

GERMAN EXTERMINATION CAMPS - Newspaper  
Clippings

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## NAZI BRUTALITY TOLD BY 3 WHO ESCAPED CAMPS

### Nearly Two Million Reported Gassed.

**ATROCIOUS PICTURES.**  
There have been many reports of German atrocities, some of which have been verified. At Lublin, Poland, for instance, reporters were permitted to interview residents and take photographs. Some of the Lublin pictures appear on page 2. No pictures were released to corroborate the atrocity story released today by the war refugee board.

**BY HAL ROUST.**  
(Chicago Tribune Press Service.)  
Washington, D. C., Nov. 25.—The war refugee board today issued a 22,000 word booklet in which three men who escaped describe the systematic murder of European civilians by the Germans in extermination camps in southwestern Poland. The board, consisting of Secretaries Hull, Morgenthau, and Stimson, vouched for the accounts, including an estimate that 1,765,000 Jews were gassed at Birkenau, one of the camps.  
"So revolting and diabolical are the German atrocities," the board said in a preface, "that the minds of civilized people find it difficult to believe that they have actually taken place. But the governments of the United States and of other countries have evidence which clearly substantiates the facts."

**Campaign of Terror.**  
"It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe. This campaign of terror and brutality, which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated, is part of the German plan to subjugate the free peoples of the world."

"The board has every reason to believe that these reports present a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps."

The names of the three narrators were suppressed. Two of them were described as young Slovakian Jews who escaped last April after two years in the Nazi concentration camps at Birkenau and near-by Auschwitz, notorious for their crematories. The third is a Polish major, who also escaped from Auschwitz.

#### Various Ways of Killing.

Their stories were the first released by the war refugee board since it was created last January by President Roosevelt to direct the rescue of concentration camp prisoners. They told of multiple murders by deliberate exposure and deprivation, by hypodermic phenol injections, by firing squad, by gas chambers, and by experimental surgery. The details are as gruesome as World War I reports that the Germans had bayoneted babies and rendered cadavers for edible fats.

The brochure said women and children as well as men are among the victims of atrocities in this war. The origin of the 1,765,000 Jews reported as gassed in death chambers in Birkenau from April, 1942, to April, 1944, was listed as follows: Poland, 900,000; Holland, 100,000; Greece, 45,000; France, 150,000; Belgium, 50,000; Germany, 60,000; Yugoslavia, Italy, and Norway, 50,000; Lithuania, 50,000; Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria, 30,000; Slovakia, 30,000, and from various camps for foreign Jews in Poland, 300,000.

#### Sealed Box Cars.

The Slovakians said the diabolical treatment of civilian prisoners began at their arrival at the camp in

sealed box cars. They said the sick, and the exhausted, all who could not walk, were piled together into trucks and hauled directly to the incinerators. Of those able to stand, they wrote, about 10 per cent of the men and 5 per cent of the women were assigned to cells for forced labor while the others were taken to the gas chambers for extermination.

"It often happened," said this account of emptying the prison trains, "that small children were thrown into the trucks along with the dead."

The prisoners retained for labor were locked in cell houses, assigned three to a cubicle described as "too narrow for a man to lie stretched out and not high enough for him to sit upright." Disease, malnutrition, exposure, and brutality decimated the ranks daily with the vacancies filled by new arrivals. Those unable to work were killed by phenol injections or by gassing.

#### Crematories Described.

The crematories were described in detail. The capacity of four cremating and gassing plants at Birkenau was given as 8,000 daily. The narrators said that on entering one of these liquidation plants, the prisoners were given the impression that they were going into a bath house. They were massed in an antechamber, made to undress, and handed small towels and small pieces of soap. Then they were jammed into another chamber with simulated doors to shower rooms.

"When everybody is inside," the account said, "the heavy doors are closed. Then there is a short pause, presumably to allow the room temperature to rise to a certain level, after which SS men with gas masks climb on the roof, open trap doors, and shake down a preparation in powder form out of tin cans labeled 'cyklon,' for use against vermin."

"It is presumed that this is a cyanide mixture of some sort which turns into gas at a certain temperature. After three minutes every one in the chamber is dead. The chamber is opened, aired, and a special squad carts the bodies on flat trucks to the furnace room where the burning takes place."

#### Three Adult Bodies.

The furnace room was described as containing nine furnaces, each with four openings of a size to re-

### Atrocity Pictures From Polish Camp

...three adult bodies. Cremation required one and a half hours. The ashes assertedly were used to fertilize fields on a prison farm.

"Prominent guests from Berlin were present at the inauguration of the first crematory in March, 1943," one of the Slovaks related. "The program consisted of the gassing and burning of 8,000 Cracow Jews.

"The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results and the special peephole fitted into the door of the gas chamber was in constant use. They were lavish in their praise."

Heinrich Himmler, Gestapo chief, was reported to have visited the crematory last May.

"According to the statement of a Jew from the 'special commands' [trustees]," read the account, from the other Slovakian, "Himmler was said to have visited Birkenau on the 15th or 16th of May. On one of these days I myself saw three automobiles and five men in civilian clothing drive toward the crematories.

Say They Recognized Him.

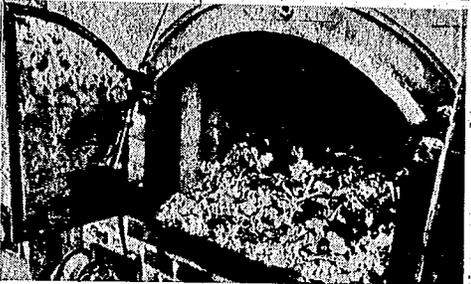
"The Jew who made this statement declared that he as well as others recognized Himmler, who had visited Crematory No. 1 and after a stay of about half an hour had driven off with those accompanying him. On the day after, there was an account in the Silesian newspapers of Himmler's visit to Cracow, so his report could be true."

Before construction of the crematory, there was an interval when bodies were buried and another interval when they were burned in large pits with the aid of gasoline. Firing squads were used as well as gas as a means of extermination, it was said.

"Great numbers of people were shot after having been brought in by truck straight from freedom or from prisons," the Polish major reported. "In two instances, whole families were executed, parents together with their children. In one case, an infant a few months old ended his short life in the arms of his mother before the execution wall."

Murder by Injection.

The murders by injection were mainly at the camp hospital. The Pole said the normal rate in 1942 was 20 to 80 a day, but about once a month a German doctor would go thru the camp and list between 200 and 400 of the weak for the lethal needle.



Germans' concentration camp at Lublin, Poland, where thousands of men, women, and children were gassed, included largest crematorium in world. This is one of the huge cremation ovens, still filled with bits of charred bones.



[Acme Photos.] Containers in which ashes of prisoners cremated at Lublin were sold for fertilizer. In background is row of cremation ovens. These pictures came from sources other than war refugee board.

000224

Chicago Daily Tribune  
NOV 26 1944

"The injections," said the major, "were not only administered to the weak and the ill but also to prisoners in the political section who were condemned to death. Apart from this, on one occasion, two groups (the first of 40 and the second of 80 prisoners) of young and strong youths between the ages of 13 and 16 were put to death on the ground that they were orphans and could not be considered in the camp as full-fledged workers."

"Racial considerations played an important role. An Aryan really had to be seriously ill to be condemned to death by injection, whereas 80 to 90 per cent of the Jews hospitalized there were eliminated in this manner. Many of them knew about this method and applied for admission as so-called 'suicide candidates,' not having the courage to throw themselves on the high tension wires."

**Electrified Fences.**  
The camp was surrounded by two belts of electrified fences with guards posted in towers mounting machine guns and floodlights. The bodies of prisoners killed in attempting to escape were displayed in camp with a placard reading "Here, a Jew in the presence of an SS I Aryan." Those captured alive were hanged in view of the prisoners. Few escaped.

The Polish major said the treatment of the men was such that a young and robust Jew could be expected to last not more than two weeks.

The three escaped prisoners told little about a mysterious biological laboratory which they said the Germans operated at Auschwitz.

"Here," wrote the Pole, "sterilizing by X-ray treatment, artificial insemination of women, as well as experiments on blood transfusion were carried on. Male and female prisoners, especially Jews, served as guinea pigs for these experiments. This block was completely isolated from the rest of the camp so that news from it reached us only very seldom."

**Reports Many Die.**  
One of the Slovaks reported that a great many died as a result of these experiments. The other Slovakian, in telling of the deaths of 4,000 in a September, 1943, convoy of Polish Jew families, said 11 twins were left alive, to be subjected to various medical tests. The brochure contained numerous

names of German prison officials who might be brought to trial when the war is ended. It also contained the names of prisoners who some times outdid their keepers in bestiality while serving in capacities that would be called trusties in an American penal institute.

"On Dec. 17, 1942, 200 young Slovak Jews, the so-called 'special squad' employed in gassing and burning the condemned, were in turn executed at Birkenau," one of the Slovaks said. "They were executed for having planned to betray and escape. A Jew betrayed their preparations. This frightful job had to be taken over by a group of 200 Polish Jews who had just arrived at camp."

**Brutal and Ruthless.**  
"The men belonging to the 'special squad' lived separately. They were extraordinarily brutal and ruthless. It was not uncommon to see one of them kill another. This was considered by the others a singular change."

"Once I was an eyewitness when a young Polish Jew named Jossel demonstrated 'scientific' murder on a Jew in the presence of an SS guard. He used no weapon, merely his bare hands, to kill his victim."

Speaking of an adjutant to one of the camp officials, the account said the adjutant, a Jew called Mittler, certainly owed his post to his brutal actions. He took full advantage of the power conferred upon him to torment the Jews."

