dein Tod!*"), proclaimed the posters posted in the camps.[30]

During his visit to the Belzec Camp, Gerstein asked an SS officer on duty if the cut-off hair was used. It was used "to make some special things for the submarines," the SS man replied.[31] After the war, a document was found which specified that the hair was used to make slippers for submarine crews and felt stockings for the *Reichsbahn* (Reich Railway).[32]

Assuming that this document is authentic, and that it does indeed confirm Gerstein's statements (which V. Reynouard disputes, see appendix, p. 479), I don't understand why A. Decaux wonders (p. 153):

> *"How could* [Gerstein] *have imagined a detail which, through the production of a document subsequently discovered, turned out to be accurate?"*

In fact, Gerstein didn't have to imagine anything. He simply repeated what an SS soldier on duty told him. This soldier was well-informed and had no reason to withhold information that was not secret.

As for Vincent Reynouard, whether he is right or wrong on this minor point, the fact remains that the use of long cut-off hair is no more a war crime, let alone a crime against humanity, than the collection of non-ferrous metals and the unbolting of bronze statues for military purposes throughout occupied Europe.

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[30] See, for example, *Le Mensonge d'Auschwitz par l'illustration*, tome I: "Les illustrations" (VHO, Antwerp, 1998), cliché No. 60. See also Jean-Claude Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1989, p. 54.

[31] See, for example, the first version of K. Gerstein's "Confessions": "Then women, girls to the hairdressers – have the hair cut with one or two cuts, which disappears into big potato sacks, to make some special things for the submarines (linings, etc.), tells me the SS Unterscharfuehrer on duty." (see here, p. 63).

[32] A. Decaux quotes a large extract (p. 153), but without mentioning the source. This is Document USSR-511, used by the Soviet prosecution at the Nuremberg trials. See IMT, Vol. XX, p. 353. See V. Reynouard's article in the appendix, starting on p. 476.

III. The Swedish Baron von Otter: a Cautious Diplomat and a Very Late Witness

Von Otter, a young Swedish diplomat stationed in Berlin, met Kurt Gerstein by chance on the Warsaw-Berlin night train on 20 August 1942.[33] Gerstein didn't let the opportunity pass him by. With an excitement that worried Otter, he reported to the diplomat from a neutral country what he had seen two days earlier in the Belzec Camp.

In an article published in 1994 and already mentioned, Martine Gozlan (who obviously didn't do her homework) wrote: "Von Otter would immediately write a report which his chiefs would not follow up" (*L'Événement du jeudi*, 2 to 8 June 1994, p. 77). However, thanks to Alain Decaux, who asked the Swedish baron a precise question on his television program, we finally learned in 1983 – only in 1983 – that von Otter had made no written report to his foreign minister; he had only spoken of his meeting.[34]

In Stockholm, Gerstein's comments were seen as akin to the rumors spreading at the time about the systematic massacres of Jewish deportees in the concentration camps of Eastern Europe.[35] In all wars, there are rumors, and they are often started by the opposing side. Sweden, like other neutral countries, was careful not to fall into the traps set by one side or the other. As for von Otter, he took no initiative, either during or after the war, to spread Gerstein's "revelations."

In London, the War Crimes Commission learned of SS officer Gerstein's confessions in the days or weeks following the German surrender. The name of the Swede von Otter was spotted, and Swedish diplomats in

[33] "Waiting in vain for a free bunk [on the train], I met the secretary of the Swedish legation, Baron von Otter. With all the bunks occupied, we spent the night in the corridor of the sleeping car" (first version of K. Gerstein's "Confessions," see p. 66). This was indeed a chance meeting. Consequently, Léon Poliakov "romanticizes" when he writes: "[Gerstein] then tried to alert the world [to what he had seen in the camps], and indeed succeeded in contacting a Swedish diplomat, Baron von Otter" (see *Bréviaire de la haine*, Calmann-, Paris, 1979, p. 220, note).

[34] "AD: Have you shared [Gerstein's revelations] with your government? Did you do so in writing or orally? VO: […] I reported to the ambassador [of Sweden in Berlin] in some detail, asking if I should make a written report. He told me not to make a written report, but to report on the events during a visit to Stockholm, which I did a few weeks later." (A. Decaux, p. 160).

[35] The press in Allied countries was quick to echo and even amplify these rumors. On this subject, see. Arthur R. Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* (Institute for Historical Review, 1989 edition), pp. 73ff.; see also the interrogation of Julius Streicher at the Nuremberg trial by Lieutenant-Colonel Griffith-Jones in *IMT*, Vol. XII, starting on p. 362. Neither the Vatican, nor the USA, nor England gave any credence to these rumors (see A.R. Butz, "Context and Perspective in the Holocaust Controversy," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 3, No. 4, Winter 1982, pp. 371-405; now as Supplement 2 of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*).

London were questioned about it. It wasn't until 7 August 1945 that a man named Lagerfelt, a colleague and friend of von Otter, wrote an aide-memoire recounting the meeting between Gerstein and a "neutral" diplomat.[36] He wrote to his friend, who had become embassy secretary in Helsinki:

> *"after careful consideration, I have given* […] *the Foreign Office an aide-memoire on the case (in which your name is not mentioned, however)."* (See p. 395)

The aide-memoire, which was an extremely cautiously worded character testimonial in favor of Kurt Gerstein, came too late. The former SS officer had been found dead in his cell at the Cherche-Midi military prison on 25 July 1945.

Von Otter, for his part, remained completely silent about the affair until 1964. That year, the Swedish diplomat was approached by a German journalist for an interview and agreed. The article appeared in the *Rheinischer Merkur* on 24 July 1964. Von Otter doesn't tell us much; above all, he seems to have been very worried about Gerstein's attitude, who appeared to be at his wit's end, sobbing, burying his face in his hands and talking out loud in the corridor of the sleeper that was taking them both to Berlin.[37] Two years later, in 1966, he was visited by Pierre Joffroy, who was preparing his book *God's Spy: The Passion of Kurt Gerstein*, came to interview him at the Swedish Embassy in London. The diplomat simply said (P. Joffroy, *L'éspion de dieu*, pp. 16f.):

> *"At that time* [1942]*, I was very cautious. I was wary of provocateurs.* [Gerstein] *probably told me about the gas he was delivering, the sabotage he was doing."*

Note the adverb "probably" and the imprecision of the terms used. As I wrote: "The Gerstein affair does not seem to have been very much on the Swedish diplomat's mind between 1942 and 1966…." (see here, p. 390). However, from 1966 until his death, Baron von Otter was a privileged and repeat witness, called upon by the media and summoned before the courts to confound Kurt Gerstein's contemptuous critics. For the last twenty years of his life, he seemed to relish the role he was made to play. Doesn't Alain Decaux's chapter overemphasize von Otter's role in attesting the reliability of Gerstein's confessions? I'm convinced it does.

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[36] See a translation of this letter starting on p. 393. Lagerfelt didn't even have the audacity (sic) to write the word "Swedish."

[37] See also Saul Friedländer, *Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, Castermann, [Paris], 1967, pp. 114-116.

IV. The Peregrinations of Hydrogen Cyanide

Most versions of the "confessions" read:[38]

> *"On 8 June 1942, SS Sturmbannführer Guenther of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, unknown to me, entered my duty room in civilian clothes. He ordered me to take 100 kgs of prussic acid* [hydrogen cyanide] *from a truck and go to a location known only to the driver."*

But it wasn't until mid-August that Gerstein set off on his journey.[39] Why the delay? Was there no urgency in carrying out an order from a superior? Alain Decaux, perhaps surprised by the discrepancy between Günther's order and K. Gerstein's departure for Poland, via Prague, wrote: "at the beginning of August 1942" instead of "8 June 1942" (p. 141).

The hydrogen cyanide was to be taken from the Kolin potash plant near Prague. Kurt Gerstein had come from Berlin by car with a driver. A truck was provided for loading.

Kurt Gerstein had a passenger, an Obersturmbannführer, Professor Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel. Pfannenstiel was on his way to Lublin to inspect drinking water and sewage works. As there was a free seat in the car, he asked Gerstein for permission to travel with him to Belzec, near Lublin.[40] Pfannenstiel, to whom we will return later, was not Gerstein's superior, despite his high rank. He had nothing to do with the mission with which the Obersturmführer had been entrusted.

Both car and truck departed for Kolin. When questioned in Paris on 19 July 1945 by an examining magistrate at the military tribunal, Gerstein stated that he himself had fixed the quantity of hydrogen cyanide to be loaded onto the truck in Kolin.[41] This presumably was the reason why, in three versions of his "confessions" and during his interrogations in France, he mentions 260 kg instead of 100 kg.[42]

The SS officer specifies that he had managed, through deliberately awkward questions and answers, to imply to the Czech factory staff that this chemical was intended for killing human beings.[43]

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[38] See here on p. 61 (T I) and p. 69 (T II); p. 78 (T III).

[39] "We set off […]. Just now, on 17 August 1942 […]" (T I, as before; similar T II and III).

[40] "As there was still room in the car, I had taken […] Pfannenstiel with me" (T I-III, as before).

[41] "I myself decided it by taking into account the load capacity of the vehicle" (see here, p. 142).

[42] These are T IV, p. 90: "to immediately procure 260 kg of prussic acid"; T V (p. 95) and T VI (p. 112).

[43] See T IV of his "confessions": "At Collin, I had made it understood that the acid was intended to kill people" (see p. 91). See also the account of his interrogation by the French justice system: "I knew about the plan to use cyanide and was determined […] to

We've already reached the point of incoherence. Gerstein claims to be under intense surveillance, not least by a judge who, a few years earlier, had ordered his expulsion from the National-Socialist Party.[44] A friend of his who met him in 1942 said: "His constant fear of being discovered had put his nerves completely on edge."[45] The SS officer even fears for his family in the event that he is unmasked.[46] And yet, despite this, he manages to spread rumors among Kolin's non-German staff about the massacres taking place in the camps. Then he had the truck fully loaded, even though he had been instructed to obtain only 100 kg of the chemical.[47]

If Günther really did give a delivery order to K. Gerstein, the addressee was General Globocnik, who commanded the Lublin sector. It is unthinkable that he should not have been informed in advance. Perhaps, moreover, he himself was the requester?

However, when the convoy arrived, Globocnik (although he had told K. Gerstein that his mission was to change the diesel gas chambers into hydrogen-cyanide gas chambers[48]) didn't give a damn about… hydrogen cyanide. In any case, what luck for K. Gerstein. He did not bring the poison to the Belzec Camp. To the aforementioned Parisian examining magistrate, the accused declared:[49]

> *"On leaving, the cyanide was put in forty-five steel bottles. On the way,* [under the pretext of a leak,] *one of them was emptied by me with all the necessary precautions, because it was dangerous. The forty-four bottles which remained were not taken to the camp of BELCEC, but were concealed by the driver and myself at about twelve hundred meters from the camp."*

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make known to the workers who manufactured it that this product was intended to kill human beings" (p. 136).

44 "the NSDAP judge who had pronounced my exclusion, made great efforts to hunt and persecute me" (see T I, p. 61; see also T II, p. 69).

45 Quoted by A. Decaux, p. 138.

46 See the letter he wrote to his wife on 26 May 1945: "I could tell you only the minimum, because, if things turned out badly, they would have been able to blackmail you" (see p. 134).

47 "I took such a large quantity only to utilize to the maximum the load capacity of the vehicle. (see p. 142).

48 "[In Lublin] Globocnik was waiting for us […]. Globocnik told us: 'This thing is one of the most secret there is. […] Your second duty: to change our gas chambers, now running on exhaust from an old 'Diesel' engine, to something more toxic and faster, that is, prussic acid" (see T I, starting on p. 61).

49 Interrogation of K. Gerstein before the military courts on 19 July 1945 (see p. 140). According to W. Pfannenstiel's testimony, K. Gerstein had told the professor that this hydrogen cyanide was in gaseous form. W. Pfannenstiel did not verify this.

From a man who feels hunted down and is afraid of being discovered, this kind of initiative may seem crazy. Even crazier since, by Gerstein's own admission, the truck driver was an unknown member of the Reich Security Main Office,[50] and there was an unexpected guest in the car: Dr. Pfannenstiel.

Kurt Gerstein never explained what the good professor was doing all this time. It is safe to assume that this bedtime story, let alone a seated one, gave him the opportunity to take a snooze. This was the best way to avoid seeing anything, while his companions unloaded more than 40 bottles (260 kg) of hydrogen cyanide from the truck and hid them, just 1.2 km from the camp, under a thicket or in a ditch later covered with branches.

As for the driver, wasn't he in danger of denouncing Gerstein? Questioned on this point on 19 July 1945, he answered in the negative, on the grounds that the driver "asked nothing better than to see me rid the car of what for him was a danger" (see p. 142). This explanation is disconcertingly childish. Having left Prague, the driver had driven over 500 km with his dangerous load to arrive near Belzec. With just one kilometer to go, he mistakenly agreed to empty his truck.

To further persuade the French judge that he was risking nothing by sabotaging the orders, K. Gerstein added (see pp. 142, 144):

> *"On the other hand, the authorities of BELCEC did not agree at all with receiving the cyanide, having already another method of extermination, that is to say, a Diesel engine with toxic exhaust.* […] *The camp commandant had a great fear of cyanide, and he was not agreeable at all that it should be used."*

However, according to the SS officer, the order to transform the gas chambers so that they would kill more quickly had been given to General Globocnik by… Hitler himself.[51] From then on, the Belzec camp authorities could only have complied, willy-nilly and regardless of the camp commandant's fear of cyanide, because they would have known that sooner or later Hitler would have checked, or had checked, that his orders had been carried out.

Faced with all these inconsistencies, the French examining magistrate questioned the accused Gerstein (see p. 144):

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[50] "Before the journey, I did not know the driver who was to drive me. This driver belonged to the Reich Security Main Office; I lost touch with him afterwards." (*Ibid.*, here p. 141).

[51] "Professor Pfannenstiel: But what does the Führer say? Then Glob[ocnik]: Faster, faster, finish all the action" (see T I, p. 62).

> *"You were charged with a mission. You tell us of not having fulfilled it at all. Likewise, you tell us that the commandant of the camp where you have to complete this mission did not want you to complete it at all. You stated this morning that, on your return to Berlin, you did not report to anyone on the result of your mission. We have every reason to think that such things were not exactly customary in the German armed forces."*

Kurt Gerstein having become entangled in dubious explanations, the judge returned to the charge and declared (see p. 145):

> *"*[…] *you visited three camps, you were received in audience by a general who, granted the purpose of your mission, believed himself bound to recount to you even the intentions of the two great Nazi chiefs.*
> *How can you persist in making us believe:*
> *1. that you did not even accomplish the purpose of your mission;*
> *2. that you reported to no one on this;*
> *3. that no one moreover questioned you at all on this subject?"*

Gerstein simply answered (*ibid*.):

> *"Hauptmann WIRTH had such a personal position in relation to HITLER and HIMMLER that he was able to tell me not to concern myself further with this matter, and in the circumstances I obeyed him. That is what I have to reply."*

Then he added:

> *"No one interested himself in what became of the cyanide."*

This statement was so surprising that the examining magistrate wrote "(sic!)" after the last word.

It is worth noting that neither in his "confessions" nor during his interrogations did Gerstein use the expression Zyklon B. He knew full well what Zyklon B was: a powerful insecticide, which he was in charge of supplying to the camps. Zyklon B comes in pellets of porous material soaked with liquid hydrogen cyanide. The whole is contained in metal cans, the image of which is familiar from photographs widely published after the war. Paradoxically, the SS officer attached invoices for Zyklon B for the Oranienburg and Auschwitz camps to his confessions.

In Nuremberg, Kurt Gerstein's confessions were not accepted as evidence, or at least not used. Perhaps as a consolation, only the invoices were accepted.[52]

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[52] The Zyklon B invoices for Oranienburg and Auschwitz were filed as PS-1553. Gerstein's confessions were attached to this bundle of documents (see IMT, Vol. VI, p. 332f.). However, not only were the former SS officer's texts never read out at the hearings, but in Volume XXVII (Documents, pp. 340-342), only two invoices are listed as PS-1553; there is no longer any mention of "confessions."

It should be noted, however, that their authenticity is questionable. On the facsimiles reproduced here (pp. 339f.), we note that the documents are made out in the name of K. Gerstein. However, it is not customary for a company of Degesch's size to issue invoices in the name of a junior officer. The client was the Waffen SS hygiene services, not Gerstein.[53]

On the other hand, these invoices are not numbered. They all read "3830," but this is a handwritten inscription made after the war (in Nuremberg or by the Israeli Police?). In all accounting systems, however simple, every invoice bears a number, which is essential for registration. The customer receives the original, while a duplicate is kept by the company's accounting department.

There are many hypotheses as to how they were written. Did Gerstein (who liked to play pranks, see P. Joffroy's book on the subject) steal a few blank copies from Degesch one day, and use them later to play a trick? While he was in prison, did the Allied authorities bring him blank invoices recovered from the firm's premises to fill in, thus enabling his "confessions" to be appended to "exhibits"? Or did they themselves fabricate the forgeries?

In any case, a search of Degesch's accounts would have revealed the dubious authenticity of these documents, but it's certainly too late for that now. The IMT was careful not to order such an investigation.

Note also that these invoices read "Attention, without warning agent" ("*Vorsicht, ohne Warnstoff*"). Some have deduced that this Zyklon B without warning agent was used to kill people gently, without making them cough, cry, etc. But, in that case, why would was it also sent to Oranienburg, where, even according to the most orthodox authors, no one was gassed?

The forger who produced these invoices probably didn't imagine concentration camps without homicidal gas chambers.

As for Alain Decaux, he mentions in his chapter neither the rejection of the "Gerstein Report," nor the acceptance of the Zyklon B invoices by the IMT.

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[53] In order to explain this strangeness, Gerstein wrote: "I had them written in my name for – as I said – discretion, in truth to be somewhat free about the disposition and to better make the toxic acid disappear. I never paid for the delivery." (See T I, p. 67; similar T II, p. 75; T III, p. 85; T V, p. 105; T VI, p. 120). However, it is surprising that the Degesch accounting department accepted this unusual procedure.

V. The Destiny of a Professor of Hygiene at the University of Marburg: A Lifeline Named Pfannenstiel

This medical doctor held a rank in the SS that corresponded to his position as a university professor. He was Obersturmbannführer, lieutenant-colonel. Was he a member of the NSDAP? Certainly, since, as an important official of the Third Reich, he could not avoid belonging to the party. Born in 1890, Pfannenstiel was 52 in 1942, when he accidentally accompanied Kurt Gerstein to Belzec. In 1945, he was taken prisoner by the Americans. The discovery of his name in Gerstein's confessions earned him fifth place (after Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann and Günther) on a list of war criminals drawn up by the French (see p. 396).

Questioned for the first time on 30 October 1947, Pfannenstiel spontaneously admitted that he had been Gerstein's traveling companion to Belzec. But he refused to admit that he had witnessed a massacre of Jewish deportees. The judge told him bluntly (see p. 398):

> *"The beginning of your story is good, then it gets worse. Would you like to go over your story one more time?"*

It is hard to say more clearly that it was expected of him to confirm Gerstein's statements.[54] As Pfannenstiel maintained his position, he returned to captivity. For almost three years, he was subjected to repeated interrogations. The professor had five children, the eldest in his twenties and the others in their infancy. He feared being handed over to Polish-Soviet judges. The only way left for him to protect and reunite with his family was to claim the *essential* truth of the *Gerstein Bericht*. This he did on 6 June 1950. Five weeks later, on 12 July, he was free and no longer considered a war criminal. All he lost was his position at the University of Marburg. He soon embarked on a new career in spa treatments and bacteriology. He became a respected bourgeois of the Federal Republic of Germany.

About the Swedish diplomat Otter, I wrote that, from 1966 until his death, for more than twenty years, he was a permanent and privileged wit-

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[54] These methods were widely used after the war. On 14 April 1948, before a military tribunal, the witness Helmuth Schneider stated, "Mr. von Halle [who was in charge of interrogating me] asked me before a record had been made, 'Are you prepared to make a proper statement?' With that, I was very astonished because as a normal person, equipped with my five senses, I was capable of making a normal statement. Mr von Halle then made me understand that under the word suitable he had understood the word usable. I said I didn't know how usable my statement was, but that I was going to tell the truth. Mr. von Halle then pointed out that he had the opportunity and the means to make me make usable statements, and this word was pronounced exactly" (see Maurice Bardèche, *Nuremberg II ou les Faux Monnayeurs*, Les Sept Couleurs, Paris, 1950, p. 131f.).

ness. In a very different context, the same was true of Professor Pfannenstiel. Summoned as a witness at trials in 1960, 1961, 1963, 1965 and 1966, he gave his last deposition before the Marburg court in 1970. He was 80 years old then.

Since 1977, advocates of the "politically correct" reading of Gerstein's confessions have been using Pfannenstiel, because without his post-war "confirmation," the former SS man's confessions would already have sunk into ridicule. Yet what would the Marburg professor's testimony prove if it had not been solicited? Only that condemnable and criminal – but fortunately limited – abuses were committed by certain special units of the SS. Can our virtuous orthodox historians name a single army in the world which, over the centuries, has never committed the slightest exaction sparing neither women, children nor the elderly?

However, before the undeniable persecution suffered by the Jews during the Second World War, specific words had never been used to describe the massacres committed by sadistic killers of all nationalities. This time, the words genocide, Holocaust and Shoah were used in succession. Let's take a closer look at these words:

– *Genocide*: this word was coined in 1943 to define the horror of an extermination which, officially, was not discovered until the liberation of the concentration camps in 1945. It is composed of a Greek root, *genos*, translated as race, and a Latin root, *caedare*, meaning to kill. The suffix "-cide" is very common in nouns such as *homicide*, *parricide*, *insecticide*, etc., and in adjectives such as *liberticide* – which applies very well to the Fabius-Gayssot law, promulgated in 1990, which Jacques Toubon (supported by Simone Veil) said, in 1991, set back the law and weakened history.[55]
– *Holocaust*: According to the French six-volume encyclopedia *Larousse* (1977 edition), a holocaust is a religious sacrifice in which the victim is entirely consumed by fire. A figurative example is: to offer one's heart to God as a holocaust. In this word, there is always the notion of *volun-*

[55] "Mr. Jacques Toubon. […] I'm against the offence of revisionism, because I'm for the law and for history, and the offence of revisionism sets back the law and weakens history." (See *Journal officiel de la République française*, Assemblée nationale, 22 June 1991, pp. 3571-3573.) Editor's remark: In 1990, Laurant Fabius (Socialist) and Jean-Claude Gayssot (Communist) successfully introduced a law into the French parliament that "provides for a prison sentence of up to a year as well as a maximum fine of €45,000 for anyone who publicly disputes the reality of one or more 'crimes against humanity' as defined and ruled on, essentially, by the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg in 1945-1946." Robert Faurisson, "The French anti-revisionist law," 9 October 2006; https://robert-faurisson.com/history/the-french-anti-revisionist-law/.

tary sacrifice. The term was not widely used in its current sense until the late 1970s when the Hollywood TV series *Holocaust* was broadcast worldwide.[56]

– *Shoah*: a Hebrew word said to mean catastrophe. It has no place in any vocabulary other than Hebrew. Its mysterious sound is designed to stun goyim confronted with "absolute evil," a "crime unique in history." *Shoah* is the title of a film by Claude Lanzmann released in 1985, for which Menachem Begin, then President of the State of Israel, made 850,000 dollars available to help develop this "project of national interest."[57] Since that year, the word has been widely used in the press and in concentration-camp literature.

After this semantic detour, it's time to return to the Marburg professor. Official historians even claim that Pfannenstiel himself took the initiative of visiting the home of Paul Rassinier, the well-known revisionist historian in Germany at the time. Why? To confirm to him that, despite many exaggerations and implausibilities in his account, Kurt Gerstein had *essentially* told the truth about the gassings at Belzec using a diesel engine. A. Decaux supports this thesis (see his p. 156). As for me, I will now explain why I reject it.

The Rassinier-Pfannenstiel Affair: Chronological Study, 1963-1998

June 1963. Paul Rassinier received a mysterious, unannounced visitor at his home in Asnières.[58] Madame Rassinier, his widow, retained a vivid and very unpleasant memory of the man who barged into their apartment that day.

What did this man have to say? "I was with Gerstein at Belzec. There are many implausibilities and exaggerations in his account, but I can confirm that there was a gassing of Jewish deportees that day in the camp."

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[56] Editor's remark: This is far from true. In 1968, for example, American historian Nora Levin published a book titled *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry, 1933-1945*, T.Y. Crowell Co, New York; *The New York Times* used that term (not capitalized) on numerous occasions since the early 20th Century – prior to the FIRST World War – to denote acts of anti-Jewish persecution in Europe: e.g. 16 May 1903: "We charge the Russian Government with responsibility for the [anti-Jewish] Kishineff massacre. We say it is steeped to the eye in the guilt of this holocaust."

[57] See also. Roger Garaudy, "Les mythes fondateurs de la politique israélienne," *La Vieille Taupe*, No. 2, Winter 1995, pp. 122f.

[58] Editor's remark: See the Addendum to Appendix IV, starting on p. 405.

Rassinier, who had previously consulted toxicologists, wanted to lead his interlocutor into technical territory. The latter evaded the question, refrained from giving any further details, and disappeared as he had come.[59]

July 1963. Paul Rassinier, confused and intrigued, asks his German publisher Grabert if he knows the address of Mr. Pfannenstiel, quoted in Gerstein's confessions. Grabert replied in the affirmative, and Rassinier wrote to W. Pfannenstiel to suggest a meeting.

3 August 1963. W. Pfannenstiel replies to P. Rassinier:[60]

> *"*[…] *I shall be very happy to meet you personally.* […] *Your suppositions as to the origin of his report, which really is a highly incredible fabrication in which the story is completely beyond belief, as well as the circumstances of his death, all seem – equally in my opinion – to be suppositions well justified.* […] *I shall be especially grateful to you for your guarantee to treat my evidence with the maximum of discretion.* […] *to Marburg, a visit from you would be most welcome. From mid-August to the end of September, I shall be at home most of the time.* […]*."*

18 September 1963. New letter from W. Pfannenstiel to P. Rassinier:[61]

> *"*[…] *I shall be in Marburg from today until 27 September.* […] *Your train leaves Frankfurt at 15:31 and arrives at Marburg at 16:52. I shall await you at the central gate* […]*. Should I reserve a room for the night or will you be returning the same evening? I look forward with pleasure to making your acquaintance."*

Late September 1963. Paul Rassinier and Wilhelm Pfannenstiel meet and talk in Marburg.

1964. P. Rassinier publishes *Le drame des juifs européens*. In all honesty, he recounts the unexpected visit he received the previous year (pp. 79-91). As far as Pfannenstiel is concerned, he keeps his promise by not mentioning his trip to Marburg. It is possible that he deliberately composed a text that takes into account the statements of his two interlocutors, the one from June and the one from September 1963.

July 1967. Death of Paul Rassinier. For three years, the non-conformist historian's opponents could have speculated on the identity of the mysterious visitor to Asnières in June 1963. They didn't. Were they afraid of Paul Rassinier's retort?

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[59] On Rassinier's visit, see. P. Rassinier*, Le drame des juifs européens*, La Vieille Taupe, Paris, 1985 (1st ed. 1963), pp. 79-91.

[60] See the full translation on p. 404.

[61] See the full translation starting on p. 404.

1977. Paul Rassinier has been dead for ten years. W. Pfannenstiel is in his eightieth year. It was then that Georges Wellers, director of *Le Monde juif* (a CDJC publication), now deceased, published an article headlined "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question and Neo-Nazi Mythomania" ("*La 'solution finale de la question juive' et la mythomanie néo-nazie*").[62] On the subject of the stranger who appeared at Rassinier's home in June 1963, he writes:

> *"The mystery is perhaps less thick than Rassinier thinks, for many details suggest that the man of 'extreme distinction'* […] *senior officer* […] *who visits the Belzec Camp with Gerstein, this man may well be Professor Pfannenstiel."*

From beyond the grave, Paul Rassinier cannot deny it. As for Pfannenstiel, was he aware of Georges Wellers's hypothesis? It's unlikely. Did he, despite his advanced age, take the liberty of making the truth known? Some time later, Pierre Vidal-Naquet asserted that Georges Wellers had formally identified Rassinier's visitor: it was Pfannenstiel.

From then on, conformist historians proclaim that the "Gerstein Report" was confirmed by a "notorious Nazi" who, of course, downplayed the massacres and attributed their execution to Jewish deportees, charged with responsibility by the SS. This "Nazi" did not dispute the essence of Gerstein's testimony, and that's what counts.

February 1979. In an attempt to nip in the bud Professor Faurisson's exceptionally courageous undertaking to take over from Paul Rassinier, Pierre Vidal-Naquet and Léon Poliakov published "A Declaration by Historians" in *Le Monde* on 21 February 1979, p. 23, to which I will return later. The only testimony included in the declaration is that of SS officer Kurt Gerstein.

November 1983. Alain Decaux publishes *L'Histoire en question, 2*, with a chapter on "L'Obersturmführer Gerstein, éspion de Dieu." On page 317, we read: "Pfannenstiel, who was traveling in France, came himself to visit Rassinier at his home in Asnières." "After denouncing Gerstein's exaggerations," Pfannenstiel, continues A. Decaux, "confirms, incessantly confirms, right in front of the great critic of the gas chambers, Paul Rassinier."

January 1984. I had just read the book that this scholar had so kindly dedicated to me. I wanted to know more about Pfannenstiel, whose recent death in Marburg on 1 November 1982 I had learned. I wrote to his widow on 9 January 1984. The widow replied on the 17th:

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[62] See also *Le Monde juif*, April-June 1977, pp. 41-84.

> *"Today I received your letter of 9 January. I wish to inform you, by return of post, that I am not prepared, under any circumstances, to make any statement whatsoever about Kurt Gerstein. As a result of the so-called 'Gerstein Report,' my husband was interned for five years and lost his professorship at the University of Marburg. For me, the case is statute-barred. The documents have been destroyed. I will not come forward* […]*."*

No comment is necessary.

15 June 1985. Defense of my thesis on "The Confessions of Kurt Gerstein. Comparative Study of the Different. Critical Edition" before a jury at the University of Nantes. In the same year 1985, an Italian revisionist, Carlo Mattogno, published *Il Rapporto Gerstein. Anatomia di un falso*.[63] We haven't consulted each other, but we've come to the same conclusions.

May-June 1986. The manipulated media launch the Roques Affair.[64] A round table is held at the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent* (IHTP). It brought together, in alphabetical order: Hélène Ahrweiler, rector of the Académie de Paris, Jean-Pierre Azéma,[65] François Bédarida, director of the IHTP, Saul Friedländer, Harry Paape, Pierre Vidal-Naquet, Georges Wellers… As observers, two representatives of the "moral authorities" were also present: Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk and… Jean-Philippe, known as Harlem Désir, president of SOS Racisme at the time.

The counter-jury's verdict is implacable: my thesis is "absolutely null and void." S. Friedländer makes a single common-sense remark, stating that "Gerstein was neither physically nor psychologically prepared to be a witness."[66]

If A. Decaux had been invited, would he have been at liberty to repeat before this select audience what he had written about me three years earlier?

> *"I believe that Mr. Roques is the man who currently knows the Gerstein affair best.* […] *I feel that all researchers should take his work into account from now on. In fact, on many points, I find myself in agreement with him."* (see *L'Histoire en question, 2*, pp. 308-312).

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63 Sentinella d'Italia, Montefalcone, 1985.

64 In France, the debate was launched by… *Le Monde juif* which, in its January-March 1986 issue (pp. 1-18), published a lively article by G. Wellers. This issue was widely distributed at the University of Nantes, and every professor found a copy in his or her P.O. box around mid-April 1986.

65 Jean-Pierre Azéma is still atoning for the "mistakes" of his father Jean Azéma, who was editor of the weekly *Je suis partout* and ended the war in Léon Degrelle's Waffen-SS division *Wallonie*.

66 On this meeting of historians at the IHTP, see *Libération*, 31 May 1986, p. 12, and *Le Monde*, 3 June 1986, p. 14.

Among many other grievances, the IHTP prosecutors criticized me for not having mentioned Pfannenstiel's testimony. They forgot that my thesis was about text criticism and did not extend to the historical field.

Summer 1986. I spoke to Madame Rassinier, widow of the maverick historian, about the unusual visit in June 1963. In a nutshell, she told me:

> *"When this unknown figure entered, I felt as if evil waves were spreading through the apartment. My husband was also very disturbed."*

To my specific question: "Could it have been Professor Pfannenstiel?," the answer immediately sprang to mind:[67]

> *"No, it wasn't Pfannenstiel, the German my husband went to see in Germany shortly afterwards."*

1989. André Chelain (pseudonym) publishes *La Thèse de Nantes et l'Affaire Roques*. Among the non-thesis appendices, we find on pages 463-474 a text headlined: "The Pfannenstiel Case: A Reticent Witness but Cooperative as to Essentials." (here starting on p. 396). The two letters written by the German to the Frenchman in August and September 1963 are published in full in French translation. I hypothesize that the visitor of June 1963 may have been a provocateur, of whom Madame Rassinier has kept a fairly precise image.

1996. *Comment l'idée vint à Monsieur Rassinier* is the title of a book by Florent Brayard, a student of Pierre Vidal-Naquet.[68] When Brayard is embarrassed by revisionist information, he accuses the author of lying. Then, he eruditely presents his explanation. However, he has read the appendix concerning Pfannenstiel that I wrote in 1989. His interpretation of the Rassinier-Pfannenstiel meeting can be summarized as follows: the two men did meet in Marburg at the end of September 1953. He does not question the authenticity of the two letters produced. The visit to Asnières by an unknown person is a fabrication on Rassinier's part, intended to cover his tracks. Paradoxically, he endorses my testimony that Rassinier's widow was present and remembers the unusual visit to her home very well.

1998. Alain Decaux writes on page 156:

> *"Greatly embarrassed by Gerstein's confessions, Mr. Rassinier was one of the first to argue that the engineer's accounts were absurd and therefore worthless. One can imagine his astonishment when the same Pfannenstiel announced a visit to his home in Asnières."* (Emphasis added)

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[67] Editor's remark: See the Addendum to Appendix IV, starting on p. 405.

[68] Florent Brayard, *Comment l'idée vint à Monsieur Rassinier*, Fayard, coll. Pour une histoire du xx^e^siècle, Paris, 1996, 464 pp.

Where does the escalation end? I suppose Alain Decaux has heard of an exchange of letters between the German and the French, but hasn't read any of them. So the historian finds himself in contradiction: on the one hand, with Madame Rassinier and myself; on the other, with Florent Brayard, a disciplined pupil of Pierre Vidal-Naquet.

How to get out of this imbroglio? Personally, I'll always regret not having asked Paul Rassinier specific questions on the subject between 1962 and 1967, when it was easy for me to do so, because his door was open to me. At the time, I had no idea that twenty years later I would be defending a university thesis on Kurt Gerstein's "confessions." I also regret not having tried to meet Wilhelm Pfannenstiel in Marburg in the early 1980s. Like everyone else, I thought he'd been dead for a long time, but he didn't die until the end of 1982.

Madame Rassinier is still with us. She's an elderly lady, but no older than many of the former deportees whose testimonies we piously collect. The widow of the founder of revisionism is anxious to preserve her own peace of mind, and that of her son and grandson. Faithful to her husband's memory, convinced of his fundamental honesty, she is convinced that justice will one day be done.

Would she refuse to speak in front of a historian, a member of the Académie française, of the renown of Alain Decaux? I don't think so.

In his book published in 1983, this scholar wrote (p. 309):

> *"I'm not one of those people who believe they can use history to support a conviction, and who are ready to eliminate information when it contradicts their own opinions. Unfortunately, such people do exist! I believe they are not historians."*

VI. The Irreversible Decline of Kurt Gerstein's Confessions

The *Gerstein Report* was not used by the Nuremberg IMT, but was used in major trials, such as the Nuremberg Medical Case (1947), the case against Degesch in Frankfurt (1949), and the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem (1961)…[69]

In France, in 1951, for the first time, Léon Poliakov (a former member of the French delegation to Nuremberg in 1945-1946 as translator) partially published Kurt Gerstein's testimony in his book *Breviary of Hate*, prefaced by François Mauriac (Calmann-Lévy, Paris, see pp. 220-224). What an unusual, provocative title! What would one think of a book titled *The Bible of Hate*, or worse, *The Talmud of Hate*?

[69] See P. Rassinier, *Le drame des juifs européens*, *op. cit.* p. 59-60.

Léon Poliakov, but also other French and foreign authors, truncated, manipulated and even falsified Kurt Gerstein's texts.[70] Why?

In many school textbooks, the "Gerstein Report" was partially reproduced.[71] It had become a kind of "Holy Scripture." In the early 1960s, Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Deputy* (*Der Stellvertreter*), featuring Kurt Gerstein, caused a stir and aroused much indignation.

Around the same time, Paul Rassinier took an interest in the Gerstein affair. He was operating alone in uncharted territory. How could he have failed to make a few mistakes and launch some risky hypotheses? Tomorrow's historians will not be able to overlook Rassinier's pioneer work, who opened up a trail on which his successors could follow.

A dozen years later, Professor Robert Faurisson presented rigorous analyses on the same subject. Rigorous though they were, they didn't save this scholar from being convicted of defaming Léon Poliakov.[72] The court recognized that the author of *Breviary of Hate* had been lacking in scientific rigor, but that he was nevertheless entitled to the benefit of good faith.[73]

In 1985, I defended my thesis in Nantes, and Carlo Mattogno published his excellent book in Italian. Since then, things have changed a great deal. In the hushed silence of the universities and in the consciences of certain historians of all nationalities, questions have arisen in which common sense had its part to play.

A. What Was Gerstein Doing in Belzec and Treblinka? Was He just an Officer Accompanying a Delivery of Chemicals?

As soon as he arrived in Lublin, SS General Globocnik told him (T I, see p. 62):

> *"You'll need – says Globocnek – to disinfect very large quantities of clothing, ten or twenty times the result of the Spinnstoff-Sammlung* [textile collection…] *Your second duty: to change our gas chambers* […]*."*

[70] For a list of authors who have cited Kurt Gerstein, see Chapter IV starting on p. 215. On L. Poliakov's manipulations, see P. Rassinier, *Le drame des juifs européens*, *op. cit*. appendix to his chapter II, pp. 93ff.

[71] See, for example, the French manuals for third-year classes published by Nathan in 1974 and Magnard in 1984.

[72] See R. Faurisson, *Mémoire en défense contre ceux qui m'accusent de falsifier l'histoire*, La Vieille Taupe, Paris, 1980, p. 119, note 1.

[73] On L. Poliakov's libel suit against R. Faurisson, see *Annales d'histoire révisionniste*, No. 7, Spring-Summer 1989, pp. 80-86. In their judgment, the magistrates wrote: "M. Poliakov may, on points of detail, have infringed scientific rigor" (p. 85); they also spoke of an "error that may well be faulty" and asserted that "other errors [may] have been committed" (*ibid.*). In short, it was an admission that L. Poliakov had indeed manipulated K. Gerstein's text.

Why not disinfection and disinfestation gas chambers? In his account, Kurt Gerstein gives not the slightest indication of how he carried out the mission entrusted to him by the SS general.

Is it plausible that Globocnik, police captain Wirth, Hauptsturmführer Obermeyer and others let Kurt Gerstein and Wilhelm Pfannenstiel wander around the Belzec Camp as spectators for hours? Yes, for hours: Gerstein "timed" 3 hours and 21 minutes (2 hours 49 minutes for the engine to start up, and 32 minutes for the gassing of the deportees).[74] He does not tell us how much time he spent watching the arrival of the train, the disembarking of the men, women and children, the cutting of the hair at the barber's, the undressing and, after the operation, the pulling out of the gold teeth, the burial in gigantic ditches and so on.

At what point in the day did the SS officer have time to give the technical instructions expected of him?

B. Did Gerstein Follow the Events He Described "from a Distance"?

That is a very sensible question. In 1989, someone answered this question in the affirmative. Was he a revisionist? Of course not. Over the last ten years or so, there have been unexpected reversals that have gone virtually unnoticed. Such is the case with Léon Poliakov. Let us not forget that he was one of the first to learn of the "Gerstein Report," and that he was the first to publicize it in France, in 1951. It was he who, in 1979, chose Gerstein's account "from among so very many testimonies" for the historians' declaration published in *Le Monde*.[75] Ten years later, in a book he had published in 1989, we read:[76]

> *"Admittedly, Gerstein's reports contained a number of errors. He had seen an extermination camp only once, and only from a distance* [emphasis added]*; it was the Polish camp of Belzec."*

Léon Poliakov may have belatedly provided us with a key to the Gerstein enigma. Let me qualify his assessment. The SS officer may have seen:

– *from close-up*, harrowing, even atrocious scenes: the arrival of a train of deportees, their ruthless disembarkation, the removal from the carriage of people who had died during the journey (some having died of as-

[74] "After two hours 49 minutes – the "stop" watch has recorded everything – the Diesel starts. […] after 32, finally, all are dead!" (T I, p. 64).

[75] "From among so very many testimonies, […is] that of the SS officer Gerstein, who tried in vain to alert, as early as 1942 […]" (*Le Monde*, 21 February 1979, p. 23; here on p. 56).

[76] Léon Poliakov, *L'envers du destin. Entretiens avec G. E. Sarfati*, Éditions de Fallois, Paris, 1989, 299 p.

phyxia, showing a bluish discoloration, as medical doctor Wilhelm Pfannenstiel pointed out in his testimony);[77]

– *from further away*, he saw the women going to a haircutting room; he would have noticed the general undressing and waiting of the poor people in front of the shower and delousing rooms;[78]
– *from too far away* for him to observe anything, he imagined the gassing after 2 hours 49 minutes of diesel engine failure;[79] he could, however, hear the screams and cries of the people locked in, for what must have seemed an interminable time.[80]

We can only speculate. The fact remains that Kurt Gerstein *unquestionably* imagined the following:

> *"After a few days, the bodies began to swell, and the whole thing rose by 2-3 meters by means of gas, which formed in the corpses. After a few days, when the swelling was over, the bodies fell together. Another day, the pits were filled again and covered with 10 cm of sand…"* (T I, p. 73)

Since the Obersturmführer left the next day for Treblinka,[81] what he reports here cannot be considered eyewitness testimony. We should also point out that Gerstein is guilty of other blatant fabrications. He is said to have written supplements (*Ergänzungen*) which were appended to the German version of 4 May 1945. These supplements had never been published before my thesis (see here, starting on p. 86). In 1953, in the journal *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (No. 2), Professor Hans Rothfels reported on their existence, but did not publish them, because, in his view, they were not eyewitness accounts but "hearsay." As for the text of 4 May 1945 (which, in my thesis, I called T III), the German historian reproduced it

[77] "[…] the first train arrived from Lemberg. 45 railway cars, containing 6,700 people, 1,450 already dead on arrival. Behind the little barbed-wire skylights, children, yellow with fear, women and men. The train arrives. 200 Ukrainians, forced into this service, rip open the doors and, using leather horsewhips, chase the people out of the railway cars." (T I, see p. 63).

[78] "Then a loudspeaker gives instructions: in the open air – some in barracks – strip off all clothing, including prostheses and glasses. […]. Then women, girls to the hairdressers […]. Then the march begins: […]. We find ourselves before the death chambers. Totally naked, men, women, girls, children, babies, men with only one leg, all naked pass through." (T I, p. 63).

[79] Remember that diesel engines give off carbon dioxide (CO_2), which is not fatal, while gasoline engines give off carbon monoxide (CO), which is fatal.

[80] "The people wait in their chamber. In vain – we listen to them crying […]" (T I, p. 64).

[81] His mission in fact lasted three days (see his interrogation before the French military justice system on 26 June 1945, p. 3), from 17 to 19 August 1942. On the 17th, Gerstein arrived in Lublin and met Globocnik; on the 18th, he went to Belzec ("The other day [after the 17th], we were off to Belcek") and the following day to Treblinka ("Another day, we drove in Hauptmann Wirth's car to Treblinca"). Finally, on the night of 19-20 August, Gerstein took the train to Berlin.

with numerous omissions, which seems to indicate that Hans Rothfels did not fully believe in Gerstein's "confessions" (see here on p. 52).

C. Gerstein's Written Testimony Was the First; Will it also Be the Last?

On page 152, A. Decaux writes:

> *"The description of the gassing he witnessed is exactly the same as the one we have from the few survivors, but it is* [also] *in line with the memories – no less rare – of the executioners who later resigned themselves to testifying. Do we have the right to forget that Gerstein's account is the first?"*

Yes, he was the first. Who still mentions the testimony of Pery Broad,[82] that of Miklos Nyiszli, the mysterious doctor no one has ever seen?[83] Even the confessions of Rudolf Höss, obtained under torture, are neglected. For Christopher Browning, a very orthodox author:[84]

> *"Höss has always been a very weak and confused witness. That's why revisionists quote him all the time in an attempt to discredit the memory of Auschwitz as a whole."*

So, we keep coming back to the ineradicable Gerstein. That's what Léon Poliakov and Pierre Vidal-Naquet did for the "Declaration by Historians" in February 1979. It is what Alain Decaux did for his TV program in March 1983 and his book published in November of the same year; he is still doing it, fifteen years later, with his latest work.

As for the deportees' testimonies, they are vague and contradictory; they often mention Zyklon B or complicated piping or fake shower heads. The most honest say: "I personally didn't see anything, and that's a good thing, because if I had, I wouldn't be here to tell the story."

Gerstein's story, being the first, has been much plagiarized. I will mention only the book and film titled *Au nom de tous les miens*.[85] Pierre Vidal-

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[82] In July 1945, as head of the SS Political Department (*Politische Abteilung* =camp Gestapo), he wrote an account of the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau for the British. This was published in French in the handbook *Auschwitz vu par les SS* (State Museum in Oswiecim, Oswiecim, 1974), pp. 141-209. Pierre Vidal-Naquet himself admits that, in his testimony, P. Broad gives "the impression of adopting entirely the language of the victors" (see *Les assassins de la mémoire*, *op. cit.*, p. 45).

[83] On Miklós Nyiszli's testimony, see for example P. Rassinier, *Le drame des juifs européens*, *op. cit.* pp. 52ff. [Editor's remark: See also the much more comprehensive study by Carlo Mattogno, *An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Bestselling Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2020.]

[84] Retranslated from R. Faurisson, "Le témoignage de Höss déclaré sans valeur!," *Nouvelle Vision*, No. 33, June-August 1994, pp. 112f.

[85] Martin Gray, *Au nom de tous les miens*, Robert Laffont, Paris, 1971. [On Martin Gray, see for example R. Faurisson, *Martin Gray, marchand de faux en tous genres*, La Sfinge, Rome, 2020].

Naquet himself had the merit of denouncing, in Le *Monde* on 27 November 1983, the imposture of the forger Martin Gray, who never set foot in Treblinka. In addition to Léon Poliakov's about-turn, I learned from French and German teachers that the "Gerstein Report" had disappeared from recent editions of school textbooks.

Alain Decaux's last book was dedicated to François Furet. It was to this recently deceased historian that his German colleague Ernst Nolte wrote the following in a letter on 5 September 1996:[86]

> *"*[…] *even eyewitness accounts that were widespread in the 50s, such as that of* […] *senior official*[87] *Kurt Gerstein, member of the Confessing Church, are no longer included in the bibliography of orthodox researchers."*

Doesn't this sound the death knell for SS Gerstein's "confessions"?

VII. The Gerstein Affair – an Extraordinary Story

Kurt Gerstein was certainly a fascinating character. Those who knew him compared his imagination to a bubbling spring. Even his wife, poor Elfriede, now deceased, spoke to me in correspondence about her husband's imaginative resources. She hadn't known him very well in seven years of marriage: She had three children with him, but Kurt was hardly ever at home. A naïve German, a pastor's daughter, a devoted wife and mother, she remained faithful to the memory of her "hero" to the very end.[88]

Today, how can anyone still deny that Kurt Gerstein was a mythomaniac and, as is often the case, a megalomaniac? On 25 June 1945, while being questioned by Major Beckhardt in the Paris offices of the ORCG, the former SS officer, who had still not lost any of his superb powers, declared (here starting on p. 137):

> *"Yes, I was head of the protestant resistance, in liaison with the Dutch resistance, and with the embassies of Sweden and of Switzerland.* […]
> *For the protestant resistance, I received instructions from Pastor NIEMÖLLER (detained at Dachau since 1937) through his family and some nuns.* […] *With the Swedish resistance, via the embassy of Sweden in Berlin, Baron von OTTER."*

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86 *Commentaire*, Winter 1997, p. 800.

87 Error by Ernst Nolte: Gerstein was an Obersturmführer, hence a lieutenant specialist, and therefore a junior officer.

88 She had to raise her children alone and without a pension, as Gerstein was not rehabilitated by the denazification chamber until 1965.

We know what to make of the alleged friendship between Niemöller and Gerstein. As for Baron von Otter, he never claimed to have given resistance instructions to the former SS officer. One wonders why Sweden and Switzerland would have resisted Hitler. They were neutral countries, not occupied! Their main concern was trading with the Third Reich.