## Two Million Executed in Nazi Camps

Gassing, Cremation Assembly-Line Methods Told by War Refugee Board

By George Connery

In two years approximately two million persons—equal to the entire population of West Virginia—were exterminated at two German concentration camps, according to a detailed report made public yesterday by the War Refugee Board, the first such indictment for wholesale murder to be issued under authority of this Government.

Six grams, sketches and maps in the 24-page report locate in rough outline the crematoria and other installations and illustrate the assembly-line methods that eliminated men, women and children.

Contrary to established policy, the board did not submit this report to the Office of War Information before making it public.

The executions total is arrived at mainly through a series of detailed tables giving national composition and estimated size of each convoy as it arrived at the camp areas. Only a percentage of the convoys was enrolled at the institutions, with the bulk sent directly to the gassing chambers. Because consecutive numbers were tattooed on those not immediately executed, it was possible to reach an approximate total for those exterminated. For one set of gas chambers alone

the figure was 1,786,000, in Upper Silesia.

The camps are Auschwitz and Birkenau, in upper Silesia. The period covered is the spring of 1942 to last spring. Millions of Jews and Poles gassed and cremated there; in addition to the reported death tolls of Lublin and other notorious mass execution centers elsewhere in Germany and occupied countries. Any estimate of the over-all total would be a pure guess on the basis of available facts.

"It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe," declares the board, which functions under the Executive Office of the President. "This campaign of terror and brutality, unprecedented in all history, even now continues unabated."

Three men, who escaped the camps furnished the basis for the report.

Although it cannot vouch for accuracy of every detail in the sensational narrative, the War Refugee Board released it as a reliable summary, it said.

"The board has every reason to believe that these reports present a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps. It is making the reports public in the firm conviction that they would be read and understood by all Americans."

"Entirely Credible"

"The declarations tally with all the trustworthy yet fragmentary reports hitherto received, and the dates given with regard to transports to various camps agree with official records. These statements can, therefore, be considered as entirely credible."

The three stories, it was learned, were forwarded to the board in Washington by one of its representatives at the American Embassy in Switzerland. Checking the men and their narratives closely, he

found that in all important aspects one corroborated another. He sent the reports back here with the recommendation that they were correct as far as could be ascertained under wartime conditions.

In Washington, the board was impressed also because the stories were from men actually confined in the camps, where escape is rare. Although there was a reluctance to publish atrocity stories, in view of the propaganda backfire following the First World War, the board felt it was on firm ground on these reports.

In the document released last night the board explained:

"The War Refugee Board is engaged in a desperate effort to save as many as possible of Hitler's intended victims. To facilitate its work the board has representatives in key spots in Europe. These representatives have tested contacts throughout Europe and keep the board fully advised concerning the German campaign of extermination and torture.

Reports Prepared Separately

"The reports were prepared separately and are reproduced exactly in the form they were received by the War Refugee Board, except for a few deletions necessary for the protection of persons who may still be alive. The figures concerning the size of the Jewish convoys and the numbers of men and women admitted to the two camps cannot be taken as mathematically exact; and, in fact, are declared by the authors to be no more than reliable approximations. They are accepted as such by the board."

One report is based on experiences of two young Slovakian Jews who escaped in April, 1944, after spending two years in the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau. The second is by a non-Jewish Polish major, the only survivor of one group imprisoned at Auschwitz.

Brutality, starvation and disease were the accepted thing at the camps, the three men declared. For example, at Auschwitz, Jews were forced to bring gravel on wheelbarrows up an incline from a pit. Those who slowed up were simply pushed back and crashed down the incline with their loads on top of them. Extremely run-down hospital patients, chronic cases and the half-starved or mutilated were virtually condemned to death by injections.

Used for Experiments

Men and women were used for medical experiments in "biological laboratories" where "even the windows were walled up," the narrators said. "A great many died as a result of these experiments," they added.

The two Slovakian Jews related that upon the opening of the first crematorium in Birkenau in March, 1943, prominent guests from Berlin were invited to witness a "program" consisting of the gassing and burning of 8000 Cracow Jews.

The guests watched the whole process through "special peepholes," they said, and afterward were "lavish" in their praise of the new installation.

Other tales of atrocities told by the three men included dipping a rabbi head first into a latrine and shooting him because he was late for a roll call, forcing the prisoners to sing at "concert parties" during which the SS guards were very generous with blows and physical punishment, and commanding the men to undergo exhausting exercises out of doors in freezing temperatures while in an unclothed state.

The three escapees give exact and factual descriptions of the exterminating processes, which varied from ordinary but relentless brutality to death by gas. Birkenau, which adjoined Auschwitz, had the most elaborate system.

First Burned in Trenches

At first bodies from the gas hall at Birkenau were burned in huge trenches. This crude step was eliminated.

# The Washington Post

NOV 2 6 1944

inated at the end of February, 1944, when a new modern gassing plant and a series of crematoria were into operation.

Two large crematoria and two smaller ones were provided. The larger ones were described by one of the Slovakian Jews as follows: "These consist of three parts, a furnace room, large hall and gas chamber. A huge chimney rises from the furnace room around which are grouped nine furnaces, each having four openings. Each opening can take three normal corpses at once and after an hour and a half the bodies are completely burned. This corresponds to a daily capacity of about 2000 bodies."

"Next to this is a large reception hall which is arranged so as to give the impression of the ante-chamber of a bathing establishment. It holds 2000 people and apparently there is a similar waiting room on the floor below."

"From there a door and a few steps lead down into the very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with simulated entries to shower rooms in order to mislead the victims. The roof is fitted with three traps which can be hermetically closed from the outside. A track leads from the gas chamber toward the furnace room."

This is his description of how the gassing takes place:

"The unfortunate victims are brought into hall B where they are told to undress. To complete the fiction that they are going to bathe, each person receives a towel and a small piece of soap, issued by two men clad in white coats. Then they are crowded into the gas chamber. On such numbers that there is, of course, only standing room."

"To compress this crowd into the narrow space, shots are often fired to induce those already at the far end to huddle still closer together. When everybody is inside, the heavy doors are closed. Then there is a short pause, presumably to allow the room temperature to rise to a certain level, after which SS men with gas masks climb on the roof, open the traps and shake down a preparation in powder form out of tin cans labeled 'Cyclon—for use against vermin,' which is manufactured by a Hamburg concern."

## 6000-a-Day Capacity

"It is presumed that this is a cyanide mixture of some sort which turns into gas at a certain temperature. After three minutes everyone in the chamber is dead. No one is known to have survived this ordeal, although it was not uncommon to discover signs of life after the primitive measures employed in the birch wood (the earlier Birkenau installation)."

"The chamber is then opened, and the 'special squad' carts the bodies on flat trucks to the furnace room, where the burning takes place. Crematoria 3 and 4 (the smaller ones) work on nearly the same principle, but their capacity is only half as large. Thus the total capacity of the four cremating and gassing plants at Birkenau amounts to about 6000 daily."

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# Wholesale Slaughter by Nazis Bared by U. S. Refugee Board

Hull, Stimson, Morgenthau Brand

German Measures as Clear Bestiality

By the Associated Press.

The War Refugee Board last night accused the Germans of bestial cruelty and murder by the million in Nazi extermination camps and backed up the charges with startling eye-witness accounts.

The board, composed of Secretary of State Hull, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, and Secretary of War Stimson, made public a 25,000-word detailed report in which it asserted:

"The board has every reason to believe that these reports present a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps. It is making the reports public in the firm conviction that they should be read and understood by all Americans."

The report consisted of two eye-witness accounts of life in the Nazi camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau in southwestern Poland, prepared

independently, but almost precisely parallel.

Each included an estimate that more than a million and a half Jews from various European countries were gassed and their bodies cremated at Birkenau alone between April, 1942, and April, 1944.

One account by two young Slovakian Jews, who for two years had clerical posts in the camp through which they could keep fairly close track of events, set the figure at 1,765,000. The second account was by a non-Jewish Polish major. All three names were withheld by the board which said in an accompanying statement:

"It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe. This campaign of terror and brut-

ality, which is unprecedented in all history, and which even now continues unabated, is part of the German plan to subjugate the free people of the world."

The board, of which John W. Feltz is executive director, is responsible for carrying out the policy of the Federal Government for rescue of the victims of enemy oppression.

Over 6,000 Cremated Daily.

Throughout the more detailed story of the two Jews appeared such gruesome statistics as these: "Conservative estimate" that 85,000 to 70,000 of 80,000 persons received at the camp were gassed; "lowest estimate" 30,000 gassed out of another group; one month's gasings, 90,000; total capacity of crematoria 6,000 a day, but for a period it was overloaded and bodies burned in great open pits.

Taken from the reports are these excerpts and paraphrases:

"The mere fact of neglecting to give information on the whereabouts of a prisoner, not to speak of extending help, is punished by death. If the escapee is caught alive, he is hanged in the presence of the whole camp; but if he is found dead, his body—wherever it may have been located—is brought

back to camp and seated at the entrance gate, a small notice clasped in his hands, reading 'Here I am.'"

Camp buildings are divided into little cubicles, each occupied by three persons, each cubicle "too narrow for a man to lie stretched out and not high enough for him to sit upright."

Death Rate High.

"Working conditions were inconceivably hard, so that the majority of us, weakened by starvation and the inedible food, could not stand it. The mortality was so high that every day our group of 200 had 30 to 35 dead. Many were simply beaten to death by the overseers—the 'capes'—during work, without the slightest provocation."

Later a "sick building" was set up. Actually this building was nothing else than an assembly center for death candidates. All prisoners incapable of working were sent there. There was no question of any medical attention or care.

"At the same time, the so-called 'selections' were introduced. Twice weekly, Mondays and Thursdays, the camp doctor indicated the number of prisoners who were to be gassed and then burned. These 'selectees' were loaded into trucks and brought to the Birch Forest. Those still alive upon arrival were gassed in a big barrack erected near the trench used for burning the bodies."