When he lived in Berlin, Gerstein listened to London radio a lot (we know this from his biographers). An SS officer had to be aware of enemy propaganda. Sometimes he heard about the gassing of human beings. He was receptive to all rumors of war. His ambition was to play a role.[89] He told us that he had joined the SS in order to "look into this witch's cauldron" (T VI, p. 110). Before leaving for Belzec*, he already knew what he had to see*.

Can you imagine Tartarin de Tarascon[90] returning from a long journey in the Atlas Mountains to piteously announce to his fellow citizens that he hadn't encountered a lion, despite his tireless scrambling? Could he psychologically return empty-handed?

Alain Decaux has always had a taste for historical enigmas. He began his career by publishing *Louis XVII retrouvé* in 1947. The notorious Naundorff, who claimed to be the heir to the French throne, son of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, must have been an exceptionally convincing character to attract so many fanatical followers. However, a recent DNA test has definitively shown him to be an impostor.[91]

[89] "According to Franz [childhood friend of K. Gerstein], when Kurt Gerstein took leave of his wife [during April 1945, to surrender to the Allies and deliver his testimony], he was "full of hope": – People will hear about me, count on it! You'll be amazed to learn what I've done" (see A. Decaux, *La guerre absolue*, p. 163). In his last letter to his wife, dated 26 May 1945, K. Gerstein wrote: "[…] everyone is very strongly interested in my case, and as I have to appear before the International Court of Justice as one of the main witnesses against the war criminals […]" (see p. 133f.). The former SS man was in the throes of a megalomaniac delusion. He never appeared as a witness, and if, much later, he was mentioned at all, it was posthumously.

[90] Editor's remark: *Tartarin of Tarascon* is the title of an 1872 novel by French author Alphonse Daudet. It tells the adventures of the swashbuckler Tartarin of the small town of Tarascon in southern France. His bragging of great adventures ultimately forces him to travel to Algiers in search of lions. However, there aren't any lions left in that region. But Tartarin manages to kill one anyway, although it turns out to have been the mascot of the local military garrison. Tartarin gets prosecuted for this, yet manages to get released on a technicality. He returns to Tarascon with the lion's pelt to a hero's welcome. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartarin.

[91] It should be noted that the "naudorffists" contest the validity of the test using arguments that it would be dishonest to dismiss without further examination. In particular, they cite comments made by Professor Cassiman, the man who carried out the test, on a Dutch-language radio station on 8 July 1997, to the effect that the bone fragment used for DNA analysis may not have been the one taken from Naundorff at the time, as the "original piece traveled a lot and was lost for a long time" (see *Flos florum. La lettre du Cercle*

In 1960, the book *L'Énigme Anastasia* gave Alain Decaux the opportunity to demonstrate, once again, his great talent for telling extraordinary stories. Four years later, the historian published a book titled *Les Grands Mystères du passé* (Éd. de Trévise), in which he evoked the enigma of the *Mary Celeste*, a two-mast schooner discovered intact but empty of its crew on 4 December 1872 off the Azores, with no one ever knowing for sure what had happened inside the ship or what had become of the missing crew.[92]

How could the academician not have been fascinated by Kurt Gerstein, whose ambiguity he nonetheless perceived, and whose death remains a mystery? Officially, Gerstein was found hanged in his Cherche-Midi prison cell on 25 July 1945. In his book, however, Alain Decaux cites a letter he received on 30 March 1983, written by Monsieur Caillavet, a former member of the Paris police who, while providing order service "on the outskirts of Cherche-Midi" in 1945, had "heard that an SS captain had been beaten to death by the FFI [who were guarding the prison]"[93] (A. Decaux, p. 164). Although Decaux did not take a position in his book, he did make his personal feelings known in an interview with the *Magazine de l'Est républicain* dated 5 July 1998: "I rather believe in suicide," he declared. "He did not manage to prevent anything."

As for me, I'm more inclined to believe that the beating resulted in death, perhaps without intention. In the dreadful black hole of his cell teeming with vermin, Kurt Gerstein was certainly in a very poor physical and moral state.[94] Let's not forget that he was diabetic. In one of his letters, his wife wrote to me:

> *"He was unbearable* [*ungeniessbar*] *before he started his meals* [diabetics must eat at set times]. *He always carried a large quantity of sugar cubes in his pockets to combat his hypoglycemia."*

At Cherche-Midi, he certainly didn't have sugar or appropriate food served at regular times. Perhaps he became "unbearable," to use Frau Gerstein's word, harassing his guards to obtain sugar or food? We can only imagine

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Louis XVII, No. 13, June 1998, p. 1). Naundorffists also point out that, if there are differences between Naundorff's DNA and that of his alleged mother, Marie-Antoinette, there are also differences between Marie-Antoinette's DNA and that of her living descendants, Queen Anne of Romania and her brother André de Bourbon-Parme (*ibid*.).

92 On the subject of the *Mary Celeste*, see Yves Van Langendonck's excellent book *Le Mary Celeste. Vaisseau maudit ou bateau fantôme*, Marabout, 1996.

93 FFI stands for *Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur*, the French Forces of the Interior, which was the French résistance turned into official forces after war's end. Editor's remark.

94 Compare his handwriting of 26 April 1945 (T I, p. 256) with that of 15 July 1945, ten days before his death (lawyer's request, p. 360).

the reaction of the [resistance fighters turned] prison guards, who were exasperated and certainly hated this "SS man" who, in their eyes, embodied "Nazi barbarism."

What convinces me is the inexplicable fact that his wife was not informed of her husband's death until June 1948, almost three years later. Yet in all the versions of his "confessions" and during his interrogations, Kurt Gerstein had given the address where his family lived: Tübingen, Gartenstrasse 24.

Frau Gerstein was never given details of his burial site (in fact, the mass grave in the Thiais cemetery), as if they feared an autopsy.

In Germany, Kurt Gerstein's supporters and opponents agree on one thing: for them, he was murdered, and his death was made to look like suicide.

All the mythomaniacs in history have had their hagiographers. Pierre Joffroy is undoubtedly the best hagiographer of Kurt Gerstein. He called him "God's spy," but this description was not enough for him. He wrote an article for Le *Monde* headlined "*Le poète du génocide*" (issue of 25 April 1970). An admirable characterization! Any poet, no matter how untalented, can, in the name of poetic license, indulge in all the fantasies and lucubration his brain teems with.

I hope that Alain Decaux's turnaround on Gerstein will be comparable to that of Léon Poliakov, mentioned above. He won't lose out. He will always have an extraordinary story to tell: that of an elusive mystifier.

That the ex-SS officer's delusional testimony was taken seriously for more than half a century testifies to the total lack of lucidity of orthodox historians, and more likely to their desire not to compromise their careers by transgressing the taboo of the 20th Century.

The Gerstein Affair was used to contribute to the guilt-tripping of the entire world, which, during the Second World War, presumably remained indifferent to what Walter Laqueur called "the terrible secret."[95]

And this whole astounding operation took place under the amused and incredulous gaze of the revisionists.

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[95] See also Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret. An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's "Final Solution"* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1980). *Le Terrifiant Secret. La "solution finale" et l'information étouffée*, 2nd ed., Gallimard, Paris, 2014.

Addendum: About Slippers Made of Human Hair

By Vincent Reynouard

Alain Decaux believes that the Germans used the hair cut off the heads of deported women and girls to make felt slippers and stockings. In his book, he writes:

> *"On the subject of women and girls having their hair cut, Gerstein quotes the explanation of an SS officer on duty: 'It's to make some special things for the submarines.' For a long time, this statement seemed incomprehensible. That is, until a document was found, dated 6 August 1942, which states: 'The head of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office* […] *has ordered that human hair be used in all concentration camps.* […] *women's hair is used to make slippers for submarine crews and felt stockings for the Reichsbahn.'"* (A. Decaux, p. 153)

Decaux gives no details of the circumstances in which this document was discovered. Please allow us some clarification.

This document was produced by the Soviets in 1946 at Nuremberg under the symbol USSR-511. It is reproduced in Volume XXXIX of the trial transcripts on pages 552f.

Consequently, Decaux is wrong when he writes that "for a long time" the explanation of the "SS officer on duty" would have "seemed incomprehensible." As early as 1946, Document USSR-511 had been made public, and historians could use it to (claim to) provide the key to this enigma.

However, can we really claim that this document helps to explain the remarks made by the "SS officer on duty" to Kurt Gerstein? Our answer is: no, and here's why.

In the first version of his "confessions," K. Gerstein wrote (see p. 63):

> *"Then women, girls to the hairdressers – have the hair cut with one or two cuts, which disappears into big potato sacks, to make some special things for the submarines (linings, etc.), tells me the SS Unterscharfuehrer on duty."*

The second version of the "confessions" offers an almost identical text (T II, p. 71).

As you can see, there's no mention here of slippers or felt stockings. What's more, according to Gerstein's text, the hair is to be used not for submarine crews, but for the submarines themselves. The word "linings" (French: *épaisseurs*) suggests use for waterproofing or caulking.

To those who reject my explanations, I'll invoke… three other versions of Kurt Gerstein's "confessions."

The third version: in his thesis, H. Roques demonstrated that this version (which he calls T III) was not written by K. Gerstein, but was most probably "fabricated from disparate documents left by Gerstein" (see p. 196). The anonymous writer would also have wanted to "attenuate implausibilities that are too flagrant, in order to make [this version] a little less incredible than the other versions" (*ibid.*). But how did the author understand the word "linings" (*épaisseurs*)? We read in T III:

> *"Then the women and young girls pass to the hairdresser who* […] *cuts all the hair and lets it disappear into large potato sacks. 'This is intended for some special purpose or other for submarines, for the caulking* [*Dichtungen*] *or something like that!' – the SS-Unterscharführer tells me* […]*."*

Remember that caulking consists of sealing a ship's hull by pouring tarred oakum into the interstices. There can be no doubt that the author of the third version of the "confessions" understood that "*épaisseurs*" meant "watertightness."

Version T Va: in his thesis, H. Roques demonstrated that this text had been drafted by the War Crimes Research Office (see the chapter starting on p. 183). On the sixth page, we read (see p. 98):

> *"Next, the women and girls go to the 'hairdresser' – with 2 or 3 strokes of the scissors, the hair is cut and disappears into large potato sacks.*
> *A duty Unterscharfuehrer told me, 'It's intended for special use in submarine insulation.'"*

Version T VI: Henri Roques has shown that Kurt Gerstein was not the author of this version either, and that it was most likely developed "from texts written in French, notably from T V onwards" (see p. 190). According to this version, on the subject of the cut-off hair, the SS man on duty is quoted as saying (see p. 114; emphasis added):

> *"That is intended for the submarines for certain special uses, for the gaskets or something like that!"*

Hence, I'm not alone in thinking that, in Kurt Gerstein's mind, the word "*épaisseurs*" meant caulking, gaskets or sealing.

This conclusion is very important, as it means that Document USSR-511 (which refers to slippers and stockings) in no way confirms Kurt Gerstein's allegations.

Of course, some may reply: whether Gerstein was wrong or not, Document USSR-511 proves that the Germans used the hair of deported women for industrial purposes.

However, this reply must be rejected for three reasons, two documental and one physical:

1. Document USSR-511 is apocryphal. Historian Carlos Porter went to The Hague to consult it in the IMT archives. There, he was told that it was not possible to examine the original because the Soviets had taken it away in 1946. All he was shown was an almost illegible photocopy, not of the original, but of a retyped copy (i.e. without letterhead, handwritten notes and, above all, without signature) of the (alleged) original document, with illegible initials indicating that it was a "true copy."[1] There is therefore no proof that an original exists…
2. Assuming that the Germans really did make slippers from human hair, the victors would have had to find specimens and take them to Nuremberg as evidence. And even if they hadn't been able to find any, thousands of documents (projects, orders, invoices…) relating to these objects would have remained, which inevitably would have been seized by the Allies. Consequently, it would have been easy to select a certain number of them and append them to Document USSR-511.
   However, none of this exists in the archives of the IMT in The Hague and, even today, no one is able to show even a slipper made of human hair or a document relating to this subject (other than USSR-511). All that remains is a photocopy of a retyped copy of a document that the Soviets (whose propensity for forgery is well known, see the Katyn affair)… would have brought home. In short, we are faced with a total void.
3. With the exception of hair of black people (which is covered with microscopic, interlocking hooks), human hair cannot be spun and therefore cannot be used to make slippers or stockings.[2]

This last reason alone leads to the conclusion that Document USSR-511, even if authentic, has no probative value. The Germans could not, for physical reasons, make slippers or stockings from human hair.

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[1] See also Carlos Porter, *Made in Russia. The Holocaust*, Historical Review Press, Brighton, 1988, p. 77.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 78, taken from *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1911 edition).

Appendix IX: Costa-Gavras

With His Film *Amen*, Filmmaker Costa-Gavras Staged a Sinister Hoax

[First published in *Le Révisionniste* (Brussels), Vol. III, Nos. 3-4, November 2003, pp. 191-216]

A Film that Has Nothing to Do with History

Director Costa-Gavras drew inspiration for his film *Amen* from a play titled *The Deputy*. The author of this play, released throughout Europe and perhaps elsewhere in 1962-1963, was Rolf Hochhuth, a German Protestant who turned his work into a war machine against the Catholic Church, and in particular against Pope Pius XII, who occupied the papal throne during the Second World War.

An author certainly has the right to imagine situations and create characters that do not correspond to historical truth. To make an absurd comparison, Corneille, in writing *Le Cid*, did not respect the biography of Diaz de Vivar, known as Cid Campeador, whose character he took over. However, Corneille's *Le Cid* has never been considered a historical tragedy.

The same cannot be said of Rolf Hochhuth's play, let alone Costa-Gavras's film. People insist on calling it a "historical" drama, even going so far as to call it a "true story" on the pretext that a pivotal figure, without whom the work could not have been produced, actually existed. Kurt Gerstein, born in 1905, died in Paris on 25 July 1945 in the Cherche-Midi military prison, where he was incarcerated for murder and complicity in murder. After surrendering to the Allies, he had written several "confessions," in which he described his role in the (alleged) planned massacre of Jews.

Kurt Gerstein Was not a Waffen-SS Combatant but a Simple Technician Attached to the Army

Kurt Gerstein is often presented as an officer in the SS, without any further details.[1] The vagueness surrounding Kurt Gerstein's rank is intended to impress the reader. The neophyte imagines a solid military man with deep-

[1] See, for example, *Histoire du christianisme magazine*, No. 9, March 2002, p. 5: "Amen tells the story of a German chemical engineer, Kurt Gerstein (1905-1946 [*sic*]), an officer during the Second World War."

rooted National-Socialist convictions, who rose through the ranks by fighting, and who chose to reveal the massacres he had witnessed first-hand; what better "witness" to the Shoah?

However, Kurt Gerstein's fragile physical and mental health (to which we will return later) meant he was considered unfit for armed service. Although he became an officer during the war, he only reached the rank of lieutenant (*i.e.* junior officer) in category F (*Fachmann*), meaning "specialist." He was in charge of disinfestation at the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute in Berlin. In other words, Kurt Gerstein earned his rank thanks to his university degrees (and no doubt paternal connections), but without ever having seen combat. He was simply a technician attached to the army, like thousands of others.

As for his convictions, we will see later that, if he had any, they were subject to many fluctuations…

Birth of the "Saint-Gerstein" Legend

Was Gerstein guilty of murder and complicity in murder? I don't think so, nor did his lawyer.[2] But long after his death, under unclear circumstances, a legend was born: that of a "Righteous among the Gentiles,"[3] of a "martyr."[4] His thurifers called him a "saint lost in the century," a "spy of God," even going so far as to speak of his "Passion," as if he were a new Messiah, dead for having revealed to the world the atrocities committed against Jewish internees in the Belzec and Treblinka camps.[5]

It is imperative to examine the Gerstein case with an eye to the future.

Aberrant "Confessions"

After surrendering to the French military authorities in April 1945, this Obersturmführer (lieutenant) left a testimony, which has more the character of a "confession." It comes in six versions, which is strange enough. Why six versions (see Chapter I), which contain contradictions between

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2 See p. 150, the reproduction of Mr. Pierre Lehmann's letter dated 25 July 1945. The lawyer said he was convinced that the impartiality shown from the very first session of the investigation would safeguard the rights of "the accused who, moreover, does not seem at all guilty."

3 See *Le Monde juif*, March-April 1964, p. 4, article by Léon Poliakov.

4 See *Le Monde*, 25 April 1970, article by P.J.F. (Pierre Joffroy) headline "Kurt Gerstein. Un poète du génocide." The article ends with this sentence: "This long, shrill cry recreates in its truth Kurt Gerstein, comedian and martyr, poet of genocide." The term "comedian" applied to Kurt Gerstein seems to me entirely justified, even if P. Joffroy used the word for reasons opposite to my own.

5 See the title of P. Joffroy's book: *L'espion de dieu. La passion de Kurt Gerstein*.

them and vary in the implausibilities they contain? Of the six versions, two were accepted into the PS (Paris Storey) series after examination by Commandant Storey's Documentation Division. One of these, in German and riddled with errors of all kinds, was typed by a person who knew nothing of the German language, and was little used. It bears the number PS-2170, and was obviously not written by Kurt Gerstein: it is a fabrication. The other version (PS-1553) was often used in trials. However, it was not read into the record at the hearing of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. The Tribunal accepted only a few invoices for Zyklon B on Degesch-Company letterhead. These invoices are suspect: made out in Gerstein's name rather than that of the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute, they have no invoice number, which is contrary to elementary accounting rules. Moreover, typewritten additions are easy to spot, particularly "*Blausäure*" (prussic acid). Besides, these invoices prove nothing. They confirm that Kurt Gerstein supplied the camps with Zyklon B for disinfestation, which nobody disputes.[6]

In a doctoral thesis defended in Nantes in 1985, I identified 29 implausibilities in Gerstein's "confessions" (here starting on p. 205). I was careful to point out that my survey was by no means complete. Of these 29 implausibilities, I have selected half a dozen, which I present below:

1) According to Kurt Gerstein, Hitler and Himmler visited the Belzec Camp on 15 August 1942 to ask for the extermination to be stepped up. This is historically proven to be untrue (see Prof. H. Rothfels, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, April 1953, No. 2). Gerstein visited the camp on 17 and 18 August 1942. Some have claimed that he merely repeated the false statement made by the camp's commanding SS general, who was known for his boasting, they say. This explanation does not hold water, however, as Gerstein, himself a very talkative man, spoke to a dozen camp officials, who would have been happy to set the record straight.

2) In the various versions of his "confessions," Kurt Gerstein explained that he had been able to visit Belzec on the occasion of a mission entrusted to him: to supply the camp with toxic gas in order to change the method of execution (until then, he said, people had been killed by asphyxiation with the exhaust fumes of a diesel engine). He explains (T VI, p. 112):

> *"Moreover, I did not have the slightest qualms. For if I had not accepted the mission, another would have executed it in the way wanted by the SD, whereas, thanks to my authority in the field of highly toxic gases, I could without difficulty get rid of the entire load, as decomposed, having turned dangerous or deteriorated."*

[6] A facsimile of these two invoices can be found starting on p. 339.

Nowhere, however, did he explain how he had managed to prevent the gas from being used, i.e., how he managed not to carry out his mission. When questioned on 26 June 1945, he merely said: "I […] was determined […] to try and do away with it" (*ibid.*, p. 136), without elaborating. Questioned again on 19 July 1945, he tried to explain himself, but became bogged down in contradictions. In the morning, he declared (see p. 140):

> *"*[…] *the cyanide did not reach its destination […]. The forty-four bottles which remained* [one had been emptied *en route*, he claimed] *were not taken to the camp of BELCEC, but were concealed by the driver and myself at about twelve hundred meters from the camp."*

In the afternoon, he alleged (see p. 143):

> *"I arrived with the cyanide at the camp* […]. *I pointed out to the commandant of the camp the danger involved in the use of cyanide by informing him that I could not assume the responsibility for making use of the cyanide which I had brought. This commandant was satisfied with my explanations, saying besides that he was satisfied with the extermination system in use."*

This explanation earned him the following reply from the interrogating officer (*ibid.*):

> *"This morning, you stated to us that forty-four bottles of cyanide* […] *did not arrive at the camp of BELCEC, because they had been hidden […]; just now, you have been telling us you arrived at the camp with your consignment. When are you speaking the truth?"*

Unperturbed, K. Gerstein replied (*ibid.*):

> *"I arrived at the camp without the cyanide, but the commandant of the camp knew that I had brought it in the vehicle which was left at twelve hundred meters from the camp."*

In the space of a few hours, then, "God's spy" had said it all: "I arrived at the camp *with* the cyanide"; "I arrived at the camp *without* the cyanide."

I would add that, according to him, he had concealed the cylinders with the help of the truck driver, whom he did not know (but whom he suspected of being connected with the SS Reich Security Main Office [*sic*]), and that neither the SS general commanding the sector nor the Berlin authorities, on whom Gerstein depended, subsequently bothered to find out what had happened to the poison gas. Here again, the military magistrate gave him a common-sense retort (see p. 144):

> *"You were charged with a mission. You tell us of not having fulfilled it at all. Likewise, you tell us that the commandant of the camp where you have to complete this mission did not want you to complete it at all. You stated this morning that, on your return to Berlin, you did not report to anyone on*

> *the result of your mission. We have every reason to think that such things were not exactly customary in the German armed forces."*

To get out of it, K. Gerstein claimed that, in truth, on 17 August 1942, he had not met the real camp commandant, who had arrived the next day and arranged everything (*ibid.*):

> *"The morning after my arrival at the camp of BELCEC, the real camp commandant returned – Polizei Hauptmann WIRTH, who had great influence in Berlin, and who liquidated this question without my having to intervene."*

The examining magistrate didn't insist. However, if he had known the history of Belzec, he would have known that Christian Wirth had no longer been camp commandant since 1 August 1942. He had been replaced by Gottlieb Hering, and his new offices were in Lublin.[7] Consequently, it was Hering whom Gerstein should have met on 18 August 1942 as the "real commandant" of the Belzec Camp, and not Wirth. It is surprising that Gerstein did not mention the name of Gottlieb Hering; all the more so as he did not fail in his "testimony" to mention the names of subordinate soldiers such as Unterscharführer Heckenholt (see T I, p. 64) and Hauptsturmführer (Captain) Obermeyer, originally from Pirmasens (*ibid*., p. 62).[8]

However, let's concede that, three years after his trip, Kurt Gerstein confused Christian Wirth (whom he had met in Lublin) with Gottlieb Hering. This would not make his "testimony" any more credible. Indeed, if we accept the official story for a moment, we learn that Wirth would have ruled out the use of cyanide gas from the outset, on the grounds that:

> *"This gas was produced by private firms, and its extensive use in Belzec might have aroused suspicion and led to problems of supply."* (*Nazi Mass Murder*, *op. cit.*, p. 109)

In their aforementioned book, E. Kogon, H. Langbein and A. Rückerl refer to the construction of "new gas chambers" in July 1942 at Belzec in particular, in order "to speed up the extermination procedure – that is, to increase the 'processing' capacity of the gas chambers" (*ibid*., p. 128). At no time,

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[7] "In August 1942 […] Christian Wirth was appointed inspector of all three extermination centers. He was replaced in Belzec by SS-Hauptsturmführer Gottlieb Hering. […] Wirth's new headquarters were in Lublin" (E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl*, Nazi Mass Murder: A Documentary History of the Use of Poison Gas*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven/London, 1993, p. 128). Raul Hilberg adds: "On 1 August 1942, Wirth was appointed inspector of the three camps" (see Raul Hilberg, *La Destruction des Juifs d'Europe*, Fayard, Paris, 1988, p. 777).

[8] This Obermeyer was never identified. In his place, the German courts indicted a certain Josef Oberhauser, who was neither a captain nor a native of Pirmasens, but who had stood guard at the entrance to the Belzec Camp. He received a relatively light prison sentence of 4½ years, of which he had to serve only 2¼ years due to excellent conduct.

they claim, was there any question of changing the method of execution by exhaust gas. In fact, they quote a "survivor" (Rudolf Reder) as saying that the new death building included "a two by two meter shed that housed the internal-combustion engine" (*ibid*.). We can deduce from this that, by the end of July 1942, according to the official story, Belzec was equipped with brand-new homicidal facilities that ran on exhaust gas.

Consequently, we fail to see why Kurt Gerstein would have been sent to this camp in mid-August 1942 with the task of "changing [the] gas chambers," which had just been rebuilt, by substituting prussic acid for the exhaust gas used.[9] This is totally absurd.[10]

The affair of the bottles allegedly buried not far from the camp took a new twist in 2002. In an article published by *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire* (No. 73, January-March 2002, pp. 15-25),[11] a member of Pierre Vidal-Naquet's university team, Florent Brayard, wrote (p. 21, note 1):

> *"It should be noted that these bottles appear to have been excavated at Belzec in 1971, according to a summary of Zdzislaw Spaczynski's paper, 'Elementy genezy i topografia obozu w Belzcu,' presented at a colloquium at the University of Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, 25-27 August 1987."*

In drawing the reader's attention to F. Brayard's exceptionally cautious style, I ask him to refer to Appendix B to this chapter, where I share my thoughts on his "discovery."

3) In his "confessions," Kurt Gerstein claims to have witnessed a homicidal gassing the day after his arrival. On 26 April 1945, he wrote: "The naked people are standing on each other's feet, 700-800 on 25 m², 45 m³!" (T I, p. 64). According to him, therefore, in a room measuring 25 m² and 45 m³, 700 to 800 people were crammed together to be gassed, hence around 30 people per m². You don't have to be a revisionist to see that this is totally impossible. I would remind you that, in his book on Auschwitz, Jean-Claude Pressac himself described as "implausible" the allegation made by the first commandant of Auschwitz that "900 people were

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[9] In a first (known) version of his "confessions," Gerstein claimed that, on his arrival in Lublin, General Globocnik told him: "Your second duty: to change our gas chambers, now running on exhaust from an old 'Diesel' engine, to something more toxic and faster, that is, prussic acid." (T I, p. 62).

[10] Before telling Gerstein what his "second task" was, Globocnik had told him that his first priority was to disinfect large quantities of clothing. Clearly, this was the real task entrusted to Kurt Gerstein. Did he carry it out? He gives us no indication of this, which is troubling, to say the least, and can only perplex any reader of good faith.

[11] This article was reprinted in a book edited by Marie-Bénédicte Vincent, *Le Nazisme, régime criminel*, Perrin, coll. Tempus, Paris, 2015, pp. 135-153; Editor's remark.

crammed into 78.2 m².”[12] What did he think when he heard Kurt Gerstein’s “testimony”?

4) According to Gerstein, at Treblinka there were “mountains” of clothes, linen and shoes 35 to 40 meters high (10 to 12 stories high).[13] These inaccessible mounds would have been seen from far and wide, even though, according to our “storyteller,” the Belzec and Treblinka camps were supposed to be completely secret.

5) Depending on the version, between 44,500 and 60,000 people were executed every day in the three smaller camps of Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor. Based on the dates of operation of these camps, we arrive at a total number of victims of between 23.7 and 31.5 million (!). Our extrapolation is justified, since in two versions of his “confessions,” Kurt Gerstein puts the death toll in the Belzec and Treblinka camps alone at 25 million and 20 million, respectively.[14] These extravagant estimates can be compared with the statements made by this SS officer after his voluntary surrender to French troops. The military security captain who conducted his first interrogation was Raymond Cartier, who became a famous journalist after the war. Cartier belatedly shared some of his impressions with Pierre Joffroy:[15]

> *“This Gerstein had been placed under house arrest in a hotel in Rottweil, rather than in a detention camp. In his room, I see a tall, pale, blond man, looking depressed. I remember his eyes, hallucinated eyes. ‘I’m a Christian, an engineer,’ he proclaims. ‘I saw a million people killed* […]. *I was*

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[12] See Jean-Claude Pressac, *Auschwitz. Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York, 1989, p. 127.

[13] “real mountains of clothes and underwear 35-40 meters high” (T I, p. 65); “real mountains of clothes and underwear, about 35-40 m high” (T II, p. 73); “no one would ever be able to find matching pairs in the 35- to 40-meter-high pile” (T V, p. 98).

[14] “At Belcek and at Treblinca, no one bothered counting the number of men killed in any accurate way. […] it will be some 25,000,000 men altogether!” (T II, p. 73); “I estimate the number of those who, defenseless and unarmed, have been murdered […] as at least 20,000,000 human beings” (T VI, p. 118). In her book *Histoire du négationnisme en France* (Le Seuil, Paris, 2000), Valérie Igounet writes: “In January 1947 (cf. *Le Monde*, 18 January 1947, p. 2), an article (unsigned) describes the hearing of K. Gerstein’s written testimony at the Nuremberg trial. Perhaps the journalist thinks that “overestimating the number of victims accentuates the horror perpetrated by the Nazis” (pp. 16f.). The anonymous journalist has neither invented nor overestimated anything; if he mentions 25 million dead, it’s because he has read the PS-1553 version of Kurt Gerstein’s testimony better than Valérie Igounet, who holds a doctorate in history (with honors and unanimous congratulations from the jury). Nor does Igounet seem to know that Kurt Gerstein’s written statement was not accepted as evidence by the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal.

[15] See P. Joffroy, *L’éspion de dieu. La passion de Kurt Gerstein*, revised and expanded edition, Seghers, Paris, 1992, pp. 344f.

in charge of operating the levers (?) of the gas chambers. I saw everything through the skylight. I sent reports to the Swedish Red Cross and the Vatican….' Then Gerstein made some clever calculations in front of R. Cartier, and gravely declared: 'That makes, say, 1,223,425 executions.'"

Stunned, and doubting the sanity of this unusual prisoner, Raymond Cartier abandoned him. He heard of him again much later.

6) According to Kurt Gerstein, corpses at Belzec were dumped in huge pits measuring 100 m x 12 m x 20 m. The depth represents a building of three to four stories. He explains (T VI, p. 117; similar T I, p. 65):

"After some days, the decomposing corpses swelled, then they collapsed heavily a short time afterwards, so that a new layer could be thrown on top; then about 10 cm of sand was spread on top, with the result that only a few isolated heads and arms stuck out."

This passage calls for three comments:

– Kurt Gerstein was only at Belzec for two days. How could he know what happened "after a few days"?
– 10 cm of sand? Can you imagine what a hotbed of infection this pestilential pit would have been? These are favorable conditions for the development of an epidemic that would certainly not have spared the camp's guards.
– In the 1990s, aerial photography expert John C. Ball examined photographs of the Belzec site taken by reconnaissance aircraft in May 1940 and again in May 1944. Knowing that the camp was located on a wooded hill (which had been partially deforested), he concluded that it was impossible to dig large mass graves, given the thin layer of topsoil and the presence of numerous stumps and roots…[16] To this day, his conclusions have not been refuted.

What does this tell us? Clearly, Kurt Gerstein had a very strong propensity for fabrication…

A Chemical Engineer Who Doesn't Seem to Know Anything about Chemistry

Born into a family of Rhineland industrialists and middle-class citizens, Kurt Gerstein studied and graduated as an engineer (mining and chemistry). He seems to have forgotten everything he learned.

[16] John C. Ball, *Air Photo Evidence*, self-published, Delta, B.C., 1993; now in G. Rudolf (ed.), *Air Photo Evidence*, 6th ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2020, pp. 139f.

Indeed, in his first written "confession," dated 26 April 1945, he states that "a large part of the disinfection service was carried out using prussic acid (*Cyankali*)" (T I, p. 61). Now:

1) The term *cyankali* (short for cyankalium) comes from a nineteenth-century chemical nomenclature that was completely outdated by 1945. However, the term had become popular, and was often found in German newspapers in the news section and in crime novels of the 1930s. Were these K. Gerstein's sources?

2) Cyankali does not refer to prussic acid (HCN), but to potassium cyanide (KCN). These two products are as different as hydrochloric acid (HCl), a powerful corrosive, and sodium chloride (NaCl), otherwise known as cooking salt. Hydrogen cyanide is a liquid that can easily turn into a gas; it must therefore be transported in pressure-resistant steel cylinders, like ordinary gas cylinders. Potassium cyanide, on the other hand, appears in crystallized, powder form; it is sold in briquette form and can easily be transported in this form.

It's surprising to see a "specialist" engineer take up a term that not only expired years ago, but also referred to a completely different chemical product.

The word *cyankali*, known to German readers, is totally unknown in France. Kurt Gerstein avoided mentioning *cyankali* during his interrogations in Paris by military magistrates on 26 June and 19 July 1945. Nevertheless, it's worth taking a closer look at the interrogation of 26 June 1945.

In response to a question from the interrogating officer, Gerstein replied:

> *"On 8 June 1942, SS Sturmbannführer GÜNTHER of RSHA gives me the order to transport 260 kg of potassium cyanide to Kollin near Prague."* (See p. 136)

In front of the words "potassium cyanide," we find crossed-out words that read "prussic acid."

Presumably, Kurt Gerstein said "prussic acid" and "potassium cyanide" in succession. The magistrate questioning him probably asked him the exact name of the product being transported. Gerstein maintained "potassium cyanide" and had "prussic acid" (another name for hydrogen cyanide) crossed out of the record.

During the second interrogation, he confirmed that he had transported "potassium cyanide" in steel bottles (see p. 140). Can briquettes or a powder be bottled?

I think K. Gerstein really did go to Kolin near Prague. In the truck following his car, he loaded steel bottles containing hydrogen cyanide for disinfecting clothes at the Belzec and Treblinka camps.[17] It was a banal operation that the SS officer turned into a criminal one through his imagination.

Kurt Gerstein's Strange Personality

From his youth, Kurt Gerstein showed an irresistible taste for provocation, a taste he retained into his maturity (assuming he ever became mature).

Here are a few of his "facetious" antics:[18]

- As early as 1925, Gerstein took on responsibilities in the youth movement of the Evangelical Church. He sometimes whispers to one of the boys in his charge: "God doesn't exist!" This was, of course, to test the faith of these teenagers, he assures us.
- In 1936, as a young deputy at the Saarland Mining Department, he was in charge of organizing Miners' Day in Saarbrücken. He took advantage of the occasion to send hundreds of German notables a flyer specifying that, for rail transport, special wagons for rabid dogs and contagious people were planned. Gerstein's best hagiographer, Pierre Joffroy alias Maurice Weil, sees this as an act of resistance to the National-Socialist regime (*sic*).
- In 1937, he had just belatedly begun studying medicine and dreamed of following in Dr. Schweitzer's footsteps. One day, in the middle of the street, he tries to treat a man suffering from apoplexy. A real doctor has to chase him away.
- At the same time, he was experimenting on a teenager with a cystoscopy device of his own invention. The experiment would have gone badly wrong had it not been for the intervention of a specialist, who was called in to help.
- In the same 1930s, Gerstein, who had considerable financial means at his disposal after his mother's death, bought a BMW sports car, forgetting that he didn't have a driver's license.

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[17] Editor's remark: The Kolin plant produced Zyklon B, liquid hydrogen cyanide soaked on gypsum pellets, packaged in tin cans. They did not fill it into small steel bottles. Hence, Gerstein, who sold Zyklon B to Waffen-SS and SS units as a main part of his official job, certainly picked up Zyklon-B cans in Kolin, if anything at all.

[18] P. Joffroy recounts these and many other "fatuities" in his book *L'éspion de dieu (God's Spy)*. P. Joffroy does not dispute the originality of K. Gerstein's character, but he believes that the "holy man" (as Tartuffe would have put it) was already shining through beneath the oddball.

Raul Hilberg's Alleged Scientific Credentials

Professor Faurisson wrote in 1984 that Raul Hilberg is the most intelligent of his opponents. Hilberg is Professor of Political Science at the University of Vermont (USA) and author of the major work *The Destruction of the European Jews*. In the first edition, dated 1961, Kurt Gerstein is quoted 23 times. During Ernst Zündel's trial in Toronto in 1985, Raul Hilberg was cross-examined about Gerstein by Zündel's lawyer Douglas Christie, advised by Robert Faurisson. Hilberg eventually agreed that certain parts of Gerstein's texts were "pure nonsense."[19]

However, in the 1991 French edition (*La Destruction des Juifs d'Europe II*, Gallimard, coll. Folio-Histoire, Paris, 1991) Kurt Gerstein is quoted four more times. I particularly note the quotation on page 775, which takes up ten and a half lines. Hilberg writes (pp. 957, 959f. in the 2003 English edition):

> *"One day in August 1942, Eichmann's deputy, Günther, and the chief disinfectant, Kurt Gerstein, arrived at Belzec. They had around 100 kg of Zyklon with them and were about to convert the carbon-monoxide chambers to hydrogen cyanide. In front of a terribly embarrassed and mortified Wirth, K. Gerstein timed the operation.* […] *Wirth abandoned all pride and asked K. Gerstein not to 'propose another type of gas chamber in Berlin.' Gerstein agreed and ordered the Zyklon to be buried, claiming that it had spoiled."*

In this short extract, there are several untruths:

1) Günther did not accompany Gerstein to Belzec. The latter writes only that, on 8 June 1942, Günther, whom he had never seen before, entered his office in civilian clothes and ordered him to transport 100 kg of hydrogen cyanide (260 kg according to some versions) to a location known only to the driver.[20] This simple scene begs the question: how could a stranger in civilian clothes give an order to an officer who wasn't his subordinate?

Kurt Gerstein did have a travelling companion: the harmless Professor Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, who was a medical doctor and professor of hygiene at the University of Marburg. Today, he is presented as the person who "essentially" confirmed Gerstein's accounts. But the truth is quite different.

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[19] *"Parts are corroborated; others are pure nonsense*" (see Barbara Kulaszka (ed.), *Did Six Million Really Die? Report of the Evidence in the Canadian "False News" Trial of Ernst Zündel – 1988*, Samisdat Publishers Ltd., Toronto, 1992, p. 31, col. B).

[20] "On 8 June 1942, SS Sturmbannführer Guenther […], unknown to me, entered my duty room in civilian clothes. He ordered me to take 100 kgs of prussic acid from a truck and go to a location known only to the driver." (T I, p. 61).

Pfannenstiel accompanied Gerstein by chance, because he too was on his way to Lublin, close to Belzec, and there was a free seat in the car (T I, p. 61). In his first "confession," Gerstein did not hesitate to compromise the doctor, stating that he had not only taken advantage of his car but had also witnessed the conversation during which Odilo Globocnik, head of the SS and Lublin Police, had revealed that a mass massacre was being carried out, and that those who revealed it would be immediately shot.[21] (Why would a general speak imprudently in front of someone who had no business knowing any of it? Why not ask him to wait outside?) On 26 June 1945, during his interrogation, Kurt Gerstein even agreed to give Pfannenstiel's home address to the examining magistrate who asked for it (see p. 136).

And so, in 1945, the unlucky doctor, who is said to have witnessed the operations described by Kurt Gerstein, found himself fifth on a list of the main culprits sought by the French delegation to the United Nations War Crimes Commission. He came right after Adolf Hitler, Heinrich Himmler, Eickmann [Eichmann], and Günther (see below). Gosh!

Having been taken prisoner in Austria by the Americans, he was finally located and interrogated for the first time in 1947. Although he admitted having been to Lublin, he initially denied having witnessed "the killing" (i.e. homicidal gassing; see p. 397). The investigating judge then told him:

> *"The beginning of your story is good, then it gets worse. Would you like to go over your story one more time."* (See p. 398)

It could hardly have been made clearer that Pfannenstiel was not expected to give accurate answers, but only to confirm Gerstein's own. On 6 June 1950, when he was questioned again, he finally gave "satisfactory" answers. He confirmed that Jews were indeed gassed at Belzec, that six diesel-operated concrete gas chambers existed there, and that he himself had witnessed a gassing.[22] The only notable differences with Kurt Gerstein are:

a. Pfannenstiel spoke of a gassing that "lasted a relatively short time," "eighteen minutes until no more noise came from the chamber," whereas, according to Gerstein, it took 2 hours 49 minutes for the engine to start, and 32 minutes for everyone to die. So, for a total of 3 hours and 21 minutes, Gerstein and Pfannenstiel would have waited patiently for

[21] "At Kollin, near Prague, we loaded the truck with the acid and drove to Lublin/Poland. There, SS Gruppenführer Globocnek was waiting for us. As there was still room in the car, I had taken the SS Obersturmbannführer Professor Dr. Pfannenstiel with me. Globocnek told us: 'This is one of the most secret things there is. Anyone who talks about it will be shot immediately.'" (T I, p. 61).

[22] See Kogon *et al.*, *Nazi Mass Murder*, *op. cit.*, pp. 130f.; subsequent quotes from there.

the "criminal" operation to unfold from start to finish. Can such an account be believed? Let's not forget that the two SS officers had come to Belzec and Lublin not as "spectators," but to carry out specific work. Would the camp commander have allowed them to do nothing for more than three hours?

b. Pfannenstiel stated that the corpses were thrown "into large ditches, where they were burnt," whereas, according to Gerstein, the corpses were placed in mass graves covered by 10 cm of sand and rotted there.

But it didn't matter. Pfannenstiel had "essentially" confirmed Gerstein's allegations, while also stripping them of their delusional character: there was no longer talk of 700 to 800 people in 25 m², but of gas chambers, the capacity of which the "witness" had forgotten ("I cannot give any details as to the capacity of the six chambers"); there was no longer any mention of a 100 x 20 x 12 m pit, but of mere "large ditches," with no further details; finally, there was no longer any mention of a 35 to 40 m high "mountain" of clothes and shoes, but of "huge piles in the camp."

Pfannenstiel had done what was expected of him. A month later, on 12 July 1950, he was released (see p. 398). He was no longer considered a war criminal… Hilberg himself points out that Pfannenstiel does not appear to have been tried (see R. Hilberg, *La Destruction*…, *op. cit.*, p. 952).

No one could blame him. High on a list of war criminals, this was the only way for the peaceful doctor to regain his freedom, look after his large family, and start a new career. Survival was at that price!

2) Contrary to what Raul Hilberg has written, K. Gerstein was not carrying "Zyklon" (the trade name for a hydrogen-cyanide-based disinfestant). He was very familiar with Zyklon B, which came in pellets of porous material soaked in hydrogen cyanide. Zyklon B, a solid product, was contained in metal cans. Kurt Gerstein never imagined that Zyklon B could be used for anything other than disinfestation. To a French military magistrate, he explains that this product (which he mistakenly calls potassium cyanide) was contained in 45 steel bottles; it was therefore, in his opinion, a liquid or gaseous product, and not solid like Zyklon B.

3) What was Kurt Gerstein's mission, according to Hilberg? To convert the carbon-monoxide chambers to hydrogen cyanide. This claim is inane. To the same magistrate in Paris, who asked him on 19 July 1945: "How was the cyanide to have been used technically for extermination?", Gerstein replied:

> *"GÜNTER in Berlin did not have the slightest idea about it. He supposed that I must have some idea. But in reality, I did not because I never used cyanide except for disinfection."* (See p. 143)

Truly, these SS executioners were like the Nickel-Plated Feet.[23]

4) Chamber operating on carbon monoxide, breaking down due to diesel-engine failure. Hilberg's assertion comes up against a technical obstacle: the diesel engine emits a lot of carbon dioxide (CO_2) yet very little carbon monoxide (CO). But it is CO that is lethal, not CO_2. A gasoline engine, not a diesel, would have done the deed.[24]

5) It was not at the suggestion of Christian Wirth (Belzec's camp commandant until 1 August 1942) that Kurt Gerstein insisted to have "ordered the Zyklon to be buried, claiming that it had spoiled." In fact, Gerstein stated that the bottles of hydrogen cyanide were hidden *before* arriving at the Belzec Camp, meaning before meeting Wirth, who didn't come to Belzec until the following day.

Some Historical Lies in the Film *Amen*

Costa-Gavras's film has two aims: to drag Pope Pius XII – and, through him, the Catholic Church – through the mud, and to make people believe that the "Holocaust" actually happened.

And yet, not content with using an obvious fabulist as his "hero," Costa-Gavras has produced a work riddled with historical lies (even by official standards) that are not innocent. Here are just a few examples.

According to the film, Kurt Gerstein witnesses a gassing operation at Belzec using Zyklon B: we see SS men standing on the roof, pouring crystals down the chimney; an empty can rolls and falls to the ground; the label reads "Zyklon." Kurt Gerstein peers through a peephole and recoils in horror. An SS man tells him quietly: "It's pretty terrible." "There aren't ten people in the world who have seen what you've seen." Why didn't Costa-Gavras respect Gerstein's claim that the gassing was carried out using an old diesel engine that took almost three hours to start up? Was he afraid

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[23] The equivalent French expression *pieds nickelés* was coined by Tristan Bernard, a French humorist of Jewish origin (1866-1947), to designate malingerers. *Les pieds nickelés* is also the name of the heroes of an early 20th-Century comic strip, where the heroes by that name failed in all their endeavors. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Pieds_Nickel%C3%A9s.

[24] For the operation of the diesel engine, see Friedrich Paul Berg, "The Diesel Gas Chambers: Myth within a Myth," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring 1984, pp. 15-46, here p. 24; corrected and expanded as "Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder" in G. Rudolf, *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 4th ed., Armreg, London, 2024, pp. 421-462.

that many viewers would question the validity of the thesis that industrial extermination was carried out using such primitive means?

Another scene shows Gerstein in his SS uniform on his way to the Nunciature in Berlin. In front of the Nuncio, he declares that he has a message for the Vatican. He says that millions of Jews are being murdered in Auschwitz and Belzec, and that he has seen it with his own eyes. He is merely asked whether he is Catholic. Gerstein replies that what he saw haunts him day and night. He is rebuffed by the nuncio, who believes this to be a provocation by the Gestapo: "An SS man defending the Jews," he says. We're being taken for idiots.

But even if you believe the SS officer, you only have to read his testimony to know that he never met the nuncio in Berlin, Monsignor Orsenigo. Gerstein writes (T I, p. 66):

> *"My attempt to refer all this to the head of the Holy Father's legation met with little success. I was asked whether I was a soldier. Then they refused to talk to me."*

The film's fabricated scene lends credence to Gerstein's account, as some would say: "It's easy to see why the Nuncio turned him down. It was quite impossible for an SS man to betray a state secret in the middle of Berlin and in uniform. It did 'smell' like a set-up. If Gerstein had come discreetly, dressed as a simple civilian, he probably would have been listened to." This is common sense. The trouble is that, in his "confessions," Kurt Gerstein wrote: "I was asked whether I was a soldier." He had presented himself in civilian clothes, otherwise he would never have been asked this question. So why was he dismissed without being listened to? It was certainly to avoid this awkward question that Costa-Gavras took up the claim – already evoked by Alain Decaux – that Gerstein arrived in SS uniform. In an attempt to lend credence to the SS officer's "testimony," those who use it are forced to take liberties with his account. What an admission!

Another scene shows Gerstein in Rome. There, he goes to see his friend, the young clergyman Ricardo, whom he first met at the Nunciature in Berlin. They had struck up a friendship because, scandalized by the Nuncio's behavior, Ricardo had finally gone to see Kurt Gerstein at his home to obtain details of the mass murders. The young clergyman then managed to speak personally to the Pope in Rome. But the Pope merely replied: "I know the suffering of the world, Ricardo" and "My heart bleeds for the victims." Ricardo's father – who held a prominent position in the Vatican – had nevertheless promised his son that Pius XII, in his Christmas homily, would denounce the massacres. But this promise had not been

kept, on the grounds that the Pope could say nothing until he had "tangible proof." That is why Ricardo had finally invited Kurt Gerstein to come to Rome, so that Pius XII could be informed by direct witness.

So, here is the SS officer in Rome. First, he tells his friend that three million Jews have already been gassed, and gives him a map of the "death camps" and bills for Zyklon B. Then he tries to get an interview with a cardinal. The cardinal refuses to receive an SS man, especially as the SS-man is a traitor to his country. Ricardo replies: "Sometimes treason is the last refuge of the righteous."

Once again, this is a false scene through and through. Anyone with an interest in the subject knows that Kurt Gerstein never went to Rome to meet anyone close to Pius XII. As for the young Jesuit Ricardo, he is a character invented by Rolf Hochhuth.

Costa-Gavras also attempts to lend credence to the legend that the Vatican received a "Gerstein report" as early as 1942, but that, even when warned, the ecclesiastical authorities were completely disinterested in the issue. He takes the opportunity to denounce U.S. apathy. In my opinion, this is the most outrageous scene in the film: Ricardo arrives late for a dinner attended by several ecclesiastics (including a completely washed-up cardinal) and the U.S. ambassador to the Vatican. Without waiting, he gives the cardinal a map that Kurt Gerstein had given him, showing the location of the "death camps," the total number of deportees already gassed, and forecasts for the future. The document is circulated. But none of those seated at the table seem moved, as they are all too busy shelling their crayfish in a setting of unprecedented luxury. The U.S. ambassador simply says: "Only our victory can save them." Ricardo retorts: "By then, they'll be reduced to ashes." Then he asks the Pope to intervene. The Cardinal replies: "He must remain neutral, otherwise Hitler will invade the Vatican." The ambassador continues: "If we slow down our war effort to save the Jews, that will do Hitler good." Then, cutting the awkward conversation short, the cardinal declares that Easter should fall on the same date every year; it is being discussed. The "Holocaust" is forgotten! Disgusted, Ricardo leaves the table.