Typical Descriptions.

Typical of the descriptions given of the fate of individual groups are these:

"2,000 Frenchmen (Aryans), Communists and other political prisoners, among them the brother of Thorez and the young brother of Leon Blum. The latter was atrociously tortured, then gassed and burned."

"Large family convoys arrived from various European countries and were at once directed to the birch wood. The special squad ('Sonderkommando') employed for gassing and burning worked in day and night shifts." Hundreds of thousands of Jews were gassed during this period.

"The men (themselves prisoners) belonging to the 'Special Squad' lived separately. On account of the dreadful smell spread by them, people had but little contact with them. Besides, they were always filthy, destitute, half wild and extraordinarily brutal and ruthless."

Killed Each Other.

"It was not uncommon to see one of them kill another. This was considered by the others a sensation, a change."

"At the end of February, 1943, a new modern crematoria and gassing plant was inaugurated at Birkenau. The large ditch was filled in, the ground leveled and the ashes used as before for fertilizer at the farm labor camp of Hermense."

Next to the furnace room was a large "reception hall" arranged to give the impression of the antechamber of a bathing establishment.

"It holds 2,000 people and apparently there is a similar waiting

# The Evening Star

NOV 26 1944

room on the floor below. There a door and a few steps lead down into the very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with simulated entries to shower rooms to mislead the victims.

The room is fitted with three traps which can be hermetically closed from the outside. A track leads from the gas chamber through the furnace room. The gassing takes place as follows:

#### Turned Into "Shower Room."

"The unfortunate victims are brought into the hall, where they are told to undress. To complete the fiction that they are going to bathe, each person receives a towel and a small piece of soap, issued by two men clad in white coats. Then they are crowded into the gas chamber in such numbers that there is, of course, only standing room.

"To compress this crowd into the narrow space, shots are often fired to reduce those already at the far end to huddle still closer together. When everybody is inside, the heavy doors are closed. Then there is a short pause, presumably to allow the room temperature to rise to a certain level, after which SS men with gas masks climb on the roof, open the traps and shake down a preparation in powder form out of tin cans labeled 'Cyclon—for use against vermin' which is manufactured by a Hamburg concern. It is presumed that this is a cyanide mixture of some sort which turns into gas at a certain temperature.

"After three minutes, every one in the chamber is dead."

The bodies are then taken out and burned.

#### Only Jews Are Gassed.

"On principle only Jews are gassed, Aryans very seldom, as they are usually given 'special treatment' by shooting.

"Prominent guests from Berlin were present at the inauguration of the first crematorium in March, 1933. The 'program' consisted of the gassing and burning of 8,000 Czech Jews. The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results and the special peephole fitted into the

door of the gas chamber was in constant use."

There is a "block recorder" who keeps the prisoners' files.

His work is one of great responsibility and he has to keep his ledgers with painful exactitude as the index cards only indicate the number and not the name of the prisoners, errors are fatal.

"For instance, if the recorder has noted down a death by mistake, and that often occurs with the unusually high mortality—the discrepancy is simply straightened out by killing the bearer of the corresponding number.

The report by the Polish major asserted that prisoners were used for experiments in sterilizing by X-ray, in artificial insemination of women, as well as blood transfusions.

#### Hebrew Group Insists

#### On Slayers' Punishment

The Hebrew Committee of National Liberation insisted yesterday that the slayers of Hebrews be punished by the United Nations as war criminals, regardless of where these victims were slaughtered or what their citizenship.

The committee asked representation on the United Nations War Crimes Commission sitting in London preparing for the trials of war criminals.

The statement was issued here through the chairman, Peter H. Bergson, who criticized what he termed the "inexplicable" failure of the United Nations governments to take any measures that would "effectively interfere with this slaughter which will be punished."

He said there was a widespread, but erroneous, impression that the War Crimes Commission would deal with all these war criminals. The truth is, he added, that the commission, under the interpretation of its chairman, Sir Cecil Hurst, "has refused to take into consideration any acts committed against persons other than nationals of the United Nations."

On the Other Hand

Reports of Mass Slayings of Jews in Poland Checked for Accuracy

By Lowell Mellett

The War Refugee Board, composed of the Secretaries of State and Treasury, made public last Sunday a report on the mass extermination by the Germans of Jewish men, women and children in prison camps at Birkenau and Auschwitz, in Southwestern Poland. As compared with the 1,500,000 persons declared by the Russian government to have been killed in three years at Lublin, this report estimates the number murdered at Birkenau between April, 1942, and April, 1944, at 1,768,000.



The horror of this story is so great that our minds instinctively rebel. We don't want to believe. We don't want to think such things can happen. We remember, too, that many atrocity tales told during the last war turned out to be untrue. We don't want to be misled again. Sharing this feeling, to some extent, despite all the evidence in the hands of a deliberate German policy of extermination, the War Refugee Board hesitated a long time before making the document public. The substance of the present information was received by cable in July. The full text came by mail more than a month ago.

While it is possible to directly verify the complete authenticity, I have every reason to believe that they are, unfortunately, a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps," Mr. McClelland wrote to the board.

In connection with the report of the Slovaks, Mr. McClelland said he had talked with a member of the Bratislava Papal Nunciature, who had personally interviewed the young men and who declared the impression they created in telling their story was thoroughly convincing. The young men were closely cross-examined, he said, and the material that finally went into their report included only that about which there was no uncertainty in their minds or in the minds of their examiners.

The Czechoslovakian representative vouched for the reliability of the Polish major and for the authenticity of his report. Mr. McClelland himself collected the translation from German into English. The figures concerning the numbers of men and women admitted to the two camps cannot be taken as mathematically exact, the author himself says they are more than reliable approximations. But, in the opinion of Mr. McClelland, a precise statistical record "would not detract in any appreciable degree from the value of these reports."

Reports Convincing

Mr. McClelland checked information in the reports concerning dates and points of origin of convoys of Jews arriving at the camps, with information possessed by reliable Jewish and non-Jewish organizations in Switzerland regarding the departure of such convoys from various European countries. Some of the information he was able to check by his own experience. He was in Southern France in August and September of 1942 and witnessed the deportation of large convoys of foreign Jews from four different internment camps, obtaining considerable first-hand information concerning their numbers and the dates of their departures.

The reports themselves seem convincing to any one who reads them. The mass of detail given is calculated to overcome any doubts. A limited number of copies of the 80-page report has been mimeographed and may be obtained by writing to the War Refugee Board in Washington.

The purpose in making the report public is to give the American people some understanding of the serious nature of the refugee problem and to enlist support for the board's efforts to relieve a diabolical situation. A further purpose will be achieved if the report helps drive home the necessity to organize the world against aggressive warfare.

The Washington Post  
DEC 3 1944

**Gallup Poll Finds  
Mass Murders  
Underestimated**

The average American thinks the number of people put to death in Nazi concentration camps has been something like 100,000, despite the fact that various investigating boards have put the figure many times higher, a Gallup Poll survey indicates.

A report issued only a week ago by the War Refugee Board concluded that between 1,500,000 and 1,785,000 had been put to death in one camp, alone, in Poland, and an estimated 1,500,000 at another.

But, regardless of the number involved, the American people are fully prepared to believe atrocities have taken place, the survey indicates.

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## Gallup Finds Most Believe Atrocity Tales

Contrary to widespread skepticism of atrocity stories after the last war, today an overwhelming majority of Americans believe accounts of Nazi mass murder.

The average American thinks the number of people put to death in Nazi concentration camps has been something like 100,000.

### Figures Higher

Various investigating boards have put the figure much higher. A report issued a week ago by the War Refugee Board, Government agency, concluded that between 1,500,000 and 1,765,000 had been put to death in one camp in Poland, an estimated 1,500,000 at another.

Regardless of the number involved, American people are fully prepared to believe atrocities have taken place, as witnessed by their vote on the question:

"Do you believe stories that Germans have murdered many people in concentration camps are true or not true?"

True.....78%  
 Not True.....12  
 No Opinion.....10

The War Refugee Board, in making its report last week, declared: "So revolting are German atrocities that civilized people find it difficult to believe they have ac-

tually taken place." What Americans find it hard to believe is that the victims have numbered in the millions.

### Guesses Wrong

The Institution put this question to all people who think German mass murder stories are true:

"Nobody knows, of course how many may have been murdered, but what would be your best guess?"

The range follows:

100,000 or less.....	47%
100,000 to 500,000.....	51
500,000 to 1,000,000.....	1
1,000,000.....	6
2,000,000 to 6,000,000.....	8
6,000,000 or more.....	14
Unwilling to guess.....	25

78%  
 The survey found some differences of opinion by sections as to the truth of the atrocity stories, but no important difference. Sectional figures:

	True	Not True	Opin.
N. Eng. ....	80%	8%	11%
M. Atl. ....	73	15	12
E. Cent. ....	75	13	12
W. Cent. ....	73	14	13
South .....	77	9	14
Far West ...	84	5	11

The country is virtually unanimous in thinking harsh punishment should be meted out to Germans. The largest number favored execution of the guilty—in poison gas chambers, by hanging, electrocution or firing squad.

100232

## Genocide

No human creature can read the report of the War Refugees' Board released last Sunday without a sense of shock and shame. The report presents eyewitness accounts of events which occurred at the German extermination camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. "So revolting and diabolical are the German atrocities," says the WRB, "that the minds of civilized people find it difficult to believe that they have actually taken place. But the governments of the United States and of other countries have evidence which clearly substantiates the facts." The facts are really quite simple, although perhaps somewhat difficult to grasp: in Birkenau, between April, 1942, and April, 1944, approximately 1,765,000 Jews were put to death by poison gas in ingeniously constructed chambers; their bodies were then burned in specially designed furnaces; their ashes were distributed as fertilizer. This process of extermination by gassing was carried on in other camps besides Birkenau; in the main, it was applied only to Jews. "Aryans" were generally exterminated by shooting or by injections of phenol. After their bodies had been shoveled into the furnaces, however, the "Aryan" and Jewish ashes were probably indistinguishable.

It is a mistake, perhaps, to call these killings "atrocities." An atrocity is a wanton brutality. There were unspeakable atrocities at Auschwitz and Birkenau. But the point about these killings is that they were systematic and purposeful. The gas chambers and furnaces were not improvisations; they were scientifically designed instruments for the extermination of an entire ethnic group. On the scale practiced by the Germans, this is something new. And it is this purpose which human beings find it difficult to believe or understand. Yet it is a purpose which Hitler has openly avowed.

We have never even had a word for it until now. But one has been recently coined by a noted Polish scholar and attorney, Prof. Raphael Lemkin, now on the faculty of Duke University. He has devised the term genocide out of the ancient Greek word *genos* (race, tribe) and the Latin *cide* (killing).

"Genocide," he says in a volume, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* recently published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "is directed against the national group as an entity; and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group." Thus Jews were gassed at Birkenau and Aryan Poles and Russians and Slovenes were otherwise butchered, not for any crime or any resistance to Axis authority but because the Nazis wished to exterminate the ethnic groups to which they belonged.

"Generally speaking," says Professor Lemkin, "genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves." In this sense the Germans have committed genocide in virtually all the countries of Europe which they occupied. They have struck deliberately at the culture, language, religious and political institutions and at the economic existence of the peoples they conquered—all with a view to undermining their national identity and weakening them, physically and morally, so that they would become subservient to German rule.

As long ago as 1933 Professor Lemkin proposed the recognition of genocide as a crime under international law. Had his proposal been adopted, Sir Cecil Hurst and his United Nations War Crimes Commission would not now be so hard put to it to determine the guilt of Nazi oppressors. Furthermore, as Professor Lemkin puts it, "the adoption of the principle of universal repression as adapted to genocide by countries which belong now to the group of non-belligerents or neutrals, respectively, would likewise bind these latter countries to punish the war criminals engaged in genocide or to extradite them to the countries in which these crimes were committed." One of the vital steps in the punishment of war guilt, we believe, is to secure international agreement now on the outlawing of genocide. If such an agreement is reached, neutrals will feel no violation of their sovereignty in the demand that perpetrators of this crime be handed over to justice. And the execution of justice will be given a firm legal foundation.

WAS 7.  
T. J.  
12/13/44

Wash Post 12/13/44

The Washington Post  
DEC 18 1944

## Letters To The Editor

Communications must carry writer's name and address, though pen names are permitted at the editor's discretion. Letters should be held to not more than 200 words. They are subject to condensation.

### Genocide

On December 10, The Washington Post published a letter by "Army Officer" referring to my proposals of 1933 to recognize Genocide (Destruction of Nations) as an international crime, described in your editorial of December 3.

"Army Officer" states that existing international agreements—the Hague Convention of 1907—define and cover completely the guilt of Nazi oppressors. Unfortunately, he fails to take into account in his able discussion of the problem certain essential points.

1. The Hague Convention applies to the treatment of civilians under military occupation. It does not cover "genocidal" practices in peace and within the boundaries of the oppressing state. According to recently published information the proposal of the American representative, Herbert Pell, to provide for the punishment of those responsible for atrocities against national, religious and racial groups within the borders of Axis countries was rejected by the United Nations Commission for Investigation of War Crimes because there was no legal basis for such punishment.

2. The Hague convention could not foresee the various ingenious, quasi-legal devices by which Germany enforced its rule. Direct murder may be more easily recognizable, but the various devious and scientifically elaborated measures to disrupt the economic, social and biological foundations of a people are not so readily distinguished under the definitions offered by the Hague convention.

3. Neither the Hague convention nor the Field Manual, published by the War Department, make specific provision for the capture of war criminals in foreign countries. Under present conditions, neutrals who may be requested to surrender such criminals may regard these requests as an infringement upon their sovereignty and may even invoke the custom of granting asylum to

political criminals. My proposal of 1933 formulated the obligation of all signatory nations either to try such criminals wherever they are apprehended or to surrender them to another signatory party.

4. If we treat the mass murders of Birkenau and Oswiecim as simple murder, only the comparatively few who were directly involved could be prosecuted. For the murder of several million people only some hundreds of officials and subordinates could be directly accused. As I have defined Genocide for the purposes of an international treaty, all persons who incited the population to committing and approving this crime and who provided the legal basis and machinery for its commission shall be considered accessories to the crime. Thus, Goebbels and his many associates would be equally responsible for Birkenau, although they may not have given the direct orders to kill.

While we should enforce the existing laws with all energy, on the other hand, we should not fail to create a more complete and a more readily enforceable machinery for facing one of our greatest tasks, the fight against the onslaught of barbarism.

RAPHAEL LEMKIN.

## Gallup Finds Mass Murders Underestimated

Contrary to widespread skepticism of atrocity stories after the last war, today an overwhelming majority of Americans believe accounts of Nazi mass murder.

The average American thinks the number of people put to death in Nazi concentration camps has been something like 100,000.

### Figures Higher

Various investigating boards have put the figure much higher. A report issued a week ago by the War Refugee Board, Government agency, concluded that between 1,500,000 and 1,768,000 had been put to death in one camp in Poland, an estimated 1,800,000 at another.

Regardless of the number involved, American people are fully prepared to believe atrocities have taken place, as witnessed by their vote on the question:

"Do you believe stories that Germans have murdered many people in concentration camps are true or not true?"

True ..... 76%  
Not True ..... 22  
No Opinion ..... 12

The War Refugee Board, in making its report last week, declared: "So revolting are German atrocities that civilized people find it difficult to believe they have actually taken place." What Americans find it hard to believe is that the victims have numbered in the millions.

### Guesses Wrong

The institution put this question to all people who think German mass murder stories are true: "Nobody knows, of course how many may have been murdered, but what would be your best guess?"

The range follows:  
100,000 or less ..... 27%  
100,000 to 500,000 ..... 5  
500,000 to 1,000,000 ..... 1  
1,000,000 ..... 6  
2,000,000 to 3,000,000 ..... 3  
3,000,000 or more ..... 4  
Unwilling to guess ..... 25

The survey found some differences of opinion by sections as to the truth of the atrocity stories, but no important difference. Sectional figures:

	True	Not True	No Opin.
N. Eng. ....	80%	19%	11%
M. Atl. ....	73	15	12
E. Cent. ....	75	13	12
W. Cent. ....	73	14	13
South ....	77	9	14
Far West ....	84	5	11

The country is virtually unanimous in thinking harsh punishment should be meted out to Germans. The largest number favored execution of the guilty—in poison gas chambers, by hanging, electrocution or firing squad.

000335

Forwards, November 27, 1944.

President's Refugee Board Issues a "Black Book" on the Killing of Jews.

Washington, Nov. 26th.

In the strongest and bitterest words which the American Government has until now used to condemn the outrages which the Nazis carried out against the Jews, were used in a "Black Book" issued by the Refugee Board which is composed of Secretaries Hull, Stimson and Morgenthau. The "Black Book" is loaded with facts and information especially with the statements of the three persons who escaped from the slaughter chambers, which describe the cold blooded murders which the Nazis carried out. America had already on several occasions, issued strong protestations against the mass-murder of Jews, but at no time was it done on such a sharp note as contained in the "Black Book".

The three living witnesses who saw the butcheries committed in the human slaughter-house in which the Nazis slaughtered and exterminated by gas 1,765,000 Jews, were two young Jewish persons of Slovakia, who escaped from Birkanov, and the third was a Polish mayor who escaped from a slaughter house in Auswitz.

The Refugee Board, as stated in the introduction to the book, dedicates itself to the task of rescuing as many Jewish refugees as is possible. She has her representatives in the centers of Europe who help out in the holy rescue work. The terrors and brutalities of the Nazis has no parallel in the history of the human race.

The fact that the Government has for the first time under its official seal issued such a document, is the best assurance that America will back up the plan of Soviet Russia that the Nazi murderers will be brought to justice after the war, and get their deserved punishment for the outrages which they committed against the Jews and other people in the occupied countries.

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000336

**'Revolting and Diabolical':  
Nazi 'Death-Factories' Story  
Told by War Refugee Board  
U. S. Cabinet Group Publishes Report  
Of Millions Massacred in Polish Camps**

By TED LEWIS

Hair-raising details of German mass atrocities were made public by the War Refugee Board through the White House last night, as proof that the "revolting and diabolical" campaign of Nazi terror through death-factories in subjugated Europe is frightful and brutal beyond belief of the civilized world.

The report of the board gave the first American official stamp of truth to the myriad of eyewitness stories of the mass massacres in Poland, which heretofore have been of Russian origin.

**Three Witnesses Quoted**

The report was documented by reports of two young Slovakian Jews who spent two years in the worldly bestial Nazi camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau in southwestern Poland.

Another report which the board said its investigation could stamp as completely authentic was that of a non-Jewish Polish major, sole survivor of one convoy imprisoned at Auschwitz.

**2,000 Bodies Daily**

The board said at the Birkenau camp alone approximately 1,765,000 Jews had been gassed to death in the two years ended April 1944.

The bloody thread of Nazi heinous sadism ran through the reports of the three fugitives from the German extermination plants.

Reporter No. 1 described the four crematoria in operation at Birkenau, the larger designed with a furnace room with an adjoining large hall and an attached gas chamber. The daily capacity was 2,000 bodies.

"The 'reception hall,' the eyewitness wrote, 'is arranged to give the impression of the ante-chamber of a bathing establishment. It holds 2,000 people. From it a door and a few steps lead down into the very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with simulated entries to shower rooms in order to mislead the victims.