Here we find the main themes used by the propagators of the "Holocaust" myth. By 1942, everyone knew (or could have known), but nobody was interested in the fate of the Jews: the Allies were only concerned with winning the war; Catholics were thinking about their own peacetime affairs.

In a review published by *Histoire du christianisme magazine* (No. 9, p. 5), we read: "You'd almost forget that this is a fictional scene, and so cartoonish!" That's exactly what we must not forget! Not only is this meal scene entirely invented, but to this day, no one has been able to prove that the Vatican ever received a "report from Kurt Gerstein." In my thesis, defended in 1985, I studied the question of any writings on "extermination" that Kurt Gerstein might have written before 1945. Only one has been found, dated 1943 and written in… Dutch. This strange document, written on a single sheet of paper, is handwritten, but not by Kurt Gerstein, who, incidentally, knew nothing of the Dutch language. What's more, it was "discovered" after the war, under astonishing circumstances: at the bottom of a chicken coop, spared by the Germans who had set fire to the house of a Dutch Resistance fighter (*sic*). Naturally, this document is unsigned. It is so suspect that none of the SS officer's biographers has seen fit to point it out (see Note 4 on p. 48). In his book on *Pie XII et le IIIe Reich*, well-known historian Saul Friedländer wants to convince his reader that a report written of 1942 does exist, but he can offer nothing of value in favor of this thesis. We read there:[25]

> *"It was then that he* [Gerstein] *sent a report to the legal adviser of Archbishop Preysing of Berlin, asking that it be forwarded to the Holy See. There is no reason to believe that the text was not sent to Rome.*
> *The Gerstein report of 1942 was probably virtually identical to the one he wrote on 4 May 1945, since it describes the same event* […].
> […] *given that the Holy See has never denied having received the Gerstein report during the war, we can assume that a text identical to the one we are about to quote was transmitted to the Supreme Pontiff by Archbishop Preysing at the end of 1942."*

It is all hot air. The claim that Gerstein sent a report to Mgr. Preysing's legal advisor is based solely on the allegations of this same… Kurt Gerstein.[26] On the basis of this fact, which he considers to be established, Friedländer goes from one daring deduction to the next: "There is no reason to believe that …," "probably"; "we can assume that …." Sorry, Mr. Friedländer, but, as I wrote as long ago as 1985 (see p. 48):

> *"In fact, the fact that a supposed recipient did not deny having received a supposed document does not suffice to consider that this document is very likely to have existed."*

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[25] See S. Friedländer, *Pie XII et le IIIe Reich*, Le Seuil, Paris, 1964, p. 123.

[26] In his "Confessions," in fact, after unsuccessfully trying to warn the papal nuncio in Berlin, he states: "I had all this told to him by Mgr. Doctor Winter, secretary of the Catholic episcopate of Berlin." (T I, p. 66).

At the time, I concluded shortly afterwards as follows:

> *"*[…] *there is not the slightest indication that Gerstein wrote any text in 1942 or later, before April 1945."*

Almost twenty years later, my position remains the same: until historians have done their job properly, until they have seriously demonstrated the reality of this report allegedly sent to the Vatican, I have no reason to believe in its existence, and I can only denounce the methods of people like Costa-Gavras, who make a mockery of the truth and seek only provocation.

Gerstein: a Mythomaniac Who Wanted to Play a Big Role

Gerstein had all the hallmarks of a mythomaniac. Unfit for military service, he was physically afflicted with severe hypoglycemia, requiring him to carry numerous sugar cubes in his pockets. He was prone to pre-comatose states.[27]

We know from a letter to his father that he was hospitalized in Helsinki (Finland) in March 1944. In autumn 1944, he was hospitalized again, but in Berlin. Were these hospital stays due to hypoglycemia or mental imbalance?[28]

I met Gerstein's widow in 1983. This naïve pastor's daughter was defending the memory of her husband, whose personality she had struggled to understand between 1937 and 1945, during a married life disrupted by his chronic instability.

Kurt Gerstein never had a permanent position in industry or administration; he collected internships, which he owed to his family connections. Enlisted for the duration of the war, he was forced to stay for over three years at the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute in Berlin. This stability must have been very hard for him, as it did not suit his temperament.

Gerstein's passion was to dazzle everyone he came into contact with with his interpersonal skills. He shopped extensively for gifts to be given to those who could be of use to him. In times of scarcity, he found ways to procure rare commodities (chocolate, oil, coffee, etc.).

He probably used his own money, but he also juggled with his budget for disinfestants. This was his way of "living dangerously," as Nietzsche

[27] In a letter to Elfriede Gerstein dated 1 October 1957, Dr. Nissen, Gerstein's colleague at the Berlin Institute of Hygiene, writes: "His glycemic imbalance sometimes provoked pre-comatose states in your husband, which would explain his absent-mindedness and some of his strange reactions" (see S. Friedländer, *K. Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, Casterman, Tournai, 1967, p. 152).

[28] As far back as 1967, L. Poliakov wrote: "Psychiatrists would have a lot to tell us about the Gerstein case" (see the afterword to S. Friedländer's book, cited in the previous note, p. 200).

put it (a precept he interpreted in a way that the philosopher would naturally have disavowed). In his "confessions," he insists that he did not pay the invoices of the company that supplied the Zyklon B on time, and even left them unpaid (see Doc. NI-115028 and T II, p. 75). His widow confirmed this to me, believing that her husband was acting as an act of resistance, when in fact he was merely hindering the normal process of disinfestation in the camps, which were ravaged by epidemics.[29]

In 1985, two years after seeing me, she made an identical revelation to Pierre Joffroy. Towards the end of the winter of 1941-1942, she was urgently "summoned" to Berlin by her husband. She found him in a state of exceptional distress: he was expecting to be arrested and shot. In fact, nothing happened to him, and "Elfriede [the widow's first name] later wondered whether the real reason for her panic was not the auditing of the Institute's accounts at the end of the year" (see P. Joffroy, *op. cit.*, p. 186).

As for me, I made a discovery on the *Encyclopædia Universalis* online site (www.universalis.fr). Didier Schulmann, chief curator of the Centre Pompidou, writes of the "Nazi" spoliations of works of art: "All traces had been lost of the [painting titled] 'Pink Wall of the Calvi Hospital' painted by Matisse in 1897 […]. It was rediscovered in July 1947, in Tübingen, in the cache of an SS officer, Kurt Gerstein […]." If the latter had acquired it under normal conditions, would he have needed to hide it in a cache? None of Kurt Gerstein's hagiographers mentioned this suspicious affair. Yet the works of Léon Poliakov, Saul Friedländer, Pierre Joffroy, etc., all post-date 1947. Was the secret so well kept?

In the internet section, we again read:

> *"Kurt K Gerstein's testimony is a central piece in the description of the extermination system; his words constitute the only existing, precise, technical and detailed testimony to the gassing of Jews that he witnessed, as a supplier of Zyklon B for the Belzec and Treblinka camps."*

Admittedly, the chief curator of the Centre Pompidou is not a historian. However, his remark is not wrong. After the written testimonies of Pery Broad, Miklós Nyiszli and several others, including that of Rudolf Höss, the first commandant of the Auschwitz Camp, were consigned to oblivion, Kurt Gerstein's testimony seems to be the last, after having been the first, since it bears the date 26 April 1945. As for the adjectives "precise, technical, detailed," they could be replaced by "bizarre, vague and implausible."

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[29] "I had the invoices written in my name […] to better make the toxic acid disappear. I never paid for these deliveries […]" (see Doc. PS-1553, p. 5 of the original; here T II, p. 75).

Kurt Gerstein "blew the minds" of all those who came into contact with him during his lifetime. He continued to do so after his death. He "blew the minds" of many authors of concentration-camp literature.

The media of the time were "blown away" by it as well, as is witnessed by the article published in *L'Avenir du plateau central*, reproduced in the appendix.[30]

It "blew the mind" of Rolf Hochhuth, who used it to defame Pope Pius XII and make all Catholics feel guilty.

When the "Faurisson Affair" erupted at the end of 1978, court historians brandished Kurt Gerstein's "testimony" as an account "indisputable in its essentials" (see *Le Monde*, 21 February 1979, p. 23).

But ten years later, Léon Poliakov, who prided himself on having been "the first to publish, in France at least," the "Gerstein report," was forced to admit:[31]

> *"Admittedly, Gerstein's reports contained a number of errors. He had seen an extermination camp only once, and only from a distance; it was the Polish camp of Belzec."*

Today, it is likely that Kurt Gerstein has ceased to "blow the minds" of the all too few lucid and courageous historians. On 5 September 1996, Ernst Nolte wrote to François Furet:

> *"*[…] *even eyewitness accounts that were widespread in the 50s, such as that of* […] *senior official Kurt Gerstein, member of the Confessing Church, are no longer included in the bibliography of orthodox researchers."* (*Commentaire*, Winter 1997, p. 800)

Does this mean that Kurt Gerstein made it all up: Kolin and his trip to Lublin, his visit to Belzec etc.? Personally, I don't think so. We know that he voluntarily joined the Wafffen-SS in March 1941, and that he underwent military training until May 1941. We know that he was assigned to the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute in June 1941, before being promoted to second lieutenant in November 1941, then to lieutenant "specialist" (category F) in April 1943. Since January 1942, he was head of the "Sanitary Technology" department, specializing in stationary and mobile disinfestation equipment and filters for drinking water for the troops at the front, and for prisoners in the camps.

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[30] Editor's remark: The article in question cannot originate from *L'Avenir du plateau central*, because this was a wartime newspaper of the occupational government under Marshal Pétain. It was banned after the liberation of Clermont-Ferrand in August 1944.

[31] *L'envers du destin. Entretiens avec Georges-Élia Sarfati*, ed. de Fallois, Paris, 1989, p. 114.

In his "confessions," he states that Globocnik told him on his arrival in Lublin:

> *"You'll need – says Globocnek – to disinfect very large quantities of clothing* […]." (T I, p. 62; similar T II, p. 70)
>
> *"It is your task to carry out successfully the disinfection of very large quantities of textiles."* (T III, p. 78)

It's also interesting to note his description of the Belzec Camp. He saw a cloakroom hut with a large counter for depositing "valuables"; then a huge room with a hundred chairs where new arrivals had their hair shorn; and then a sign pointing the way to the "baths & inhalations" (T I, p. 62).

The next day, Gerstein witnessed the arrival of a convoy. People were stripped, shaved and disinfected. To those wondering about their fate, the answer was (T I, p. 63):

> *"True, men have to work, building streets and houses. But women don't have to. Only if they want to, they can help in the household or in the kitchen."*

All this fits in perfectly with the thesis that presents Belzec as a simple transit camp. The Jews stopped long enough for themselves and their clothes to be disinfested. Then those fit for work were separated from the unfit, and their paths diverged. The former were transported to labor units, while the latter were sent further east.

Bearing in mind that the first major deportations began in the first half of 1942, and that the Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor camps came into operation during this period (between March and July 1942), it's not surprising that a disinfestation specialist like Kurt Gerstein was called in to solve the unforeseen problems that inevitably arose, in particular the disinfestation of huge quantities of clothing.

In my opinion, this is the true core of the story of Kurt Gerstein, a simple "specialist" junior officer who was given a mundane task corresponding to his specialty. Like all mythomaniacs bored by routine, Gerstein started from this – too – simple reality, and gave free rein to his imagination. The rumors of the time provided him with the opportunity. Dreaming of playing a major role, he created a character for himself, that of the witness who had seen, who knew the secret. But the people he spoke to (among them the Swedish diplomat Göran von Otter) – understandably – didn't believe him. The end of the war and the intense Allied propaganda campaign from April 1945 onwards provided him with a new opportunity to play the role he had hoped for: he went to the French authorities and told his stories. For a time, he thought he had succeeded. In a letter written to his wife on 26 May 1945, he declared that they were "very strongly inter-

ested in [his] case" and that he would "appear before the International Court of Justice as one of the main witnesses against the war criminals […]."[32] But things didn't turn out as planned. On 25 July 1945, he was found hanged in his cell under mysterious circumstances.

Under normal circumstances, Kurt Gerstein would have quickly joined a cohort of other mythomaniacs in the night of oblivion. This is exactly what almost happened, as his "confessions" were not even accepted at Nuremberg. It was not until several years later that he finally played his part, albeit posthumously. In 1951, Léon Poliakov partially published the typed version of 26 April 1945, not without serious distortions and omissions.[33] Since then, other authors have taken an interest in the "Gerstein Case," including the filmmaker Costa-Gavras. I know that the latter had my thesis in his hands, a year before he began shooting his film.[34] Has he also read Ernst Nolte's assessment? In any case, he didn't care. The provocative filmmaker had a good subject; he wasn't going to let it go. Above all, he didn't want to miss out. But, paradoxically, his film may one day serve the revisionist cause. How could that be? Because at the end of the film, the screen reads:[35]

> *"The Gerstein report contributed to the authentication of the Holocaust.* […After having been convicted by a denazification court,] *Gerstein was rehabilitated twenty years later."*

As for me, I've tried to get as close as possible to the truth, without ignoring the fact that there may still be a few grey areas, as is the case with all stories of this kind. My conclusion is that the Gerstein reports – plural, not singular – are worthless.

If the opponents of historical revisionism of the Second World War have been reduced to making abundant use of such a "document" (in numerous books, in countless articles, in a play, and finally in a film), it's obvious that they are at a loss to "authenticate the Holocaust." They have chosen the wrong person and the wrong (alleged) evidence to blame not

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[32] "But since everyone is very strongly interested in my case, and as I have to appear before the International Court of Justice as one of the main witnesses against the war criminals, I cannot yet say anything more definite." (see p. 134).

[33] See L. Poliakov, *Bréviaire de la haine*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris, 1951, pp. 220-224.

[34] Alerted by a revisionist who told him about the existence of a thesis on Kurt Gerstein's "confessions," Costa-Gavras sent one of his relatives to my home. I sold him a copy of the book *La thèse de Nantes et l'affaire Roques*. It was probably early autumn 2000.

[35] After his death, Kurt Gerstein was in fact initially placed in the category of "lesser offenders" by a denazification court, which even refused to rehabilitate him in 1950. It was only in 1965 that the SS officer was fully rehabilitated, thanks to the case brought by Rolf Hochhuth with his play *Der Stellvertreter* (in French: *Le Vicaire*).

only Catholics as a whole, but the whole world, including the Allies, through the symbolic person of Pope Pius XII.

Will Costa-Gavras's latest film one day turn against the real falsifiers of history? I hope so.

Appendix A

Article published in 1945 (or 1946)



Les révélations de Nuremberg

15.000 Juifs étaient gazés chaque jour au camp de BELBEC

La Haute-Cour américaine des crimes de guerre a entendu, à Nuremberg, le long récit détaillé des exterminations massives de juifs au camp de Belbec, près de Lublin, en Pologne occupée par les Allemands. Il s'agissait de la déposition écrite de l'ingénieur des mines westphalien nommé Kurt Gerstein qui entra, dit-il, dans les Waffen SS « afin de pénétrer à l'intérieur des camps de concentration les plus fermés » et de crier au monde entier le résultat de ses observations.

Vers la mi-août, Gerstein inspecta ce camp où l'on gazait 15.000 israélites par jour. Il assista à l'arrivée d'un train de 6.700 victimes, dont 1.450 étaient déjà mortes quand le convoi pénétra dans la gare.

Les chambres à gaz avaient une capacité d'environ 45 mètres cubes. Dans l'une d'entre elles, 5.000 juifs furent effroyablement entassés et attendirent 24 heures le moment de leur mort. Le moteur diesel dont les gaz devaient les asphyxier ne parvenant pas à se mettre en marche...

Pendant ce temps, d'autres juifs attendaient leur tour dehors.

Des dentistes arrachaient les dents d'or en ouvrant les mâchoires crispées avec des crochets de fer et les corps étaient lancés pêle-mêle dans les fosses béantes qui débordaient bientôt.

Selon le propre témoignage de Kurt Gerstein, le nombre de juifs et de déportés d'Europe centrale, massacrés par les nazis dans les camps d'extermination s'élève à 25 millions de victimes.

Appendix B: On Warning Agents and Buried Bottles

On an article by Florent Brayard, published in *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire*, No. 73, January-March 2002, pp. 15-25.

Florent Brayard recently defended his thesis on "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question" ("*La solution finale de la question juive*"), which the newspaper *Le Monde*, in one of its "Le Monde des livres" issues, has announced for publication. In the meantime, we can highlight a few points of interest to revisionists in the article referenced above. This article bears a title that seems to me rather pedantic, namely "Humanity versus Zyklon B," which could more simply be expressed as: "Concern for humanity versus Zyklon B."

Absence of Warning Agent in Zyklon B Delivered to K. Gerstein Proves Nothing

It is clear that, for Florent Brayard, Zyklon B, a powerful disinfestant and vermin exterminator used by the German army since the early 1920s, was above all used in certain camps in occupied Poland to kill Jewish deportees in special slaughterhouses known as "gas chambers." On this point, Brayard is in no doubt.

He is only troubled by Kurt Gerstein's ambiguous attitude. In his 1967 book, Saul Friedländer had already pondered this subject, and gave it the title *Kurt Gerstein or the Ambiguity of Goodness*. Brayard goes much further: the subtitle of his article is "The Ambiguity of Kurt Gerstein's *choice*" ("*L'ambiguïté du choix de Kurt Gerstein*"). Brayard concludes that Kurt Gerstein is not the "spy of God" proclaimed by Pierre Joffroy, nor even the "saint lost in the century," as another hagiographer put it. Could he be, after all, a "Righteous among the Gentiles," as defined by Léon Poliakov? Brayard doesn't completely rule out this hypothesis, but he is careful not to assert anything.

In fact, he sees in Kurt Gerstein first an Obersturmführer (lieutenant) in charge of the camp disinfestation department. In this capacity, he placed orders for Zyklon B and ensured that they were carried out correctly.

Kurt Gerstein never wrote in his "confessions," nor did he state during his interrogations, that he had witnessed a homicidal gassing with Zyklon B. He only mentioned a large order for hydrogen cyanide (8,500 kg) placed by a certain Rolf Günther in early 1944. However, an analysis of document NI-115028 leads to the conclusion that Gerstein ordered and left unpaid 3,400 kg of Zyklon B for around 11 months at the time of the German surrender, which represents around 310 kg per month for all the camps.

We've said on many occasions that the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg accepted only a few invoices for Zyklon B in January 1946, addressed to Kurt Gerstein instead of the real client, the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute in Berlin. The IMT was silent on the "testimony" itself. In

this connection, Florent Brayard reveals something very important, which, to my knowledge, had always been overlooked. This revelation explains why the invoices for Zyklon B accepted by the IMT were marked: "Caution, without warning agent) ("*Vorsicht, ohne Warnstoff*").

This is where Brayard brings in what he calls Gerstein's "concern for humanity." Gerstein is said to have asked the firm that supplied Zyklon B to remove the warning irritant (*Warnstoff*). Why, according to Brayard? To make the victims' deaths more gentle. But the author of the thesis can't avoid giving us the gist of his thinking. "The improvement proposed by Gerstein," he writes, "was very much on the margin of a project in which it was nonetheless a part: killing Jews without making them suffer, but killing them all the same" (p. 23, col. A).

Florent Brayard doesn't question Zyklon B's homicidal function. However, since he has done some research, which we can only congratulate him on, he tells us in a paragraph on the same page 23 (col. 8) that "the shortage situation created by the war had led to a change in the composition of Zyklon B, resulting in a drastic reduction in the addition of the irritant (from 5% to 0.5%)." He adds, disillusioned: "between almost nothing and nothing at all, the distinction is hard to make."

It would have been simpler to write that the absence of an irritant cannot be used by orthodox authors to reinforce their hypothesis that Zyklon B was used to kill people.

The Case of the Bottles Buried Near Belzec

Florent Brayard also comments on the famous automobile journey from Berlin to Belzec in Poland, made by Kurt Gerstein accompanied, by chance, by Professor Dr. Pfannenstiel, who had taken advantage of a free seat in the car. The travelers stopped off at the Kolin factory near Prague to load 45 bottles of liquid prussic acid, if we believe Kurt Gerstein. Referring to document NI-11950, Brayard mentions in a note (p. 22, note 1) that a certain Victor Graf, an employee of the factory, remembered delivering prussic acid in liquid form. As Graf's interrogation is dated 12 March 1946, one wonders why the investigators didn't simply consult the plant's archives. This would have been far more effective and convincing, since the warehouse storage and accounting departments had certainly kept track of a delivery of this size, made less than four years earlier, in August 1942. Wouldn't it have been the best proof of the reality of this delivery? Why did they disregard it?

Florent Brayard continues his study by recalling that Kurt Gerstein concealed the bottles of hydrogen cyanide before arriving at the camp, giving the pretext that the product was "decomposed and dangerous."

This time, in footnote 1 on page 21, the article's author writes:

> *"It should be noted that these bottles appear to have been excavated at Belzec in 1971, if we are to believe a summary of Zdzislaw Spaczynski's paper, 'Elementy genezy i topografia obozu w Belzcu,' presented at a colloquium of the University of Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, 25-27 August 1987."*

Note Brayard's careful style. Who has heard of the recovery of the acid bottles in 1971? Was an appraisal made? Certainly not. No scientific examination is mentioned, which is very strange. As for the 1987 symposium in Lublin, it is said to have taken place with suspicious discretion.[1]

The political and media uproar caused by my thesis defense in Nantes date back to 1986. My opponents missed a great opportunity to confound me by failing to "reveal" in 1987 that Kurt Gerstein had been telling the truth about the bottles hidden in the countryside near the Belzec Camp.

As for 1971, it was also the year in which the Gerstein file, "misplaced" since November 1945 after being sent to Poland via the French delegate to the War Crimes Commission in London, "mysteriously" returned to the Directorate of Military Justice in Paris. This was on 3 August 1971. Was it a coincidence?

We await the publication of Florent Brayard's thesis with interest, as it would be surprising if revisionists did not have severe criticisms to express on many other points.

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[1] Translator's remark: This colloquium did indeed take place. A search on the Internet reveals that Zdzisław Spaczynski's text appears in a collection titled *Materiały dotyczące konferencji naukowej "Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka jako obozy natychmiastowej zagłady," Lublin 25-27 sierpnia 1987 r*. This work does not appear to have been publicly distributed. It is archived at the Institute of National Memory – Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Warsaw (in Polish *Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu* or IPN). We don't know whether F. Brayard reads Polish.

Appendix X: Dean Michel de Boüard and the Homicidal Gas Chambers

[First published in *Revue d'histoire révisionniste*, No. 1, August-September-October 1990, pp. 46-49]

On 9/10 June 1990, the Pays d'Auge edition of the French daily newspaper *Ouest-France* (page 15), reported on an event held the previous day at the University of Caen to pay tribute to two great medievalist academics: Lucien Musset, still very active after forty-five years with the French Ministry of Education, and Michel de Boüard, who died in 1989 after a brilliant career at Caen, where he was Dean of the Faculty of Letters until 1981.