"To complete the fiction that they are going to bathe, each person receives a towel and a small piece of soap issued by two men clad in white coats. Then they are crowded into the gas chamber in such numbers that there is, of course, only standing room.

**Three Minutes—Death**

"When everybody is inside the heavy doors are closed. After three minutes everyone in the chamber is dead. The chamber is then opened, and the bodies are taken on flat trucks to the furnace rooms where the burning takes place."

Eyewitness No. 1 said only seldom are Aryans gassed. They are usually shot, but all Jews are gassed at Birkenau, where the crematorium setup was inaugurated in March 1943, with "prominent guests from Berlin" present. The highlight of the ceremonies, said the report, was the gassing and burning of 8,000 Cracow Jews.

"The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results, and the special peephole fitted into the door of the gas chamber was in constant use," the eyewitness reported.

**"Here I Am"**

At the Auschwitz segregation camp in Poland prisoners had their prison numbers tattooed on their chests. If an escapee was found dead, "his body—wherever it may have been located—was brought back to camp and seated at the entrance gate, a small notice clasped in his hands, reading, 'Here I am.'"

Also at Auschwitz, eyewitness No. 2 related, there is a closely guarded biological laboratory where experiments are performed on women and children. "A great many died as a result of these experiments," he said.

The report of the Polish major gave more details of this laboratory. He described it as a "so-called hygiene institute where sterilizing by X-ray treatment, artificial insemination of women, as

well as experiments on blood transfusion were carried on."

The War Refugee Board is composed of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson.

The board's "careful estimate" of the 1,765,000 Jews gassed to death at Birkenau included 800,000 Polish Jews; 100,000 from Holland, 45,000 from Greece, 150,000 from France, 50,000 from Belgium, 50,000 from Yugoslavia, Italy, and Norway, and 300,000 from various camps for foreign Jews in Poland.

**French Issue List**

**Of German Crimes**

PARIS, Nov. 25 (C.T.P.S.).—A preliminary list of war crimes committed in France by the Germans was issued today by the recently formed French war crimes service, which collaborates with similar bodies in other Allied countries in tabulating German atrocities during the occupation. The list catalogues 37 major crimes between January 30 and September 13 this year, in which a total of nearly 2,000 civilians of both sexes, ranging in age from 14 to 81 years, were murdered by orders of German army officers.

A grim list it is, with its tabulation of villages burned and victims of savage reprisals tortured, shot, hanged, burned to death and buried alive. The climax of the reprisal wave in the rural districts came during the summer months, when more than 1,700 civilians were put to death and six entire villages destroyed by fire.

Chief horror item on the list is the razing of the little town of Oradour-sur-Glane in the department of Haute Vienne and the slaughter of its entire population of 792, including 350 women and children.

This took place June 10 after a high German officer had been shot and killed in the region by unknown assailants.

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## U. S. Charges Nazis Tortured Millions to Death in Europe

### War Refugee Board Says 1,765,000 Jews Were Killed by Gas in One Camp Alone; Witnesses' Testimony Gives Details of the Atrocities

By George Polk  
WASHINGTON, Nov. 25.—The War Refugee Board, in what was regarded as the most shocking document ever issued by a United States government agency, made public today an official report on German atrocities that have caused the death of "millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe." The "revolting and diabolical" German atrocities were described as a "campaign of terror and brutality which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated and is part of the German plan to subjugate the free peoples of the world."

The 26,000-word indictment of Germany was assembled by the W. R. B. as one of the agencies under the executive office of the President of the United States. The board consists of the three highest ranking Cabinet officials—Cordell Hull, Secretary of State; Henry Morgenthau Jr., Secretary of the Treasury; and Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War. John W. Pehle is the board's executive director.

The report is an indictment of the entire German nation, for the atrocities were directed from Berlin, and that they were German atrocities which were planned and executed by Germans. There is no singling out of the Nazi party or the Gestapo as being responsible for the horrible deeds described. Nor is there any hint that the thousands of Germans involved made any protest regarding what the board says is "the German campaign of extermination and torture."

The information contained in the report came from two young

Slovakian Jews who escaped in April, 1944, after passing two years in German concentration camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau in southwestern Poland, and from a non-Jewish Polish major, the only survivor of a group of sixty men imprisoned at Auschwitz.

The information supplied by these three men, whose names were not made public in the interests of their own safety, has been checked, rechecked and verified in every way, the board said—with reports from inside German-dominated areas and by cross-examination of the three men and comparison of their statements.

The report reveals that 1,765,000 Jews were gassed to death at Birkenau alone between April, 1942, and April, 1944, including 800,000 Poles, 100,000 Dutch, 45,000 Greeks, 150,000 French, 50,000 Belgians, 60,000 Germans, 50,000 Yugoslavs, 30,000 Lithuanians, 30,000 Bohemians, Moravians and Austrians, 30,000 Slovaks and 300,000 brought in from various foreign camps.

For untold thousands of non-Jewish Europeans, the report said, the Germans had more lenient treatment. The non-Jewish prisoners were shot rather than gassed to death.

The board disclosed that the young brother of Leon Blum, former Premier of France, had been "atrociously tortured, then gassed and burned" to death at Auschwitz.

The Germans competed with one another, according to the report, in devising new and more bestial torture for their victims. Women and children suffered the same fate—or worse—than men. Many of the Germans at the death camps and concentration pens were described as being obvious pathological cases.

The report recalled the words of Averell Harriman, American Ambassador to Russia, who declared recently during a brief visit to Washington, that "German atrocities have not and can not be exaggerated." Ambassador Harriman indicated that no imagination could devise tales of horror as appalling and revolting as the crimes perpetrated by the Germans. He said that his opinion was based on official information and personal investigation.

The German policy of torture, both physical and mental, was described in the report as having been scientifically devised to reduce the morale of the prisoners so low that they killed one another as a novelty or sought an escape through hopeless charges upon machine guns or high-voltage prison fences.

The report suggests that the Germans may have permitted certain prisoners to escape so that they might be hunted down by dogs. It is clear in the report that the criminal treatment of the prisoners was in accordance with official instructions from Berlin and that the atrocities were not committed merely by a few irresponsible prison camp officials.

The War Refugee Board, undoubtedly aware that many of the atrocities reported during the last war were later proved untrue, has been assembling files on the topics contained in the report since soon after the three men escaped from the Germans nearly eight months ago. Only after exhaustive investigation was the report made public.

A statement from the board said it had "every reason to believe" that the report presented a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps, and added that the report was being made public "in the firm conviction" the American people should read and understand what the German policy is.

#### Used Science to Kill Cheaply

The report contained no suggestion that the Germans had put their victims to death for specified reasons—except merely to get them out of the way. Few of any of the prisoners were charged with any crimes and none was given a trial. With brutality that made even Japanese atrocities seem pale

by comparison, the Germans made scientific use of chemistry, electricity and gunfire to kill as many persons as possible with the least effort and expense.

When epidemics struck the starving and freezing prisoners, according to the report, the Germans brought their medical skill into use immediately—to prevent the spread of disease outside the prison compounds and encourage its virulence among the prisoners.

In addition men and women and children were used as guinea pigs for alleged scientific experiments, the report said. Almost invariably these experiments brought horrible and painful death.

The report disclosed that Heinrich Himmler, Gestapo chief recently rumored to have succeeded Adolf Hitler as the German Fuehrer, personally had inspected one of the mass-murder camps and he and the "distinguished visitors" who accompanied him expressed great satisfaction with the efficiency of the lethal chambers and the torture methods.

#### Mental Torture Described

Throughout the story of mass murder it was apparent that the millions of Europeans were—and apparently still are—being put to death because of ancestry, their political beliefs, or just because they happened to live in a certain geographical area.

One incident described the mental torture which seemed to delight the sadistic German temperament. A prisoner received an almost, but not quite, impossible task of painting 120 skis each day. If this task was not performed, the prisoner was flogged unmercifully during the night and then put back to work the following morning with instructions to "try harder."

Semi-starved, in rags, and incredibly maltreated, the prisoner could achieve his quota only by drawing upon unrealized reserves of sheer nervous energy and the grimmest and most exhausting determination. This treatment continued for weeks and months until the prisoner went insane. The report indicates that this type of torture had special satisfaction for the German guards—the idea that the simple task of painting skis could destroy a man's sanity.

The report said that when a prisoner escaped and was run to earth, as he was almost invariably, he would be put to death. His body was then seated at the entrance to the prison camp and in his hands was placed a card reading: "Here I am."

#### Men Died by Dozens

Much of the work the prisoners were forced to do, according to the report, was so strenuous that the men, weakened by near starvation, died by the dozens. "The mortality was so high," one of the three men who escaped reported, "that every day our group of 200 (workers) had thirty to thirty-five dead. Also, many men were simply beaten to death by our overseers without the slightest provocation."

When a new crematorium was opened at Birkenau in March, 1943, a number of officials came from Berlin to see it put into use, the report said, adding: "The 'program' consisted of the gassing and burning of 8,000 Crakow Jews. The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results and the special peephole fitted into the door of the gas chamber was in constant use. They were lavish in their praise of this newly erected installation."

The German guards, not content with studied brutality during the day, made the prisoners "entertain" the German garrison in the evening with "camp songs." The report said: "This was the occasion of much hilarity." One of the prisoners who collapsed at a "concert party" was thrown into the latrine and there shot to death with much laughter from the guards.

In moments of boredom, according to the report, the German guards would order a prisoner to go into an area where he was forbidden to be under threat of death. "If the prisoner followed the order," the report said, "he was shot for having left his assigned place. If he did not comply with orders he was shot for disobedience."

Death was always so close, the report said, that often the persons who were alive were carted away for burial along with murdered victims. "It often happened," the report declared, "that small children were thrown alive into the trucks along with the dead."

When a large group of prisoners arrived at a camp unexpectedly they often were put to death to obviate the necessity of entering their names on prison rolls. The report said that "whole families were executed, parents together with their children."

## J. S. Board Bares Atrocities Details Told by Witnesses at Polish Camps

By JOHN H. CRIDER  
Special to This New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 25.—In the first detailed report by a United States Government Agency of a "eyewitness proof" of mass murder by the Germans, the War Refugee Board made public today accounts by three persons of organized atrocities at Brzezinka [Birkenau] and Oswiecim [Auschwitz] in southwestern Poland that transcend the horrors of Lublin. The accounts were vouched for by the WRB.

While at Lublin 1,500,000 persons were said to have been killed in three years, 1,500,000 to 1,785,000 persons were murdered in the torture chambers of Brzezinka from April, 1942, to April, 1944, according to these Government-verified reports. Many thousands of other deaths by phenol injection, brutal beatings, starvation, shooting, etc., also are recounted.

"It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe," the WRB declared.

"This campaign of terror and brutality, which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated, is part of the German plan to subjugate the free peoples of the world," it added.

"So revolting and diabolical are the German atrocities that the minds of civilized people find it difficult to believe that they have actually taken place," the board stated. "But the Governments of the United States and of other countries have evidence which clearly substantiates the facts."

After describing the nature of the reports now made public, the WRB added:

"The board has every reason to believe that these reports present a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps. It is making the reports public in the firm conviction that they should be read and understood by all Americans."

The two Slovak youths estimated the number of Jews gassed and burned at Birkenau in the two-

year period at 1,785,000 in the following table, but the Polish officer estimated that about 1,500,000 Jews were killed in Oswiecim in that fashion. Here is the recapitulation by the two escaped Jews.

A careful estimate of the number of Jews gassed in Birkenau between April, 1942, and April, 1944 (according to countries of origin; figures approximate):

Poland (transported by truck)	500,000
Poland (transported by train)	500,000
Holland	100,000
France	45,000
Belgium	50,000
Germany	80,000
Yugoslavia, Italy and Norway	50,000
Lithuania	50,000
Czechoslovakia, Moravia & Austria	30,000
Slovakia	30,000
Camps for foreign Jews in Poland	300,000
Total	1,785,000

### 2,000 Bodies a Day

In the report the Jewish youths described the gassing and burning technique as follows:

"At present there are four crematoria in operation at Birkenau, two large ones, I and II, and two smaller ones, III and IV. Those of Type I and II consist of three parts, i.e., (a) the furnace room, (b) the large hall, and (c) the gas chamber. A huge chimney rises from the furnace room, around which are grouped nine furnaces, each having four openings. Each opening can take three normal corpses at once, and after an hour and a half the bodies are completely burned. This corresponds to a daily capacity of about 2,000 bodies.

"Next to this is a large 'reception hall,' which is arranged so as to give the impression of the antechamber of a bathing establishment. It holds 2,000 people, and apparently there is a similar waiting room on the floor below. From there a door and a few steps lead down into the very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with simulated entries to shower rooms in order to mislead the victims. The roof is fitted with three traps which can be hermetically closed from the outside. A track leads from the gas chamber toward the furnace room.

"The gassing takes place as follows: The unfortunate victims are brought into the hall (b), where they are told to undress. To complete the fiction that they are going to bathe, each person receives a towel and a small piece of soap

issued by two men clad in white coats. Then they are crowded into the gas chamber (c) in such numbers that there is, of course, only standing room.

To compress this crowd into the narrow space, shots are often fired to induce those already at the far end to huddle still closer together. When everybody is inside, the heavy doors are closed. Then there is a short pause, presumably to allow the room temperature to rise to a certain level, after which SS men with gas masks climb the roof, open the traps, and shake down a preparation in powder form out of tin cans labeled 'Cynlon,' for use against vermin, which is manufactured by a Hamburg concern.

### Ordeal Lasts Three Minutes

"It is presumed that this is a cyanide mixture of some sort which turns into gas at a certain temperature. After three minutes everyone in the chamber is dead. No one is known to have survived this ordeal, although it was not uncommon to discover signs of life after the primitive measures employed in the birch wood.

"The chamber is then opened, aired, and the 'special squad' carts the bodies on flat trucks to the furnace rooms, where the burning takes place. Crematoria III and IV work on nearly the same principle, but their capacity is only half as large. Thus the total capacity of the four cremating and gassing plants at Birkenau amounts to about 6,000 daily."

In his independent report the Polish officer described the mass extermination thus:

"The first large convoys arrived from France and Slovakia. Physically able men and women—those without children or the mothers of grown-up children—were sent to the camp of Birkenau. The remainder, i. e., old or weak men, women with small children and all those unfit for labor, were taken to the Birch Wood (Brzezinka) and killed by means of hydrocyanic gas. For this purpose special gassing barracks had been built there.

"These consisted of large halls, airtight, and provided with ventilators which could be opened or closed according to the need. Inside they were equipped so as to create the impression of bathing establishments. This was done to deceive the victims and make them more manageable. The executions took place as follows: Each death convoy consisted of some eight to ten trucks packed with the 'selected'; the convoy was unguarded, as the whole frightful drama took place on camp territory.

"A private car containing the camp doctor followed each truck

## The New York Times.

NOV 26 1944

convoy, since it was compulsory for him to be present at these mass executions. On their arrival at the gassing establishment, which was surrounded by a double barbed wire fence, men, women and children had to completely undress. Each of them was given a towel and piece of soap. Then they were driven into the barrack until it was completely filled up.

### Gas Bombs Hurled In

"Everything was hermetically closed, and specially trained SS units threw hydrocyanic bombs through the ventilation openings. After about ten minutes the doors were opened and a special squad composed exclusively of Jews had to clear away the bodies and prepare for a new group of 'selectees'.

"The crematoria had not yet been constructed, although there was a small one at Auschwitz which, however, was not employed for burning these bodies. Mass graves were dug at that time into which the corpses were simply thrown.

"This continued into the au-

000241

# The New York Times.

NOV 26 1944

turn of 1942. By this time extermination by gas was being intensified and there was no more time even for such summary burial. Row upon row of bodies of murdered Jews, covered only by a thin layer of earth, were widely dispersed in the surrounding fields, causing the soil to become almost marshy through the putrefaction of the bodies.

"The smell emanating from these fields became intolerable. In the autumn of 1942 all that remained of the bodies had to be exhumed and the bones collected and burned in the crematoria (by that time four had been completed). An alternative was to gather the remains of the unfortunate victims into heaps, pour gasoline over them, and leave it to the flames to finish the tragedy. The immense quantity of human ashes thus collected was carted away in every direction to be scattered over the fields where these martyrs had found their last rest."

#### Furnaces for Sanitation

It was noted that the executioners did not provide the crematoria until sanitary conditions became such that this method of disposal had to be resorted to.

In addition to mass asphyxiations, the Germans resorted to executions, phenol injections and brutally to dispose of victims. Here is one eyewitness account of brutality recorded by the Polish major:

"One day a working comrade discovered a few pieces of turnip, which he carefully hid. He continued his work but, from time to time, took surreptitious bites off his treasure. Another prisoner, having 'squealed' on him, the capo arrived a few minutes later.

"It must be remembered that the capo is absolute master of his commando and that everybody tries to get into his good graces. Unfortunately, this favor often had to be attained to the detriment of the well-being or sometimes even of the lives of other prisoners.

"The capo proceeded to search our comrade and, finding the pieces of turnip, knocked the weakened man to the ground, hitting him brutally about the head and face and in the stomach. He then ordered him to sit up, hands outstretched in front of him on the ground with a weight of bricks on each hand; the pieces of turnip were stuck in his mouth.

"All the men were then assembled and informed that the unfortunate man was to stay in this position for a whole hour. We were warned that this punishment would befall any member of the commando who committed a similar offense. The condemned man underwent this ordeal guarded by one of the foremen, very eager to fulfill

his task to the satisfaction of the capo, so that he hit our friend every time he tried to shift his position slightly.

"After fifteen to twenty minutes the man became unconscious, but a bucket of water was poured over him and he was again forced into his original position. After he had slumped over, senseless, for a second time, his body was thrown aside and nobody was allowed to pay further attention to him. After roll call that evening he was taken to the 'infirmary,' where he died two days later."

The use of the hypodermic needle for murder was described by the Polish major as follows: "The sick were classified into two groups, 'Aryans' and Jews. These groups were again subdivided into further groups, of which the first included the sick, who were to remain in hospital, being considered 'curable.' The second consisted of extremely rundown patients, chronic cases, and the half-starving or mutilated whose recovery could only be effected by a long stay in the hospital.

"This group was practically condemned to death by phenol injections in the heart region. Racial considerations played an important role. An 'Aryan' really had to be seriously ill to be condemned to death by injection, whereas 80 to 90 per cent of the Jews 'hospitalized' there were 'eliminated' in this manner. Many of them knew about this method and applied for admission as so-called 'suicide candidates,' not having the courage to throw themselves on the high tension wires."

#### Sadism Wins Promotion

Then there was the story of the executioner who became a "hero": "An SS man by the name of Kler, a shoemaker by profession, gave the injections. He had taken up this post in the hospital as a simple SS private but was later promoted to SS 'group leader,' although practically a moron. He also received supplementary food rations and was awarded the Iron Cross. There were days when this psychopath picked out victims from the wards on his own initiative, without instructions from the German doctor, on whom to practice his 'technique.' "He was a complete sadist, torturing his victims with animal-like brutality before putting them to death."

The accounts of the Slovaks and the Polish major mentioned a special "hygiene-institute" at Oswiecim, which was adjacent to Birkenau, and where mysterious "experiments" were conducted on Jewish prisoners, mostly on females. The Polish major's account, which provided the only clue of what went on in the "institute," said:

"Here sterilizing by X-ray treatment, artificial insemination of women, as well as experiments on blood transfusions, were carried on."