The current president of the University of Caen, Max Robba, eulogized Michel de Boüard and, after evoking the past of this Institute's distinguished member within the French Resistance during World War II, he declared:

> *"Today, advocates of an unspeakable thesis are smearing the martyrs of a battle in which Michel de Boüard took part. Unlike annihilation camps like Auschwitz, the Mauthausen Camp had only a small-scale gas chamber, but it was a camp for annihilation through labor."*

And yet, in May 1986, Michel de Boüard, alone at the university, had the courage – many even thought the imprudence – to break with legend and conformism, and to defend unreservedly the thesis I had defended at the University of Nantes on 15 June 1985. Questioned about his "heretical" stance by the daily newspaper *Ouest-France* (2-3 August 1986), Michel de Boüard declared:

> *"In the monograph on Mauthausen that I published in the* Revue d'histoire de la Seconde Guerre mondiale *in '54, I twice mentioned a gas chamber. When the time came to reflect, I said to myself: where did I acquire the conviction that there was a gas chamber at Mauthausen? It wasn't during my stay in the camp, because neither I nor anyone else suspected that there might be one; so it was 'baggage' I received after the war, it was accepted.* […] *Now, I was a member of the French command of the camp's International Resistance Organization, and we were fairly well informed about what was going on there."*

The French National Association of Deportees and Families of those Missing from Mauthausen (*Amicale nationale des déportés et familles de disparus de Mauthausen*) reacted passionately through the pen of its vice-president. In its issue of 15 December 1986, *Ouest-France* published key extracts from the *Amicale*'s letter, as well as a memo by Dean de Boüard. In this memo, we note the following passage:

> *"Although people who lived in the camp (deportees or SS) have asserted that this method of murder* [homicidal gassing] *was practiced there, there are many indications that lead me to doubt it. In particular, there is no mention of a gas chamber in the very detailed report (preserved in the I.T.S. archives in Arolsen) drawn up by the American command after the camp's liberation.*
>
> […] *The obstinacy of some Mauthausen deportees in maintaining that there was a gas chamber there is quite astounding* […]*."*

Following a conference held on 10 December 1986 in Caen by some forty fellow historians, Michel de Boüard wrote an article for publication in the journal *Historiens et Géographes*, published by the French Association of History and Geography Teachers (*Association des professeurs d'histoire et de géographie*). It took the urgent insistence of the Caen regional delegation, coupled with a threat of resignation from its president, for the journal in question, after more than a year's reluctance, to publish Michel de Boüard's text in its December 1988 issue, No. 321. The article was headlined "The deportation between history and myth" ("*La déportation entre l'histoire et le mythe*"). It begins as follows:

> *"Forty years after the end of the Second World War, the image of the Deportation that haunts many minds is still imbued with myth, so that a historically correct view of what the Deportation was is unable to prevail."*

Referring to Alain Resnais's film *Nuit et Brouillard*, the author remarked:

> *"The images he presents are, with a few exceptions, borrowed from unquestionable sources; but the author has taken no account of the temporal and spatial context to which they relate. He has turned them into a kind of dolorous and, let's say it, simplistic, abstract condensation, in the sense that all reference to time and place is excluded.* […] *Nuit et Brouillard is undoubtedly a great film, but an ahistorical one."*

Returning to the notion of myth, M. de Boüard observed:

> *"*[…] *myths generate taboos that hinder historical research."*

The former Dean of the Faculty of Letters at Caen has not hesitated to maintain simple, frank relations with some of those whom M. Robba calls "the proponents of an unspeakable thesis." Thus, in a letter dated 6 January

1988, on the occasion of an exchange of greetings, M. de Boüard wrote to me:

> *"After all, how can we hold it against associations of former deportees to exploit what is their reason for existing. The Amicale de Mauthausen continues to send me its newsletter; it's almost touching how childishly blind it is.*
>
> *What revolts me, however, is the 'betrayal of the clerics' who are institutionally charged with elaborating history, and who flout objectivity. On the contrary, they do nothing to provide a critical counterweight to this mythical literature."*

I won't go into the few letters in which the eminent historian renews his support for my thesis, in particular his indignation at the decision of the Nantes Administrative Court, handed down on 18 January 1988, which rejected my appeal against the annulment, in July 1986, of my thesis defense.

On 17 June 1988, M. de Boüard thanked me for having sent him a "long report on the Toronto trial" written by Professor Faurisson and published as a separate issue by the French weekly *Rivarol*:

> *"*[…] *I read it with great attention and interest, all the more so as I am not familiar with most of the authors and writings cited in it.* […] *Within the Comité d'histoire de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, to which I belonged from 1945 until its dissolution, I have often expressed reservations about what I consider to be a 'betrayal of the clergy.' This institution, whose mission was to develop and promote a true history of the deportation* […]*, has constantly given in to the propagators of the 'myth,' i.e. the media and the lobbies that still inspire them; some of the best-known members of the Committee have even exploited the 'best-seller' aspect of the literature on the KZ* [Konzentrationslager]*."*

We won't give in to the temptation to claim that M. de Boüard had become a convinced revisionist by the end of his life. But how can we deny his evolution towards revisionism when we read the letter he wrote to me on 28 September 1988:

"Antibes, 28 Sept. 88

> *Many thanks, dear Sir, for sending me No. 5/1988 of the Annales d'Histoire Révisionniste. I am only imperfectly acquainted with the record of the gas-chamber controversy; but I have always found it strange that examinations such as those just made by Fred A. Leuchter have not been carried out before anything else. The results seem to me blindingly clear. What can 'the others' possibly object to? How, on the other hand, have we not (if I'm not mistaken) located the famous 100 m x 20 m x 12 m pits we've heard so much about (Gerstein among others), where the corpses of those gassed*

were piled up in such numbers that the crematoria couldn't incinerate them? Any archaeologist knows full well that such mass graves are easy to locate using geophysical prospecting instruments.

If I have the pleasure of seeing you again one of these days (I'm going back to Normandy next Sunday), I'll tell you about a very good friend of mine who stayed at Auschwitz I from the end of July 42 to the end of 44; he worked in the electricians' Kommando and was sent to Birkenau on several occasions to do maintenance work on the crematoria."

Michel de Boüard was an honest man; he was a just man; above all, he was a courageous historian.

Appendix XI: Henri Amouroux

(First published as an Appendix 4 to Robert Faurisson's *Le Révisionnisme de Pie XII*, Graphos, Genoa, 2002, pp. 113-116; reprinted in 2009 and 2025 by La Sfinge, Rome)

Letter from Henri Roques to Henri Amouroux

Sir,

I read with interest your article headlined "Does Cinema Betray History?" (*Figaro-Magazine*, 23 February 2002).

You ask the question, but I have no doubt that your answer is yes. You go on to say: "History is not written in film." This last sentence applies to many other cinematographic achievements, including *Holocaust*, a pure Hollywood soap opera, and Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*, to stay on the same subject. I appreciated your defense of Pope Pius XII and the Catholic Church as a whole. However, I would like to draw your attention to the character of Kurt Gerstein.

You were rightly scandalized by the transformation of the dreadful Joanovici[1] into a quasi-hero of the Resistance in a recent TV film. You were quite right to point out that he was a businessman protected by the Gestapo, who tried to clear his name in 1944 thanks to his immense, dishonestly acquired fortune. Of course, I'm not comparing Gerstein to the strange Monsieur Joseph. Gerstein was not venal, as his family was well-to-do. His aim was to make himself interesting to those close to him, to win their sympathy and complicity through gifts, to dazzle them with his interpersonal skills. In short, he was consumed by the ambition to play a role, whatever it might be, and his country's defeat provided him with the opportunity to play the role you know. The transformation of this proven psychopath into a "spy of God" who fulfilled his mission by denouncing to the world the gassings at the Belzec Camp in August 1942 resembles a sinister hoax.

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[1] Editor's remark: Joseph Joanovici was a Russian-born Romanian-French scrap-metal merchant who supplied Germany and funded the French Resistance with the proceeds during the German occupation of France in World War II. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Joanovici.

Before saying anything about Gerstein, I think it is obvious to start by reading what he wrote in his "now-famous report," as you put it. It was for this reason that I defended my doctoral thesis at the University of Nantes on 15 June 1985, which caused a political and media uproar. I went to see you personally, in 1984 or 1985, to give you a copy of my thesis. I don't know if you have read it. In my conclusions, I noted the assessment of a medical doctor, Gerstein's colleague at the Waffen SS Hygiene Institute. This doctor speaks of the "absent-mindedness" and "strange reactions" of this curious SS officer, unfit for armed service, seriously afflicted both physically and mentally (subject to pre-comatose states brought on by diabetes). Léon Poliakov himself, who in 1951 revealed Gerstein's testimony in his book *Breviary of Hatred*, wrote in 1967: "Psychiatrists would have a lot to tell us about the Gerstein case." I won't go into the mind-boggling implausibilities I highlighted in my study. If you find my thesis, you can read it. I only wish to say that you yourself were misled when you wrote that his "task was to go to Belzec (not Belzen) and Treblinka, two concentration camps, to witness the testing of Zyklon B gas on deportees." In none of the six versions of his "confessions" does Gerstein mention Zyklon B gas. It was a product he knew well, since he was in charge of supplying it to the camps for disinfestation purposes. He tells us an extravagant story of hydrogen cyanide contained in 45 steel bottles. This liquid or gaseous product could not therefore have been Zyklon B, a solid product in metal cans. Gerstein claims to have hidden these bottles before arriving at the Belzec Camp, with the help of the driver he didn't know, but whom he suspected of belonging to the SS secret service (*sic*).

Gerstein then relates an alleged gassing by diesel-engine exhaust. As you can see, we are a long way from Zyklon B gas tests. None of Gerstein's stories makes sense. He talks indiscriminately about hydrogen cyanide and potassium cyanide, as if they were the same product. But there is as much difference between the two as between hydrochloric acid and sodium chloride (cooking salt).

As for Gerstein's behavior, it is very murky. I met his widow in 1983. Even though she was very careful to defend her husband, she told me that he had a budget for purchases necessary for disinfestation, which he used to buy scarce foodstuffs during the war. Pierre Joffroy, Gerstein's great hagiographer, makes a similar point in his book (*L'espion de dieu*, Seghers, 1992 [1969], p. 186). We read that, according to his wife, the real reason for her husband's distress and panic in Berlin in 1942 may well have been the year-end audit of the Hygiene Institute.

I spoke to an Alsatian who had Gerstein as his boss at the Berlin Institute. This boy, then aged 17-18, was twice sent on very special missions to Paris: he was in charge of buying table oil (!) in a Jewish district of Paris. Finally, I discovered a curious piece of information on *the Encyclopædia Universalis* website. How did a painting by Matisse end up in Gerstein's home? They modestly refer to "unknown circumstances."

The idealized image of Gerstein as "God's spy" on a mission "behind the scenes in the hotbed of evil" is seriously tarnished and even completely called into question. To give a historical dimension to this unbalanced high-flyer is to abuse human naiveté. The role of the historian is to limit the damage, tackle misconceptions, and get as close as possible to the truth.

Pius XII never received a Gerstein report. Moreover, if he had had in his hands such an implausible text, the product of a sick brain, he would have disregarded it. Denouncing the aberrant nature of Gerstein's testimony is the best way to defend Pius XII and the Catholic Church, both of which are under attack from a scandalous film.

I value your intellectual honesty as a historian.

This is why I would appreciate a reply from you, and please accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Henri Roques, 18 March 2002

NB: The key to the Gerstein mystery may be found on the www.universalis.fr website devoted to National-Socialist art spoliations (page 7): "Henri Matisse – *Paysage, le mur rose*." "All traces had been lost of the [painting titled] 'Pink Wall of the Calvi Hospital' painted by Matisse in 1897 […]. It was rediscovered in July 1947, in Tübingen, in the cache of an SS officer, Kurt Gerstein […]." This article is reserved for site subscribers. On 23 February 2003, Didier Schulmann, curator at the *Musée national d'art moderne* in Paris, and Florent Brayard, researcher at the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent*, addressed the subject in a conference on "Henri Matisse, *Le mur rose* (de l'hôpital d'Ajaccio), 1898, discovered in Germany, in 1948, in a cache belonging to Kurt Gerstein, an SS officer."

<www.centrepompidou.fr/Pompidou/inscriptions.nsf/Docs/ID7E4BA9CBEF9BA90C1256CD10057B849?OpenDocument>.
[no longer available; ed. remark]

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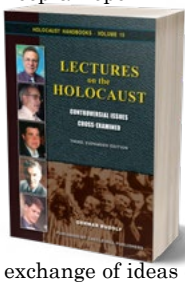


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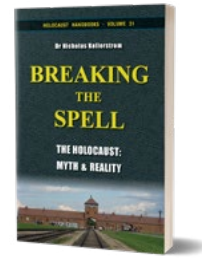
The First Holocaust. The Surprising Origin of the Six-Million Figure. By Don Heddesheimer. This compact but substantive study documents propaganda spread prior to, during and after the FIRST World War that claimed East European Jewry was on the brink of annihilation. The magic number of suffering and dying Jews was 6 million back then as well. The book details how these Jewish fund-raising operations in America raised vast sums in the name of feeding suffering Polish and Russian Jews but actually funneled much of the money to Zionist and Communist groups. 6th ed., 206 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#6)



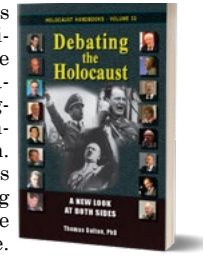
Lectures on the Holocaust. Controversial Issues Cross Examined. By Germar Rudolf. This book first explains why "the Holocaust" is an important topic, and that it is essential to keep an open mind about it. It then tells how many mainstream scholars expressed doubts and subsequently fell from grace. Next, the physical traces and documents about the various claimed crime scenes and murder weapons are discussed. After that, the reliability of witness testimony is examined. Finally, the author argues for a free exchange of ideas on this topic. This book gives the most-comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the critical research into the Holocaust. With its dialogue style, it is easy to read, and it can even be used as an encyclopedic compendium. 4th ed., 597 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index.(#15)



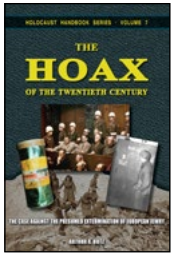
Breaking the Spell. The Holocaust, Myth & Reality. By Nicholas Kollerstrom. In 1941, British Intelligence analysts cracked the German "Enigma" code. Hence, in 1942 and 1943, encrypted radio communications between German concentration camps and the Berlin headquarters were decrypted. The intercepted data refutes the orthodox "Holocaust" narrative. It reveals that the Germans were desperate to reduce the death rate in their labor camps, which was caused by catastrophic typhus epidemics. Dr. Kollerstrom, a science historian, has taken these intercepts and a wide array of mostly unchallenged corroborating evidence to show that "witness statements" supporting the human gas chamber narrative clearly clash with the available scientific data. Kollerstrom concludes that the history of the Nazi "Holocaust" has been written by the victors with ulterior motives. It is distorted, exaggerated and largely wrong. With a foreword by Prof. Dr. James Fetzer. 7th ed., 286 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index. (#31)



Debating the Holocaust. A New Look at Both Sides. By Thomas Dalton. Mainstream historians insist that there cannot be, may not be, any debate about the Holocaust. But ignoring it does not make this controversy go away. Traditional scholars admit that there was neither a budget, a plan, nor an order for the Holocaust; that the key camps have all but vanished, and so have any human remains; that material and unequivocal documentary evidence is absent; and that there are serious problems with survivor testimonies. Dalton juxtaposes the traditional Holocaust narrative with revisionist challenges and then analyzes the mainstream's responses to them. He reveals the weaknesses of both sides, while declaring revisionism the winner of the current state of the debate.

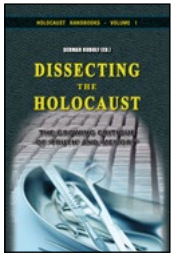


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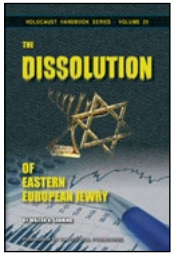


4th ed., 342 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#32)

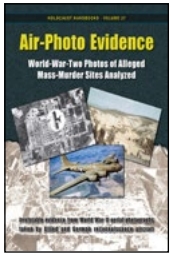
The Hoax of the Twentieth Century. The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry. By Arthur R. Butz. The first writer to analyze the entire Holocaust complex in a precise scientific manner. This book exhibits the overwhelming force of arguments accumulated by the mid-1970s. Butz's two main arguments are: 1. All major entities hostile to Germany must have known what was happening to the Jews under German authority. They acted during the war as if no mass slaughter was occurring. 2. All the evidence adduced to prove any mass slaughter has a dual interpretation, while only the innocuous one can be proven to be correct. This book continues to be a major historical reference work, frequently cited by prominent personalities. This edition has numerous supplements with new information gathered over the last 48 years. 5th ed., 572 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#7)



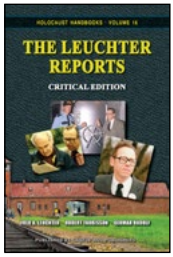
Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.' Edited by Germar Rudolf. *Dissecting the Holocaust* applies state-of-the-art scientific techniques and classic methods of detection to investigate the alleged murder of millions of Jews by Germans during World War II. In 22 contributions—each of some 30 pages—the 17 authors dissect generally accepted paradigms of the "Holocaust." It reads as excitingly as a crime novel: so many lies, forgeries and deceptions by politicians, historians and scientists are proven. This is the intellectual adventure of the 21st Century. Be part of it! 4th ed., 611 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#1)



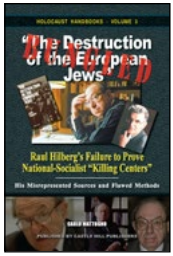
The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry. By Walter N. Sanning. Six Million Jews died in the Holocaust. Sanning did not take that number at face value, but thoroughly explored European population developments and shifts mainly caused by emigration as well as deportations and evacuations conducted by both Nazis and the Soviets, among other things. The book is based mainly on Jewish, Zionist and mainstream sources. It concludes that a sizeable share of the Jews found missing during local censuses after the Second World War, which were so far counted as "Holocaust victims," had either emigrated (mainly to Israel or the U.S.) or had been deported by Stalin to Siberian labor camps. 3rd ed., foreword by A.R. Butz, epilogue by Germar Rudolf, and an update by the author containing new insights; 264 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography (#29).



Air-Photo Evidence: World-War-Two Photos of Alleged Mass-Murder Sites Analyzed. By Germar Rudolf (editor). During World War Two both German and Allied reconnaissance aircraft took countless air photos of places of tactical and strategic interest in Europe. These photos are prime evidence for the investigation of the Holocaust. Air photos of locations like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, Babi Yar etc. permit an insight into what did or did not happen there. The author has unearthed many pertinent photos and has thoroughly analyzed them. This book is full of air-photo reproductions and schematic drawings explaining them. According to the author, these images refute many of the atrocity claims made by witnesses in connection with events in the German sphere of influence. 6th edition; with a contribution by Carlo Mattogno. 167 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index (#27).



The Leuchter Reports: Critical Edition. By Fred Leuchter, Robert Faurisson and Germar Rudolf. Between 1988 and 1991, U.S. expert on execution technologies Fred Leuchter wrote four reports on whether the Third Reich operated homicidal gas chambers. The first on Auschwitz and Majdanek became world-famous. Based on various arguments, Leuchter concluded that the locations investigated could never have been "utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers." The second report deals with gas-chamber claims for the camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Hartheim, while the third reviews design criteria and operation procedures of execution gas chambers in the U.S. The fourth report reviews Pressac's 1989 tome about Auschwitz. 4th ed., 252 pages, b&w illustrations. (#16)



Bungled: "The Destruction of the European Jews". Raul Hilberg's Failure to Prove National-Socialist "Killing Centers." By Carlo Mattogno. Raul Hilberg's magnum opus *The Destruction of the European Jews* is an orthodox standard work on the Holocaust. But how does Hilberg support his thesis that Jews were murdered *en masse*? He rips documents out of their context, distorts their content, misinterprets their meaning, and ignores entire archives. He only refers to "useful" witnesses, quotes fragments out of context, and conceals the fact that his witnesses are lying through their teeth. Lies and deceits permeate Hil-

berg's book, 302 pages, bibliography, index. (#3)

Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich. By Ingrid Weckert. Current historical writings about the Third Reich claim state it was difficult for Jews to flee from Nazi persecution. The truth is that Jewish emigration was welcomed by the German authorities. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy. She shows that German and Jewish authorities worked closely together. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. 2nd ed., 130 pages, index. (#12)

Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography. By Carlo Mattogno. Neither increased media propaganda or political pressure nor judicial persecution can stifle revisionism. Hence, in early 2011, the Holocaust Orthodoxy published a 400-page book (in German) claiming to refute "revisionist propaganda," trying again to prove "once and for all" that there were homicidal gas chambers at the camps of Dachau, Natzweiler, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Neuengamme, Stutthof… you name them. Mattogno shows with his detailed analysis of this work of propaganda that mainstream Holocaust hagiography is beating around the bush rather than addressing revisionist research results. He exposes their myths, distortions and lies. 2nd ed., 280 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#25)

SECTION TWO:
Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

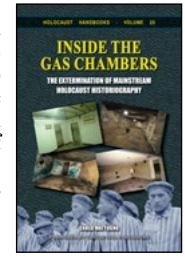
The Dachau Gas Chamber. By Carlo Mattogno. This study investigates whether the alleged homicidal gas chamber at the infamous Dachau Camp could have been operational. Could these gas chambers have fulfilled their alleged function to kill people as assumed by mainstream historians? Or does the evidence point to an entirely different purpose? This study reviews witness reports and finds that many claims are nonsense or technically impossible. As many layers of confounding misunderstandings and misrepresentations are peeled away, we discover the core of what the truth was concerning the existence of these gas chambers. 154 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#49)

Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp? By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, Diesel-exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity as a mere transit camp. 3rd ed., 384 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#8)

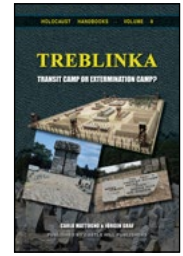
Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History. By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that between 600,000 and 3 million Jews were murdered in the Belzec Camp, located in Poland. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: Diesel-exhaust gas; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers; etc. The corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving a trace. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this sounds familiar. Thus, the author has restricted this study to the aspects which are new compared to Treblinka. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed at Belzec, the results of which are critically reviewed. 142 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#9)

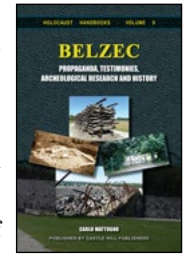
Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality. By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2 million Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in Poland. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are based on the selective use of contradictory eyewitness testimony. Archeological surveys of the camp are analyzed that started in 2000-2001 and carried on until 2018. The book also documents the general National-Socialist policy toward Jews, which never included a genocidal "final solution." In conclusion, Sobibór emerges not as a "pure extermination camp", but as a transit camp from where Jews were deported to the occupied eastern territories. 2nd ed., 460 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#19)

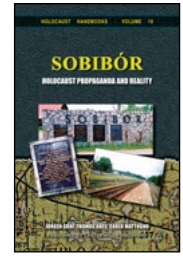






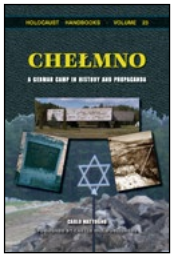




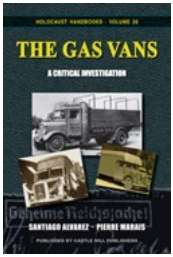




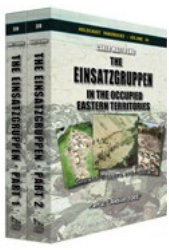
The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec. By Carlo Mattogno. This study has its first focus on witness testimonies recorded during World War II and the immediate post-war era, many of them discussed here for the first time, thus demonstrating how the myth of the "extermination camps" was created. The second part of this book brings us up to speed with the various archeological efforts made by mainstream scholars in their attempt to prove that the myth is true. The third part compares the findings of the second part with what we ought to expect, and reveals the chasm between facts and myth. 402 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. (#28)



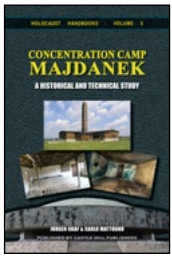
Chelmno: A Camp in History & Propaganda. By Carlo Mattogno. At Chełmno, huge masses of Jewish prisoners are said to have been gassed in "gas vans" or shot (claims vary from 10,000 to 1.3 million victims). This study covers the subject from every angle, undermining the orthodox claims about the camp with an overwhelmingly effective body of evidence. Eyewitness statements, gas wagons as extermination weapons, forensics reports and excavations, German documents – all come under Mattogno's scrutiny. Here are the uncensored facts about Chełmno, not the propaganda. This is a complementary volume to the book on *The Gas Vans* (#26). 2nd ed., 188 pages, indexed, illustrated, bibliography. (#23)



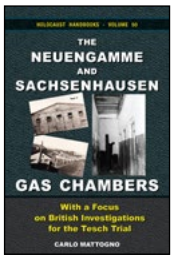
The Gas Vans: A Critical Investigation. By Santiago Alvarez and Pierre Marais. Did the Nazis use mobile gas chambers to exterminate 700,000 people? Are witness statements believable? Are documents genuine? Where are the murder weapons? Could they have operated as claimed? Where are the corpses? In order to get to the truth of the matter, Alvarez has scrutinized all known wartime documents and photos about this topic; he has analyzed a huge amount of witness statements as published in the literature and as presented in more than 30 trials held over the decades in Germany, Poland and Israel; and he has examined the claims made in the pertinent mainstream literature. The result of his research is mind-boggling. Note: This book and Mattogno's book on Chelmno were edited in parallel to make sure they are consistent and not repetitive. 2nd ed., 412 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#26)



The Einsatzgruppen in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Genesis, Missions and Actions. By C. Mattogno. Before invading the Soviet Union, the German authorities set up special units meant to secure the area behind the German front. Orthodox historians claim that these units called *Einsatzgruppen* primarily engaged in rounding up and mass-murdering Jews. This study sheds a critical light onto this topic by reviewing all the pertinent sources as well as material traces. It reveals on the one hand that original war-time documents do not fully support the orthodox genocidal narrative, and on the other that most post-"liberation" sources such as testimonies and forensic reports are steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda and are thus utterly unreliable. In addition, material traces of the claimed massacres are rare due to an attitude of collusion by governments and Jewish lobby groups. 2nd ed.., 2 vols., 864 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#39)



Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. At war's end, the Soviets claimed that up to two million Jews were murdered at the Majdanek Camp in seven gas chambers. Over the decades, however, the Majdanek Museum reduced the death toll three times to currently 78,000, and admitted that there were "only" two gas chambers. By exhaustively researching primary sources, the authors expertly dissect and repudiate the myth of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. They also critically investigated the legend of mass executions of Jews in tank trenches and prove it groundless. Again they have produced a standard work of methodical investigation which authentic historiography cannot ignore. 3rd ed., 358 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#5)



The Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen Gas Chambers. By Carlo Mattogno and Friedrich Jansson. The Neuengamme Camp near Hamburg, and the Sachsenhausen Camp north of Berlin allegedly had homicidal gas chambers for the mass gassing of inmates. The evaluation of many postwar interrogation protocols on this topic exposes inconsistencies, discrepancies and contradictions. British interrogating techniques are revealed as manipulative, threatening and mendacious. Finally, technical absurdities of gas-chambers and mass-gassing claims unmask these tales as a mere regurgitation of hearsay stories from other

camps, among them foremost Auschwitz. 2nd ed., 238 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#50)

Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Orthodox historians claim that the Stutthof Camp near Danzig, East Prussia, served as a "makeshift" extermination camp in 1944, where inmates were killed in a gas chamber. Based mainly on archival resources, this study thoroughly debunks this view and shows that Stutthof was in fact a center for the organization of German forced labor toward the end of World War II. The claimed gas chamber was a mere delousing facility. 4th ed., 170 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#4)

SECTION THREE: Auschwitz Studies

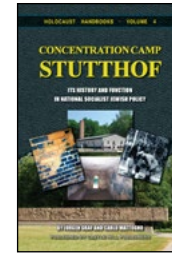
The Making of the Auschwitz Myth: Auschwitz in British Intercepts, Polish Underground Reports and Postwar Testimonies (1941-1947). By Carlo Mattogno. Using messages sent by the Polish underground to London, SS radio messages sent to and from Auschwitz that were intercepted and decrypted by the British, and a plethora of witness statements made during the war and in the immediate postwar period, the author shows how exactly the myth of mass murder in Auschwitz gas chambers was created, and how it was turned subsequently into "history" by intellectually corrupt scholars who cherry-picked claims that fit into their agenda and ignored or actively covered up literally thousands of lies of "witnesses" to make their narrative look credible. 2nd edition, 514 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#41)

The Real Case of Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed. By Carlo Mattogno. Prof. Robert van Pelt, a mainstream expert on Auschwitz, became famous when appearing as an expert during the London libel trial of David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt. From it resulted a book titled *The Case for Auschwitz*, in which van Pelt laid out his case for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. This book is a scholarly response to Prof. van Pelt—and Jean-Claude Pressac, upon whose books van Pelt's study is largely based. Mattogno lists all the evidence van Pelt adduces, and shows one by one that van Pelt misrepresented and misinterpreted every single one of them. This is a book of prime political and scholarly importance to those looking for the truth about Auschwitz. 3rd ed., 692 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. (#22)

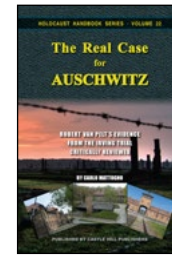
Auschwitz: Plain Facts: A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac. Edited by Germar Rudolf, with contributions by Serge Thion, Robert Faurisson and Carlo Mattogno. French pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac tried to refute revisionist findings with the "technical" method. For this he was praised by the mainstream, and they proclaimed victory over the "revisionists." In his book, Pressac's works and claims are shown to be unscientific in nature, as he never substantiates what he claims, and historically false, because he systematically misrepresents, misinterprets and misunderstands German wartime documents. 2nd ed., 226 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary bibliography, index. (#14)

Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers: An Introduction and Update. By Germar Rudolf. Pressac's 1989 oversize book of the same title was a trail blazer. Its many document repros are valuable, but Pressac's annotations are now outdated. This book summarizes the most pertinent research results on Auschwitz gained during the past 30 years. With many references to Pressac's epic tome, it serves as an update and correction to it, whether you own an original hard copy of it, read it online, borrow it from a library, purchase a reprint, or are just interested in such a summary in general. 144 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography. (#42)

The Chemistry of Auschwitz: The Technology and Toxicology of Zyklon B and the Gas Chambers – A Crime-Scene Investigation. By Germar Rudolf. This study documents forensic research on Auschwitz, where material traces reign supreme. Most of the claimed crime scenes – the claimed homicidal gas chambers – are still accessible to forensic examination to some degree. This book addresses questions such as: How were these gas chambers configured? How did they operate? In addition, the infamous Zyklon B is examined in detail. What exactly was it? How did it kill? Did it leave traces in masonry that can be found still today? Indeed, it should have, the author concludes, but several sets of analyses show no trace of it. The author also discusses in depth similar forensic research conducted by other scholars. 4th ed., 454 pages, more than 120 color and over 100 b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#2)

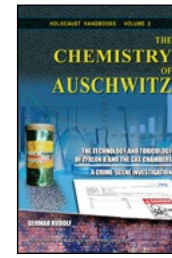


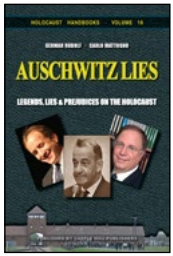


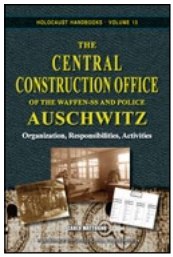


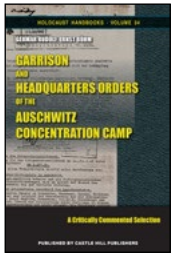


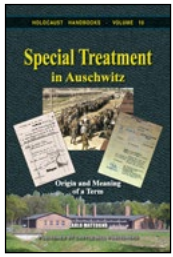


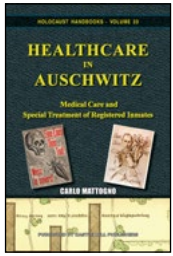


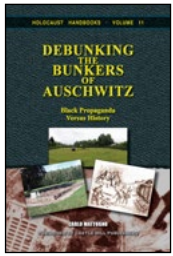












Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies and Prejudices on the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno and Germar Rudolf. The fallacious research and alleged "refutation" of revisionist scholars by French biochemist G. Wellers (attacking Leuchter's famous report, #16), Polish chemist Dr. J. Markiewicz and U.S. chemist Dr. Richard Green (taking on Rudolf's chemical research), Dr. John Zimmerman (tackling Mattogno on cremation issues), Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman (trying to prove it all), as well as researchers Keren, McCarthy and Mazal (who turned cracks into architectural features), are exposed for what they are: blatant and easily exposed political lies created to ostracize dissident historians. 4th ed., 420 pages, b&w illustrations, index. (#18)

Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office. By Carlo Mattogno. When Russian authorities granted access to their archives in the early 1990s, the files of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, stored in Moscow, attracted the attention of scholars researching the history of this camp. This important office was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including the crematories which are said to have contained the "gas chambers." This study sheds light into this hitherto hidden aspect of this camp's history, but also provides a deep understanding of the organization, tasks, and procedures of this office. 2nd ed., 188 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, index. (#13)

Garrison and Headquarters Orders of the Auschwitz Camp. By Germar Rudolf and Ernst Böhm. A large number of the orders issued by the various commanders of the Auschwitz Camp have been preserved. They reveal the true nature of the camp with all its daily events. There is not a trace in them pointing at anything sinister going on. Quite to the contrary, many orders are in insurmountable contradiction to claims that prisoners were mass murdered, such as the children of SS men playing with inmates, SS men taking friends for a sight-seeing tour through the camp, or having a romantic stroll with their lovers around the camp grounds. This is a selection of the most pertinent of these orders together with comments putting them into their proper historical context. 185 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index (#34)

Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term. By Carlo Mattogno. When appearing in German wartime documents, terms like "special treatment," "special action," and others have been interpreted as code words for mass murder. But that is not always true. This study focuses on documents about Auschwitz, showing that, while "special" had many different meanings, not a single one meant "execution." Hence the practice of deciphering an alleged "code language" by assigning homicidal meaning to harmless documents – a key component of mainstream historiography – is untenable. 2nd ed., 166 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#10)

Healthcare at Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno. In extension of the above study on *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, this study proves the extent to which the German authorities at Auschwitz tried to provide health care for the inmates. Part 1 of this book analyzes the inmates' living conditions and the various sanitary and medical measures implemented. It documents the vast construction efforts to build a huge inmate hospital insinde the Auschwity-Birkenau Camp. Part 2 explores what happened to registered inmates who were "selected" or subject to "special treatment" while disabled or sick. This study shows that a lot was tried to cure these inmates, especially under the aegis of Garrison Physician Dr. Wirths. Part 3 is dedicated to this very Dr. Wirths. The reality of this caring philanthropist refutes the current stereotype of SS officers. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#33)

Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History. By Carlo Mattogno. The "bunkers" at Auschwitz-Birkenau, two former farmhouses just outside the camp's perimeter, are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose. They supposedly went into operation during the first half of 1942, with thousands of Jews sent straight from deportation trains to these "gas chambers." However, documents clearly show that all inmates sent to Auschwity during that time were properly admitted to the camp. No mass murder on arrival can have happened. With the help of other wartime files as well as air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944, this study shows that these homicidal "bunkers" never existed, how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups in the camp, and how this propaganda was transformed into a false reality by "historians." 2nd ed.,

292 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#11)

Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality. By Carlo Mattogno. The first gassing in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941 in a basement. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other about the event's location, date, the kind of victims and their number, and many more aspects, which makes it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to this legend and prove without a shadow of a doubt that this legendary event never happened. 4th ed., 262 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#20)

Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings. By Carlo Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is said to be the first homicidal gas chamber there. This study analyzes witness statements and hundreds of wartime documents to accurately write a history of that building. Where witnesses speak of gassings, they are either very vague or, if specific, contradict one another and are refuted by documented and material facts. The author also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses' black propaganda into "truth" by means of selective quotes, omissions, and distortions. Mattogno proves that this building's morgue was never a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have worked as such. 2nd ed., 152 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#21)

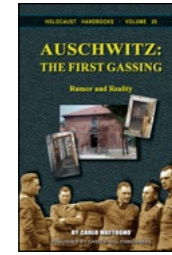
Auschwitz: Open-Air Incinerations. By Carlo Mattogno. In 1944, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and allegedly murdered in gas chambers. The camp crematoria were unable to cope with so many corpses. Therefore, every single day thousands of corpses are claimed to have been incinerated on huge pyres lit in trenches. The sky was filled with thick smoke, if we believe witnesses. This book examines many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were even possible. Using air photos, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are fiction. A new Appendix contains 3 papers on groundwater levels and cattle mass burnings. 2nd ed., 202 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#17)

The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno & Franco Deana. An exhaustive study of the early history and technology of cremation in general and of the cremation furnaces of Auschwitz in particular. On a vast base of technical literature, extant wartime documents and material traces, the authors establish the nature and capacity of these cremation furnaces, showing that these devices were inferior makeshift versions, and that their capacity was lower than normal. The Auschwitz crematoria were not facilities of mass destruction, but installations barely managing to handle the victims among the inmates who died of various epidemics. 2nd ed., 3 vols., 1201 pages, b&w and color illustrations (vols 2 & 3), bibliography, index, glossary. (#24)

Curated Lies: The Auschwitz Museum's Misrepresentations, Distortions and Deceptions. By Carlo Mattogno. Revisionist research results have put the Polish Auschwitz Museum under enormous pressure to answer this challenge. They've answered. This book analyzes their answer. It first exposes the many tricks and lies used by the museum to bamboozle millions of visitors every year regarding its most valued asset, the "gas chamber" in the Main Camp. Next, it reveals how the museum's historians mislead and lie through their teeth about documents in their archives. A long string of completely innocuous documents is mistranslated and misrepresented to make it look like they prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers. 2nd ed., 259 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#38)

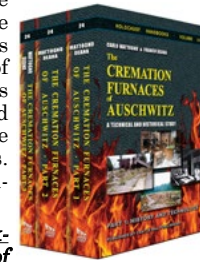
Deliveries of Coke, Wood and Zyklon B to Auschwitz: Neither Proof Nor Trace for the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno. Researchers from the Auschwitz Museum tried to prove the reality of mass extermination by pointing to documents about deliveries of wood and coke as well as Zyklon B to the Auschwitz Camp. If put into the actual historical and technical context, however, as is done by this study, these documents prove the exact opposite of what those orthodox researchers claim. This study exposes the mendacious tricks with which these museum officials once more deceive the trusting public. 184 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#40)

Mis-Chronicling Auschwitz. Danuta Czech's Flawed Methods, Lies and Deceptions in Her "Auschwitz Chronicle". By Carlo Mattogno. The *Auschwitz Chronicle* is a reference book for the history of the Auschwitz

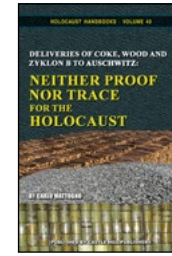






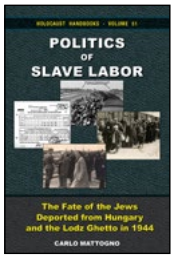




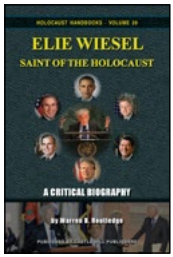


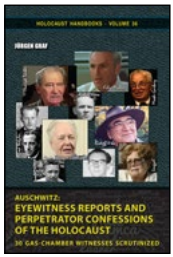












Camp. It was published in 1990 by Danuta Czech, one of the Auschwitz Museum's most prolific and impactful historians. Analyzing this almost 1,000-page long tome one entry at a time, Mattogno has compiled a long list of misrepresentations, outright lies and deceptions contained in it. They all aim at creating the otherwise unsubstantiated claim that homicidal gas chambers and lethal injections were used at Auschwitz for mass-murdering inmates. This literary mega-fraud needs to be retired from the ranks of Auschwitz sources. 324 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#47)

The Real Auschwitz Chronicle. By Carlo Mattogno. Nagging is easy. We actually did a better job! That which is missing in Czech's *Chronicle* is included here: day after day of the camp's history, documents are presented showing that it could not have been an extermination camp: tens of thousands of sick and injured inmates were cared for medically with huge efforts, and the camp authorities tried hard to improve the initially catastrophic hygienic conditions. Part Two contains data on transports, camp occupancy and mortality figures. For the first time, we find out what this camps' real death toll was. 2 vols., 906 pp., b&w illustrations (Vol. 2), bibliography, index. (#48)

Politics of Slave Labor: The Fate of the Jews Deported from Hungary and the Lodz Ghetto in 1944. By Carlo Mattogno. The deportation of the Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in May-July 1944 is said to have been the pinnacle of this camp's extermination frenzy, topped off in August of that year by the extermination of Jews deported from the Lodz Ghetto. This book gathers and explains all the evidence available on both events. In painstaking research, the author proves almost on a person-by-person level what the fate was of many of the Jews deported from Hungary or the Lodz Ghetto. He demonstrates that these Jews were deported to serve as slave laborers in the Third Reich's collapsing war economy. There is no trace of any extermination of any of these Jews. 338 pp., b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#51)

Labor Camp Auschwitz-Monowitz: Exposing the Myth of "Extermination through Labor". By Carlo Mattogno. The Monowitz Camp near Auschwitz was the Third Reich's largest and arguably most infamous forced-labor camp. After the war, it was the focus of one of the Nuremberg Military Tribunals. This trial concluded that tenth of thousands of inmates in that camp were systematically worked to death. This book analyzes pivotal documents to reconstruct the Monowitz Camp's history, then juxtaposes this with over 140 witness testimonies presented at that Nuremberg trial. While the orthodox Monowitz narrative is dominated by a few hand-picked witness claims, the present study finally puts the history of the Monowitz Camp on a solid documental basis, supported by many testimonies. It rings in the end of the "extermination through labor" paradigm. 358 pp., bibliography, index. (#53)

SECTION FOUR: Witness Critique

Elie Wiesel, Saint of the Holocaust: A Critical Biography. By Warren B. Routledge. An analyzis of several of Wiesel's texts, foremost his camp autobiography *Night*, proving that much of what Wiesel claimed can never have happened. It shows how Zionist control has allowed Wiesel to force leaders of many nations, the U.N. and even popes to genuflect before Wiesel as symbolic acts of subordination to World Jewry, while at the same time forcing school children to submit to Holocaust brainwashing. This study also shows how parallel to this abuse of power, critical reactions to it increased as well. While Catholics jumped on the Holocaust band wagon, the number of Jews rejecting certain aspect of the Holocaust narrative and its abuse grew as well. This first unauthorized biography of Wiesel exposes both his personal deceits and the whole myth of "the six million." 3rd ed., 458 pages, b&w illustration, bibliography, index. (#30)

Auschwitz: Eyewitness Reports and Perpetrator Confessions. By Jürgen Graf. The traditional narrative of what transpired at the infamous Auschwitz camp during WWII rests almost exclusively on witness testimony from former inmates as well as erstwhile camp officials. This study critically scrutinizes the 30 most important of these witness statements by checking them for internal coherence, and by comparing them with one another as well as with other evidence such as wartime documents, air photos, forensic research results, and material traces. The result is devastating for the traditional narrative. 372 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#36)

Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions. By Carlo Mattogno & Rudolf Höss. From 1940 to 1943, Rudolf Höss was the commandant of the infamous Auschwitz Camp. After the war, he was captured by the British. In the following 13 months until his execution, he made 85 depositions of various kinds, confessing his involvement in the "Holocaust." This study first reveals how the British tortured him to extract various "confessions." Next, all of Höss's depositions are analyzed by checking his claims for internal consistency and comparing them with established historical facts. The results are eye-opening… 2nd ed., 411 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#35)

An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed. By Miklos Nyiszli & Carlo Mattogno. Nyiszli, a Hungarian physician, ended up at Auschwitz in 1944 as Dr. Mengele's assistant. After the war he wrote a book and several other writings describing what he claimed to have experienced. To this day some traditional historians take his accounts seriously, while others reject them as grotesque lies and exaggerations. This study presents and analyzes Nyiszli's writings and skillfully separates truth from fabulous fabrication. 2nd ed., 484 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#37)

The "Confessions" of Kurt Gerstein: Key Testimony on the Bełżec Camp Scrutinized. By Henri Roques. This classic PhD thesis critically examines the iconic witness statements by a former SS officer about the alleged Belzec extermination camp. After years of polemicizing against Roques's thesis, the Holocaust orthodoxy ultimately had to declare defeat and dropped Gerstein's fables as untrustworthy. This book contains the original thesis, and a thorough documentation on the repercussions it had. Newly translated, greatly expanded 2nd ed., 542 pp., b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#54)

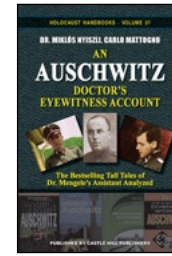
Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein: Two False Testimonies on the Bełżec Camp Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. Only two witnesses have ever testified substantially about the alleged Belzec Extermination Camp: The survivor Rudolf Reder and the SS officer Kurt Gerstein. Gerstein's testimonies have been a hotspot of revisionist critique for decades (see the previous book, #54). It is now discredited even among orthodox historians. They use Reder's testimony to fill the void, yet his testimonies are just as absurd. This study thoroughly scrutinizes Reder's various statements, critically revisits Gerstein's various depositions, and then compares these two testimonies which are at once similar in some respects, but incompatible in others. 216 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#43)

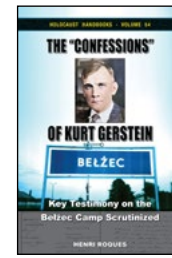
Sonderkommando Auschwitz I: Nine Eyewitness Testimonies Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. The 1979 book *Auschwitz Inferno* by alleged former Auschwitz "Sonderkommando" member Filip Müller has a great influence on the perception of Auschwitz by the public and by historians. This book critically analyzes Müller's various post-war statements, which are full of exaggerations, falsehoods and plagiarized text passages. Also scrutinized are the testimonies of eight other claimed former *Sonderkommando* members: D. Paisikovic, S. Jankowski, H. Mandelbaum, L. Nagraba, J. Rosenblum, A. Pilo, D. Fliamenbaum and S. Karolinskij. 304 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#44)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz II: The False Testimonies by Henryk Tauber and Szlama Dragon. By Carlo Mattogno. Auschwitz survivor and former member of the so-called "Sonderkommando" Henryk Tauber is one of the most important witnesses about the alleged gas chambers inside the crematoria at Auschwitz, because right at the war's end, he made several extremely detailed depositions about it. The same is true for Szlama Dragon, only he claims to have worked at the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau, two makeshift gas chambers just outside the camp perimeter. This study thoroughly scrutinizes these two key testimonies. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#45)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz III: They Wept Crocodile Tears. A Critical Analysis of Late Witness Testimonies. By Carlo Mattogno. This book focuses on the critical analysis of witness testimonies on the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers recorded or published in the 1990s and early 2000s, such as J. Sackar, A. Dragon,







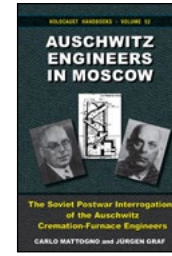




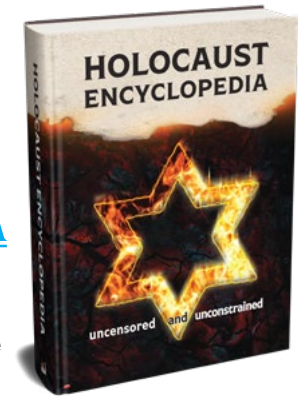
For current prices and availability, and to learn more, go to www.HolocaustHandbooks.com – for example by simply scanning the QR code on the right.

J. Gabai, S. Chasan, L. Cohen and S. Venezia, among others. 232 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#46)

Auschwitz Engineers in Moscow: The Soviet Postwar Interrogations of the Auschwitz Cremation-Furnace Engineers. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. After the war, the Soviets arrested four leading engineers of the Topf Company. Among other things, they had planned and supervised the construction of the Auschwitz cremation furnaces and the ventilation systems of the rooms said to have served as homicidal gas chambers. Between 1946 and 1948, Soviet officials conducted numerous interrogations with them. This work analyzes them by putting them into the context of the vast documentation on these and related facilities. The appendix contains all translated interrogation protocols. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#52)



Three decades of unflagging archival and forensic research by the world's most knowledgeable, courageous and prodigious Holocaust scholars have finally coalesced into a reference book that makes all this knowledge readily accessible to everyone:



HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPEDIA

uncensored and unconstrained

Hardcover, available in b&w or color, 646 pages, 8.5"×11"; as eBook (ePub or PDF) and eBook + audio (ePub + mp3); more than 350 illustrations in 591 entries; introduction, bibliography, index. **Online at www.NukeBook.org**

We all know the basics of "The Holocaust." But what about the details? Websites and printed encyclopedias can help us there. Take the 4-volume encyclopedia by Israel's Yad Vashem Center: The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust (1990). For every significant crime scene, it presents a condensed narrative of Israel's finest Holocaust scholars. However, it contains not one entry about witnesses and their stories, even though they are the foundation of our knowledge. When a murder is committed, the murder weapon and the crime's traces are of crucial importance. Yet Yad Vashem's encyclopedia has no entries explaining scientific findings on these matters – not one.

This is where the present encyclopedia steps in. It not only summarizes and explains the many pieces that make up the larger Holocaust picture. It also reveals the evidence that confirms or contradicts certain notions. Nearly 300 entries present the essence of important witness accounts, and they are subjected to source criticism. This enables us to decide which witness claims are credible.

For all major crime scenes, the sometimes-conflicting claims are presented. We learn how our knowledge has changed over time, and what evidence shores up the currently valid narrative of places such as Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen and many more.

Other entries discuss tools and mechanisms allegedly used for the mass murders, and how the crimes' traces were erased, if at all. A few entries discuss toxicological issues surrounding the various lethal gases claimed to have been used.

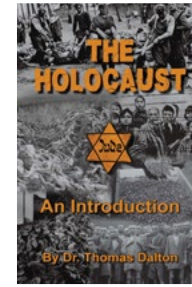
This encyclopedia has multiple entries on some common claims about aspects of the Holocaust, including a list of "Who said it?" This way we can quickly find proof for these claims.

Finally, several entries address factors that have influenced the creation of the Holocaust narrative, and how we perceive it today. This includes entries on psychological warfare and wartime propaganda; on conditions prevailing during investigations and trials of alleged Holocaust perpetrators; on censorship against historical dissidents; on the religious dimension of the Holocaust narrative; and on motives of all sides involved in creating and spreading their diverse Holocaust narratives.

In this important volume, now with 591 entries, you will discover many astounding aspects of the Holocaust narrative that you did not even know exist.