The reports mentioned several well-known individuals, such as Witold Zacharewicz, Polish actor, and a brother of Léon Blum, former French Premier, as having been executed.

Prominent guests from Berlin were present at the inauguration of the first crematorium in March, 1943," the reports said. "The program consisted of the gassing and burning of 8,000 Cracow Jews. The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results and the special people fitted into the door of the gas chamber was in constant use. They were lavish in their praise of this newly erected installation."

100242

### **This Is Our Enemy: Murderer of the Helpless**

There is nothing new about Nazi-perpetrated mass-murder. From the death factories of Maidanek to the martyred villages of Lidice and Distomo we have examples in plenty of the German mania for wholesale execution of innocent and helpless civilians.

But it has taken the first official U. S. Government report on German atrocities, presenting in 25,000 harrowing words eye-witness accounts of Nazi cruelty in the extermination camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau, to demonstrate the frightful extremes to which this madness has been carried.

To the two camps were brought whole families of Jews and others rooted from their homes all over occupied Europe and sentenced to death for the crime of being unwanted in Hitler's New Order. At Birkenau alone nearly 2,000,000 Jews have been gassed to death.

The members of the Board who sponsor

this report, Secretary of State Hull, Secretary of War Stimson and Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, have made it public "in the firm conviction that it should be read and understood by every American."

They are right in that conviction. Every American should read the report and digest its meaning so as to understand more clearly the enemy we face in the Germans. There is a disposition in some circles at times to make a sharp distinction between the Germans and the Japs, to picture the former as no savages but as part of our own civilization and culture and deserving therefor a more sympathetic treatment.

Such pro-German propaganda falls to pieces in face of the testimony of Birkenau and Auschwitz. These murder camps are the finest products of the Nazi way of life. Let us not, when it comes time to talk of peace settlements, forget them.

New York Post  
NOV 27 1944

## Congress Calls for Action on Germany's Atrocities

Washington, Nov. 27 (AP) — Congress erupted today with demands for relentless punishment of Germans guilty of what a Cabinet committee calls the systematic murder of millions of innocent

European civilians. In both Senate and House arose a measured call for peace terms severe enough to keep the Nazis from ever again committing crimes of atrocity and for the

death penalty for those tried and found guilty of them in this war. Chairman Bloom (D-N. Y.) of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Sen. Johnson (D-Col.) declared that Germany shouldn't be allowed to keep a single gun. They said the peace machinery should include the means of meting out punishment to Nazis responsible for war murders.

000344

### **German People Must Be Re-Civilized**

As we study the report of the War Refugee Board, issued last Saturday, giving a detailed account of the bestial cruelty and murder of millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—in concentration camps in Germany and German-occupied territory, we must reiterate our opinion that Germany will have to be occupied for many years after peace comes if its people are to be brought back to principles of decent civilization.

The reports of such inhuman behavior are by no means new, but this latest report, coming from the War Refugee Board, whose members are Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, is the result of more than a year of investigation and study by agents throughout occupied Europe, so that the facts—horrible as they are—can be taken for granted.

They show clearly that for several generations the people of Germany have been taught the doctrines of inhuman cruelty that activate Hitler, Himmler and others of the leading Nazi gangsters. Punishment of these leaders alone will not be enough to bring about a change that is needed to safeguard civilization from another outbreak of inhuman cruelty such as horrified the world since Hitler gained control of Germany.

The only cure for this condition is the education of the next two generations of the German people along the lines of decency as the civilized world understands it, and this should begin as soon as Germany surrenders unconditionally and the United Nations take over the country. For this reason we repeat our proposal of last year, during the Nazi atrocities on helpless Polish and Russian women and children, that Germany be policed by the United Nations for fifty years to come.

### Monstrous Nazi Crimes

Civilization is shamed, humanity is sickened, by the new evidence on German mass-murder methods just disclosed by the War Refugee Board.

For the first time, an agency of the American Government presents a detailed report of the scientifically organized slaughter houses whereby the Germans exterminate their so-called racial inferiors. Added to previous reports by Russian, Polish, Czech, Greek, Bulgarian, French and other governments, official agencies, the picture is indeed, as the War Refugee Board says, a "campaign of terror and brutality which is unprecedented in all history." It is a picture that the board, composed of Secretaries Hull, Morgenthau and Stimson, considers authentic, for its statement says:

It is a fact beyond dispute that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—over Europe.

In civilized times at least, war has been waged between bodies of soldiers. The Nazis wage war in its cruelest form against civilians; not in the heat of battle, not in desperation, but as an lolly calculated policy of extermination so that Germany, whether it wins or loses the war, shall retain superiority of numbers.

The gas chamber, the firing squad, starvation, brutal beatings, torture—all these are weapons used methodically in the carrying out of German policy. The policy has been laid down many times by Hitler. Thus, on Jan. 31, 1939, he said that if war came, the result would be "the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe." And not the Jews alone, for as long ago as 1927 he had said: "It is either you or I, life or death; either extermination or servitude." And in 1929: "If men wish to live, they are forced to kill others."

So murder of helpless and unoffending civilians, of whatever nationality or religion, becomes a fixed part of Nazi methods. Its use is a festive occasion, for one of the most ghastly sections of the new report tells how "prominent guests from Berlin were present" when a slaughter house in Poland was inaugurated, and watched with satisfaction the gassing and burning of 8000 Jews from Cracow.

A monstrous and protracted crime has been exposed to the eyes of the world. Dare anyone in the Allied countries now, in the face of such beatings, preach a temporizing policy and a "soft peace" in the settlement with Germany?

# The Evening Star

NOV. 28 1944

## Scientific Slaughter

In these grim days the gruesomely incredible is apt to happen. This is tragically manifest by the revelations of Nazi mass atrocities contained in a 25,000-word detailed report just issued by the War Refugee Board, a United States Government agency composed of Secretary of State Hull, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau and Secretary of War Stimson.

The report covers the hideous doings at two "extermination camps" built by the Nazi authorities in southwestern Poland in the two-year period between April, 1942, and April, 1944. The dreadful stories are related by prisoners detained there during that time, who fortunately managed to escape. These accounts, given independently of each other, not only tally closely but also are almost perfect parallels with the report issued recently by the Soviet government of a similar extermination camp found near Lublin when that part of Poland was occupied by the Soviet armies. Evidently the Nazis evolved a definite extermination technique which they applied in every specific case. The victims were chiefly Jews, killed in pursuance of Hitler's avowed aim of annihilating that race wherever it was in his power to

do so, though considerable numbers of non-Jewish prisoners, political offenders against the Nazis, were included. The number of victims disposed of is astounding. At the Birkenau (Brzezinka) camp alone, a "conservative" estimate is 1,765,000, comprising Jews from all parts of German-occupied Europe. And it should be remembered that the figure set by the Russian report for the Lublin camp is 1,500,000. Furthermore it should be understood that the Birkenau and Auschwitz (Oswiecim) camps, being in that part of Poland still under German occupation, presumably continue to function and thus raise the tragic totals.

The whole process is one of cold-blooded efficiency wherein mass slaughter is reduced to an exact science by huge gas chambers and multiple crematoria, the resultant ashes being used to fertilize nearby fields. The board aptly says: "So revolting and diabolical are the German atrocities that the minds of civilized people find it difficult to believe that they have actually taken place." The report is issued to make the general public aware of the true nature of the Nazi enemy and its deliberate plan to enslave and brutalize the world, of which mass extermination is an organic part.

100247

### Germany's Fiendish Cruelty

**W**HAT fiends the Nazis are! What horror and brutality they have inflicted upon millions of helpless human beings! Men, women and children—not soldiers, but civilians—have been slaughtered literally in droves, ruthlessly exterminated in an orgy of blood lust as systematic as it is heartless.

Accounts of German bestiality are not new. They have been coming out of Europe for years. The stories have been almost incredible. Such wanton cruelty is almost too much for the minds of civilized people to comprehend.

Yet these reports are true. Of that there can be no doubt. The evidence is too overwhelming, too well authenticated by eyewitness accounts, to permit of any lingering shadow of suspicion that they are "atrocity propaganda."

The American people now have confirmation of German terrorism and wholesale slaughter from an official agency of the United States government itself. The War Refugee Board, composed of three members of the President's Cabinet, has made public a report setting forth that in two years approximately 2,000,000 persons were put to death at two German concentration camps—only two of a number of notorious mass execution centers operated in Germany and in German-occupied countries.

This is the first time that our government has made an official report on these German atrocities. How many millions more have been murdered in other concentration centers can only be conjectured. But of the reasonable accuracy of the 2,000,000 total given for the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau the War Refugee Board is convinced.

It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe, the report states. This campaign of terror and brutality, unprecedented in all history, even now continues unabated.

The Germans have employed various methods of torturing and killing helpless civilians. Their greatest mass executions, however, have evidently been carried out by means of gas chambers into which their victims are herded. After they have been put to death by gas, which is said to take about three minutes, their bodies are disposed of in a crematorium near the gas chamber.

This sickening report has raised demands in Congress for relentless punishment of the Germans responsible for these acts. Members of the Senate and the House are more insistent than ever on imposing peace terms severe enough to keep Germany from ever again committing such crimes, and on the death penalty for those Nazis who are tried and found guilty of atrocities in this war. There is no sentiment in Congress for retaliation in kind, however.

We believe that the temper of Congress in this regard is that of the American people in general. Americans could not be so uncivilized as to want to do to the Germans what they have done to their victims. But this country will be strongly determined upon meting out stern justice to the Nazi barbarians.

## Nazi Record of Wholesale Murder Indictment of Whole German People

The record of the Nazi regime in war and in peace has made the world fully aware of the baseness of its character and of the extent to which it employs the expedients of inhumanity in its scheme of world conquest.