Books on History, the Holocaust and Free Speech

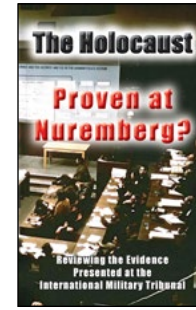
Please check out the books available from ARMREG that are not part of the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. For changes, prices and availabilities, visit us online at www.ARMREG.co.uk.



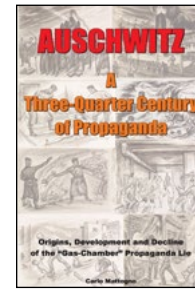
The Holocaust: An Introduction. By Thomas Dalton. The Holocaust was perhaps the greatest crime of the 20th Century. Six million Jews, we are told, died by gassing, shooting, and deprivation. But: Where did the six-million figure come from? How, exactly, did the gas chambers work? Why do we have so little physical evidence from major death camps? Why haven't we found even a fraction of the six million bodies, or their ashes? Why has there been so much media suppression and governmental censorship on this topic? In a sense, the Holocaust is the greatest murder mystery in history. It is a topic of greatest importance for the present day. Let's explore the evidence, and see where it leads. 128 pp. pb, 6"×9", ill., bibl., index.



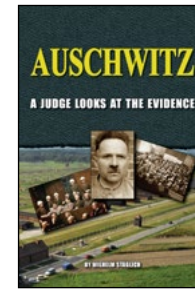
Nazi Gas Chambers: The Roots of the Story. By Germar Rudolf. Nazi gas chambers are the iconic core of the Holocaust narrative. Millions of Jews were killed in them with poison gas, we are told. However, if we dig deeper, we find early accounts that tell a different story: steam, vacuum and electrocution chambers, murder with chlorinated lime in trains, or with toxic fluids. How did we get from these bizarre claims to what we are told today? This book reveals who cleansed the historical record to create an apparently consistent and coherent narrative, and which methods were used in the process. 146 pp. pb, 5"×8", ill., bibl., index.



The Holocaust: Proven at Nuremberg? Reviewing the Evidence Presented at the International Military Tribunal. By Germar Rudolf. Was the Holocaust incontrovertibly proven at the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (IMT)? This book scrutizes the history, laws and rules that defined the IMT, and a detailed study of the procedures applied. The author then looks into how evidence was created for this trial. This is followed by a critical analysis of a broad variety of evidence presented during the trial in support of the claim that the Nazis murdered 6 million Jews during the Holocaust: a documentary, many witness statements, sets of documents, and numerous forensic reports. The author finds that the truth was the first victim not only of World War Two, but also of the Nuremberg trials. 192 pp. pb, 5"×8", ill., bibl., index.



Auschwitz: A Three-Quarter Century of Propaganda. By Carlo Mattogno. Wild rumors were circulating about Auschwitz during WWII: Germans testing war gases; mass murder in electrocution chambers, with gas showers or pneumatic hammers; living people sent on conveyor belts into furnaces; grease and soap made of the victims. Nothing of it was true. When the Soviets captured Auschwitz in early 1945, they reported that 4 million inmates were killed on electrocution conveyor belts discharging their load directly into furnaces. That wasn't true either. After the war, "witnesses" and "experts" added more claims: mass murder with gas bombs, gas chambers made of canvas; crematoria burning 400 million victims… Again, none of it was true. This book gives an overview of the many rumors and lies about Auschwitz today rejected as untrue, and exposes the ridiculous methods that turned some claims into "history," although they are just as untrue. 125 pp. pb, 6"×9", ill., bibl., index, b&w ill.



Auschwitz: A Judge Looks at the Evidence. By Wilhelm Stäglich. Auschwitz is the epicenter of the Holocaust, where more people are said to have been murdered than anywhere else. The most important evidence for this claim was presented during two trials: the International Military Tribunal of 1945/46, and the German Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965. In this book, Wilhelm Stäglich, a former German judge, reveals the incredibly scandalous way in which Allied victors and German courts bent and broke the law in order to come to politically foregone conclusions. Stäglich also exposes the superficial way in which historians are dealing with the many incongruities and discrepancies of the historical record. 3rd edition 2015, 422 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

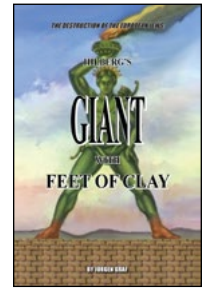
Hilberg's Giant with Feet of Clay. By Jürgen Graf. Raul Hilberg's epochal work *The Destruction of the European Jews* is considered a standard work on the Holocaust. The critical reader might ask: what evidence does Hilberg provide to back his thesis that there was a German plan to exterminate Jews, to be carried out in the legendary gas chambers? And what evidence supports his estimate of 5.1 million Jewish victims? Jürgen Graf applies the methods of critical analysis to Hilberg's evidence, and examines the results in the light of revisionist historiography. The results of Graf's critical analysis are devastating for Hilberg. Graf's analysis is the first comprehensive and systematic examination of the leading spokesperson for the orthodox version of the Jewish fate during the Third Reich. 3rd edition 2022, 182 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

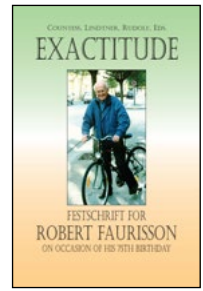
Exactitude: Festschrift for Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson. By R.H. Countess, C. Lindtner, G. Rudolf (eds.)_Faurisson probably deserves the title of the most-courageous intellectual of the 20th and the early 21st Century. With bravery and steadfastness, he challenged the dark forces of historical and political fraud with his unrelenting exposure of their lies and hoaxes surrounding the orthodox Holocaust narrative. This Festschrift is dedicated to him by some of his closest friends in his struggle for exactitude in historiography and his life-long struggle not only for historical and political, but also for individual justice. It describes and celebrates the man and his work, dedicated to accuracy and marked by insubmission. 146 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

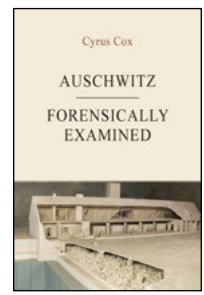
Auschwitz – Forensically Examined. By Cyrus Cox. Modern forensic crime-scene investigations can reveal a lot about the Holocaust. This booklet condenses the most-important findings of Auschwitz forensics into an easy read. Section One reviews forensic investigations conducted so far. Second Two summarizes the most-important results of these studies. The main arguments focus on two topics: 1. The poison allegedly used at Auschwitz for mass murder: Zyklon B. Did it leave traces in masonry? Can it still be detected? 2. Mass cremations: Did the crematoria of Auschwitz have the claimed huge capacity? Do wartime air photos confirm witness statements on huge smoking pyres? This book gives the answers, together with many references to source material and further reading. Section Three reports on how the establishment has reacted to these research results. 2nd ed., 128 pp. pb., b&w ill., bibl., index.

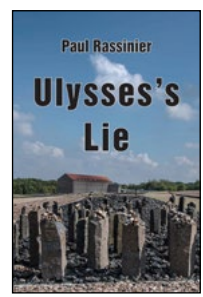
Ulysses's Lie. By Paul Rassiner. Holocaust revisionism began with this book: Frenchman Rassinier, a pacifist and socialist, was sent first to Buchenwald Camp in 1944, then to Dora-Mittelbau. In the first part of this book, Rassinier recounts the horrific detention and labor conditions to which thousands of prisoners were exposed. He reveals how the SS resorted to inmates to run the camp, and that, in return, the inmate leadership resorted to violence and terror to harass their fellow inmates without need. In the second part, Rassinier analyzes the writings of former fellow prisoners: Alfred Untereiner, Jean-Paul Renard, Robert Ploton, Louis Martin-Chauffier, David Rousset and Eugen Kogon. He reveals how these authors lied and distorted the truth in order to conceal from the public that, in the world of concentration camps, it was largely the inmate leadership who were responsible for the terror and mass deaths of their fellow inmates. First complete English edition, including Rassinier's prologue, Albert Paraz's preface, and press reviews. 270 pp, 6"×9" pb, bibl, index.

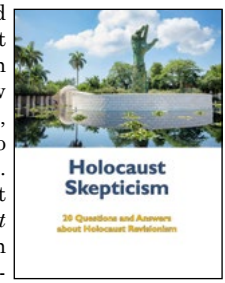
Holocaust Skepticism: 20 Qs & As about Holocaust Revisionism. By Germar Rudolf. This 15-page brochure introduces the novice to the concept of Holocaust revisionism, and answers 20 tough questions, among them: What does Holocaust revisionism claim? Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat? How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators? What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps? Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many? … Glossy full-color brochure. PDF file free of charge available at www.armreg.co.uk. This item is *not* copyright-protected. Hence, you can do with it whatever you want: down-











load, post, email, print, multiply, hand out, sell, drop it accidentally in a bookstore… 19 pp., 8.5"×11", full-color throughout.

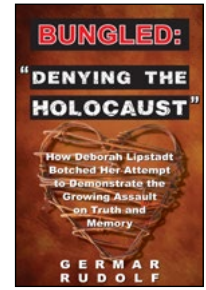
Bungled: "Denying the Holocaust" How Deborah Lipstadt Botched Her Attempt to Demonstrate the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory. By Germar Rudolf. With her book *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt tried to show the flawed methods and extremist motives of "Holocaust deniers." This book demonstrates that Dr. Lipstadt clearly has neither understood the principles of science and scholarship, nor has she any clue about the historical topics she is writing about. She misquotes, mistranslates, misrepresents, misinterprets and makes a plethora of wild claims without backing them up. Rather than dealing thoroughly with factual arguments, Lipstadt's book is full of *ad hominem* attacks on her opponents. It is an exercise in anti-intellectual pseudo-scientific arguments, an exhibition of ideological radicalism that rejects anything which contradicts its preset conclusions. **F for FAIL.** 2nd ed., 224 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Bungled: "Denying History". How M. Shermer and A. Grobman Botched Their Attempt to Refute Those Who Say the Holocaust Never Happened. By Carolus Magnus (C. Mattogno). *Skeptic Magazine* editor Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman from the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote a book claiming to be "a thorough and thoughtful answer to all the claims of the Holocaust deniers." As this book shows, however, Shermer and Grobman completely ignored almost all the "claims" made in the more than 10,000 pages of more-recent cutting-edge revisionist research. They ignored the known unreliability of their cherry-picked evidence, and piled falsifications, contortions and omissions upon fallacious interpretations. They merely "demolished" a ridiculous parody of revisionism, dooming their project to failure. 162 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

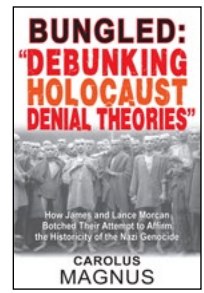
Bungled: "Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories". How James and Lance Morcan Botched Their Attempt to Affirm the Historicity of the Nazi Genocide. By Carolus Magnus. The novelists and movie-makers James and Lance Morcan have produced a book "to end [Holocaust] denial once and for all" by disproving "the various arguments Holocaust deniers use to try to discredit wartime records." It's a lie. First, the Morcans completely ignored the vast amount of recent scholarly studies published by revisionists. Instead, they engage in shadowboxing, creating some imaginary, bogus "revisionist" scarecrow which they then tear to pieces. In addition, their knowledge of the matter is dismal, and their arguments are pitifully inadequate. 144 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

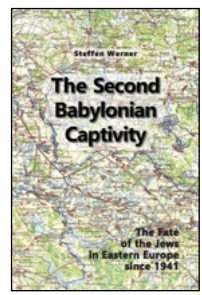
The Second Babylonian Captivity: The Fate of the Jews in Eastern Europe since 1941. By Steffen Werner. "But if they were not murdered, where did the six million deported Jews end up?" This objection demands a well-founded response. While researching an entirely different topic, Werner stumbled upon peculiar demographic data of Belorussia. Years of research subsequently revealed more evidence which eventually allowed him to propose: The Third Reich did indeed deport many of the Jews of Europe to Eastern Europe in order to settle them there "in the swamp." This book shows what really happened to the Jews deported to the East by the National Socialists, how they have fared since. It provides context for hitherto-obscure historical events and obviates extreme claims such as genocide and gas chambers. With a preface by Germar Rudolf. 190 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill., bibl., index

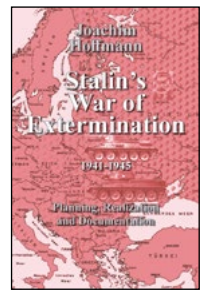
Stalin's War of Extermination 1941-1945. By Joachim Hoffmann. A documentation of the Red Army's grisly record of atrocities against soldiers and civilians, as ordered by Stalin. Since the 1920s, Stalin planned to invade Western Europe to initiate the "World Revolution." He prepared an attack which was unparalleled in history. The Germans preempted Stalin's invasion, but underestimated the Red Army's strength. This book shows how Stalin and his henchman used violence and atrocities to break any resistance in the Red Army, and to force their unwilling soldiers to fight. The book explains how Soviet propagandists incited to unlimited hatred against everything German, and gives











the reader an unpleasant glimpse into what happened when these Soviet soldiers reached German soil: A gigantic wave of looting, arson, rape, torture and mass murder… **428 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.**

Who Started World War II: Truth for a War-Torn World. By Udo Walendy. Mainstream historians insist that Germany was the main, if not the sole culprit for unleashing WWII in Europe. In the present book, this myth is refuted. A great number of documents on the foreign policies of the Great Powers before the war and a wealth of literature, such as memoirs of leading politicians of the time, enable Walendy's present mosaic-like reconstruction of the events before the outbreak of the war. This book has been published only after an intensive study of sources, taking the greatest care to minimize speculation and inference. The present edition has been translated completely anew from the German original, and has been slightly revised. 500 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl., b&w ill.

The Day Amazon Murdered Free Speech. By Germar Rudolf. Amazon is the world's biggest book retailer. They dominate the U.S. and several foreign markets. Pursuant to the 1998 declaration of Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos to offer "the good, the bad and the ugly," customers once could buy every title that was in print and was legal to sell. However, in early 2017, a series of anonymous bomb threats against Jewish community centers occurred in the U.S., fueling a campaign by Jewish groups to coax Amazon into banning revisionist writings. On March 6, 2017, Amazon caved in and banned more than 100 books with dissenting viewpoints on the Holocaust. In April 2017, an Israeli Jew was arrested for having placed the fake bomb threats. But Amazon kept its new censorship policy: They next culled any literature critical of Jews or Judaism; then they enforced these bans at all its subsidiaries, such as AbeBooks and The Book Depository; then they banned books other pressure groups don't like; finally, they bullied Ingram, who has a book-distribution monopoly in the US, to enforce the same rules by banning from the entire world-wide book market all books Amazon doesn't like… 3rd ed., 158 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., color illustrations throughout.

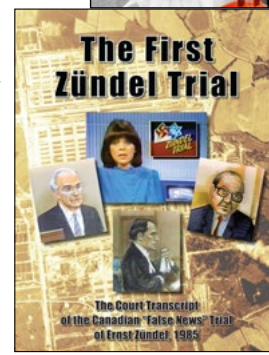
The First Zündel Trial: The Transcript. In the early 1980s, Ernst Zündel, a German living in Toronto, was indicted for allegedly spreading "false news" by selling copies of Harwood's brochure *Did Six Million Really Die?,* which challenged the accuracy of the orthodox Holocaust narrative. When the case went to court in 1985, so-called Holocaust experts and "eyewitnesses" of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz were cross-examined for the first time in history by a competent and skeptical legal team. The results were absolutely devastating for the Holocaust orthodoxy. For decades, these mind-boggling trial transcripts were hidden from public view. Now, for the first time, they have been published in print in this new book – unabridged and unedited. 820 pp. pb, 8.5"×11"

The Holocaust on Trial: The Second Trial against Ernst Zündel 1988. By Ernst Zündel. In 1988, the appeal trial of Ernst Zündel for "knowingly spreading false news about the Holocaust" took place in Toronto. This book is introduced by a brief autobiographic summary of Zündel's early life, and an overview of the evidence introduced during the First Zündel Trial. This is followed by a detailed summary of the testimonies of all the witnesses who testified during the Second Zündel Trial. This was the most-comprehensive and -competent argument ever fought in a court of law over the Holocaust. The arguments presented have fueled revisionism like no other event before, in particular Fred Leuchter's expert report on the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Majdanek, and the testimony of British historian David Irving. Critically annotated edition with a foreword by Germar Rudolf. 410 pp. pb, 6"×9", index.

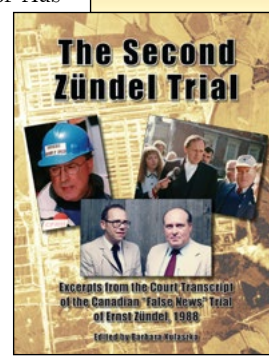
The Second Zündel Trial: Excerpts from the Transcript. By Barbara Kulaszka (ed.). In contrast to Ernst Zündel's book *The Holocaust on Trial* (see earlier description), this book focuses entirely on the Second











Zündel Trial by exclusively quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing the entire trial transcript… 498 pp. pb, 8.5"×11", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Confessions of a Holocaust Revisionist. By Bradly R. Smith. This first autobiographical book of the founder of the Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust interweaves two strands of Smith's early involvement in Holocaust revisionism. The first spans the early years of his conversion in 1979 and 1980, while the other covers his increasingly deep revisionist engagements during the mid-1980s. It chronicles the budding of what was to become the world's most effective campaign for an open debate on the West's last standing taboo subject. 4th ed. 2024, 132 pp. pb, 6"×9."

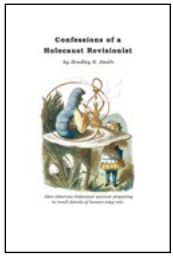
Break His Bones: The Private Life of a Holocaust Revisionist. By Bradly R. Smith. Initially, *Confessions* (see previous book) was announced as Part 1. *Bones* is Part 2 of Smith's confessions. It picks up where *Confessions* left off in 1987. First released in 2002, this book covers 15 more years of Smith's personal account of his incessant lobbying for a free market of ideas, a free press, no censorship and intellectual freedom for all regarding the orthodox Holocaust narrative and its skeptical scrutiny. Includes an appendix with eulogies of his many friends. 2nd ed. 2024, 326 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

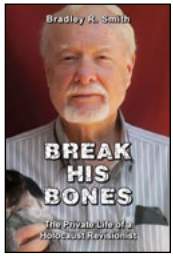
Resistance Is Obligatory! By Germar Rudolf. In 2005, Rudolf, dissident publisher of revisionist literature, was kidnapped by the U.S. government and deported to Germany. There a a show trial was staged. Rudolf was not permitted to defend his historical opinions. Yet he defended himself anyway: Rudolf gave a 7-day speech-proving that only the revisionists are scholarly in their approach, whereas the Holocaust orthodoxy is merely pseudo-scientific. He then explained why it is everyone's obligation to resist, without violence, a government which throws peaceful dissidents into dungeons. When Rudolf tried to publish his defence speech as a book, the public prosecutor initiated a new criminal investigation against him. After his probation time ended in 2011, he dared publish this speech anyway… 2nd ed. 2016, 378 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

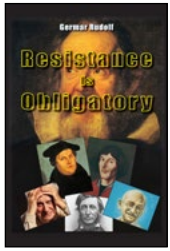
Hunting Germar Rudolf: Essays on a Modern-Day Witch Hunt. By Germar Rudolf. German-born revisionist activist, author and publisher Germar Rudolf describes which events made him convert from a Holocaust believer to a Holocaust skeptic, quickly rising to a leading personality within the revisionist movement. This in turn unleashed a tsunami of persecution against him: lost his job, denied his PhD exam, destruction of his family, driven into exile, slandered by the mass media, literally hunted, caught, put on a show trial where filing motions to introduce evidence is illegal under the threat of further prosecution, and finally locked up in prison for years for nothing else than his peaceful yet controversial scholarly writings. In several essays, Rudolf takes the reader on a journey through an absurd world of government and societal persecution which most of us could never even fathom actually exists in a "Western democracy"… 304 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

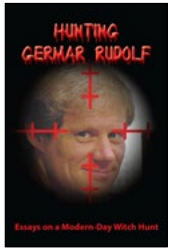
The Book of the Shulchan Aruch. By Erich Bischoff. Most people have heard of the Talmud-that compendium of Jewish laws. The Talmud, however, is vast and largely inscrutable. Fortunately, back in the mid-1500s, a Jewish rabbi created a condensed version of it: the Shulchan Aruch. A fair number of passages in it discuss non-Jews. The laws of Judaism hold Gentiles in very low regard; they can be cheated, lied to, abused, even killed, if it serves Jewish interests. Bischoff, an expert in Jewish religious law, wrote a summary and analysis of this book. He shows us many dark corners of the Jewish religion. 152 pp. pb, 6"x9".

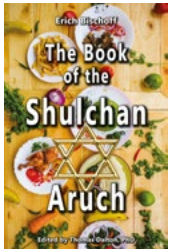
Hitler's Revolution: Ideology, Social Programs, Foreign Affairs. By Richard Tedor. Defying all boycotts, Adolf Hitler transformed Germany from a bankrupt state to the powerhouse of Europe within just four years, thus becoming Germany's most popular leader ever. How was this possible? This study tears apart the dense web of calumny surrounding this controversial figure. It draws on nearly 200 published German sources, many from the Nazi era, as well as documents from British, U.S., and Soviet archives that describe not only what Hitler did but, more importantly, why

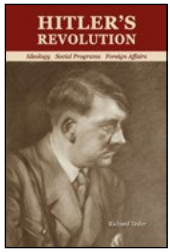










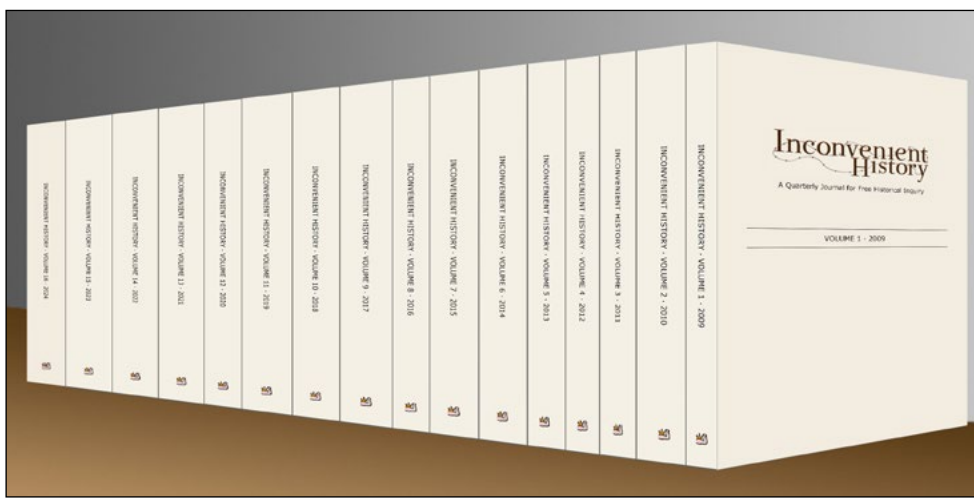


he did it. These sources also reveal the true war objectives of the democracies – a taboo subject for orthodox historians – and the resulting world war against Germany. This book is aimed at anyone who feels that something is missing from conventional accounts. 2nd ed., 309 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.

Inconvenient History, Annual Volumes. Since 2009, the revisionist online journal *Inconvenient History* has been the main publishing platform for authors of the revisionist school of historical thought. *Inconvenient History* seeks to maintain the true spirit of the historical revisionist movement; a movement that was established primarily to foster peace through an objective understanding of the causes of modern warfare. Now considered a revisionist collector's item, this beautiful set of softbound books contains all the hard-hitting revisionist scholarship revealing the truth on several inconvenient moments in our recent history. Get single volumes or the complete set at a discount. Various page ranges, pb, 6"×9", illustrated. See the table below for each volume's number of articles, page count, eBook file size and number of illustrations.

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Volume 1, 2009	11	308	4.2	17
Volume 2, 2010	16	580	6.8	34
Volume 3, 2011	17	464	10.2	61
Volume 4, 2012	19	416	7.75	72
Volume 5, 2013	17	464	9.2	64
Volume 6, 2014	20	568	10.8	86
Volume 7, 2015	17	496	8.6	60
Volume 8, 2016	19	374	8.2	69
Volume 9, 2017	28	568	14.8	127
Volume 10, 2018	25	538	14.1	138
Volume 11, 2019	33	582	12.6	104
Volume 12, 2020	34	448	8.7	72
Volume 13, 2021	28	564	16.8	121
Volume 14, 2022	25	592	15.7	150
Volume 15, 2023	24	636	17.1	150
Volume 16, 2024	33	562	14	147
All Volumes:	366	8,160	179.55	1,472

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