To those familiar with the story of Lidice, with the horrors of Lublin, with the whole appalling history of cruelty and enslavement, it would seem as nothing more could be added that might deepen further the infamy of the German people. This purpose has been accomplished, however, by the report of the War Refugee Board on the German campaign of "extermination and torture."

Indictment of a whole people, traditionally difficult to achieve without the danger of injustice, is accomplished by this rigidly factual document, which brings more vividly to the mind of the world the peril in which civilization has been placed by this interlude of Nazi domination of Europe, also the sufferings endured by millions.

When one reviews mentally the careers of the tyrants of history, the men whose names and regimes are black with every conceivable crime against decency and honor, the board's appraisal of the Hitlerian era commands thoughtful consideration as the time for judgment approaches.

It is described as a "campaign of terror and brutality which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated" as a part of a German campaign to subjugate the

free peoples of the world. The indictment is carefully documented. It is a narrative of murder, practiced systematically and scientifically against Jews and Christians alike, men and women of every race, including Germans, and often for no particular rea-

At the camp, that at Birkenau, according to the information gathered by the board, 1,765,000 Jews were killed by gas between April 1942 and April 1944. Electric execution, chemistry, gunfire, starvation and the encouragement of virulent disease in prison compounds also have had their places in the fiendish Nazi scheme of human destruction. This report does not present the Germans in a new light. It serves merely to etch a little more deeply the picture of the enemy developed by the record over the years.

In addition, however, this report serves the practical purpose of fixing guilt and of determining where the punishment must fall. The crime of these tragic years is the crime of the German nation, which has debased itself to such a degree that it has become the willing instrument through which sadistic leaders have visited horror upon a continent.

# German Atrocities

By Paul Winkler  
OCT 5 - 1944  
Telling The People

## HERR'S SUGGESTION for American propagandists:

Compile an accurate and impressive file of Germany's innumerable atrocities, set down names, dates, places, details. Describe what has happened in the death camps and the torture chambers of the Gestapo. Tell of the massacres of civilians. Record it without heat or indignation. Write it simply with dry scientific precision. Print it in book form, on lightweight paper, and drop copies by the hundred thousand in Germany. I think it will contribute to the disorganization of the German home front.

For it is a fact that few Germans are aware of the abject misdeeds which are being committed in their name in the occupied countries. Neutral travelers coming out of Germany have testified to that fact. Because Germans are ignorant of what their armies and their police have been doing, they are not plagued by bad consciences. The revolution against their own leaders which many of them might feel if they only knew what exceeds those leaders, are ordering also cannot exist in the absence of that knowledge. Nor their fear of the retribution might be exacted rises to heights that would lead them to try to stop the machine in the hope of escaping the vengeance of the victors when their forces have melted.

## Prohibitions to Soldiers

The German authorities and soldiers are afraid to have the German people know the truth about the atrocities. German army officers forbid their men returning to Germany on leave or on discharge from their units to tell anything of what they have seen in occupied countries. This German policy, pursuing the same policy from the other side, regularly warns civilians not to give too much credence to stories which soldiers back from the front tell. There are two sorts of reports which they are not anxious to have disseminated. The first is descriptions of defeats. The second is accounts of atrocities.

When such stories are told, punishment for spreading them is swift and dire. For some of today are less extreme than they used to be. Black market operations, for instance, used frequently to be punished by death; nowdays they often draw nothing worse than short prison sentences. But for others, those punishing about defeatism, penalties have been increased. It is significant of the Nazis' contempt over present-day moral pronouncements these days for the mildest defeatist utterances. Thus a fortune teller who told a client that the Fuehrer would soon fly abroad would be executed. So was an accountant who said to his employer: "It is better to be a coward for five minutes than dead forever."

Since this capital punishment for defeatist talk betrays the fears of the Nazis in the present situation, it is important to note that death is the penalty also for revealing German atrocities. Apparently the authorities consider this as equally dangerous with the spreading of defeatism. Thus the Vienna editor of the Voelkischer Beobachter on September 16 reported that a woman surgeon had been sentenced to death because "she was spreading the most vicious atrocity propaganda among her colleagues and patients."

Postwar Effects  
To acquaint the German people with the facts of the atrocities would not only have its uses for the present. It would also be valuable for the settling of the postwar situation. The value in the case of making the atrocities known to the Germans themselves is that the realization of their own guilt which will follow will make them accept more philosophically, and without the resentment which is born of unjust punishment, whatever measures will have to be taken against them in the future.

Even Germans will be forced to realize that countries which have had such horrors inflicted upon them will be justified in taking the most rigorous measures to protect themselves against their repetition. Even they will be obliged to admit that whatever restraints are imposed upon themselves will be mild indeed compared to those imposed upon others. No doubt German nationalists will try to revive the "sharpness" of the Allies, after this war as after the last one. But it is not going to be easy for a German to be indignant about, say, the closing of his country's armaments factories when he compares that fact with such crimes of his compatriots as the burning alive of Polish women and children, the wholesale massacres of Italian hostages or the torturing of hapless French civilians.



'Who, Me?'

000351

## WAR REFUGEES TELL OF NAZI ATROCITIES

U. S. Board Releases Eyewitness Accounts Of Horrors

Washington, Nov. 25 (AP)—The War Refugee Board—three members of President Roosevelt's Cabinet—sponsored today a 25,000-word detailed report of bestial cruelty and murder by the million in German extermination camps.

Said the board, comprising Secretary of State Hull, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau and Secretary of War Stimson:

"The board has every reason to believe that these reports present a true picture of the frightful happenings in these camps. It is making the reports public in the firm conviction that they should be read and understood by all Americans."

### Eyewitness Accounts

The report consisted of two eyewitness accounts of life in the Nazi camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau in southwestern Poland, prepared independently, but almost precisely parallel.

Each included an estimate that more than a million and a half Jews from various European countries were gassed and their bodies cremated at Birkenau alone between April, 1942, and April, 1944.

One, by two young Slovakian Jews who for two years had clerical posts in the camp through which they could keep fairly close track of events, set the figure at 1,765,000. The second account was by a non-Jewish Polish major. All three escaped. For their protection, their names were withheld by the board which said in an accompanying statement:

"It is a fact beyond denial that the Germans have deliberately and systematically murdered millions of innocent civilians—Jews and Christians alike—all over Europe.

"This campaign of terror and brutality, which is unprecedented in all history and which even now continues unabated, is part of the German plan to subjugate the free people of the world."

The board, of which John W. Pehle is executive director, is responsible for carrying out the policy of the Federal Government for rescue of the victims of enemy oppression.

Throughout the more detailed story of the two Jews appeared such gruesome statistics as these: "Conservative estimate" that 65,000 to 70,000 of 60,000 persons received at the camp were gassed; "lowest estimate," 30,000 gassed

out of another group; one month's gassings 60,000; total capacity of crematoria, 6,000 a day, but for a period it was overloaded and bodies burned in great open pits.

### Excerpts From Reports

Taken from the reports are these excerpts and paraphrases:

"The mere fact of neglecting to give information on the whereabouts of a prisoner, not to speak of extending help, is punished by death. . . . If the escapee is caught alive, he is hanged in the presence of the whole camp; but if he is found dead, his body—wherever it may have been located—is brought back to camp . . . and seated at the entrance gate, a small notice clasped in his hands, reading 'Here I am.'"

Camp buildings are divided into little cubicles, each occupied by three persons, each cubicle "too narrow for a man to lie stretched out and not high enough for him to sit upright."

### Mortality High

"Working conditions were inconceivably hard, so that the majority of us, weakened by starvation and the inedible food, could not stand it. The mortality was so high that every day our group of 200 had 30 to 35 dead. Many were simply beaten to death by the overseers—the 'camps'—during work, without the slightest provocation."

Later a "sick building" was set up.

"Actually this building was nothing else than an assembly center for death candidates. All prisoners incapable of working were sent there. There was no question of any medical attention or care."

"At the same time, the so-called 'selections' were introduced. Twice weekly, Mondays and Thursdays, the camp doctor indicated the number of prisoners who were to be gassed and then burned. These 'batches' were loaded into trucks and brought to the birch forest. Those still alive upon arrival were gassed in a big barrack erected near the trench used for burning the bodies."

Typical of the descriptions given of the fate of individual groups are these:

### Frenchmen Named

"Two thousand Frenchmen (Aryans) Communists and other political prisoners, among them the brother of Thorez and the young brother of Leon Blum. The latter was atrociously tortured, then gassed and burned. . . ."

"Large family convoys arrived from various European countries and were at once directed to the birch wood. The special squad ('sonderkommando') employed for gassing and burning worked in day and night shifts. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were gassed during this period."

"The men (themselves prisoners) belonging to the 'sonderkommando' lived separately. On account of the dreadful smell spread by them, people had but little contact with them. Besides they were always filthy, destitute, half wild and extraordinarily brutal and ruthless."

### Killed Companions

"It was not uncommon to see one of them kill another. This was considered by the others a sensation, a change."

"At the end of February, 1943, a new modern crematoria and gassing plant was inaugurated at Birkenau. The large ditch was filled in, the ground levelled and the trees used as before for fertilizer as the farm labor camp of Hermense."

Next to the furnace room was a large "reception hall" arranged to give the impression of the antechamber of a bathing establishment.

### Holds 2,000 People

"It holds 2,000 people and apparently there is a similar waiting room on the floor below. From there a door and a few steps lead down into the very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this chamber are also camouflaged with simulated entries to shower rooms to mislead the victims."

"The room is fitted with three traps which can be hermetically closed from the outside. A track leads from the gas chamber through the furnace room. The gassing takes place as follows:

"The unfortunate victims are brought into the hall, where they are told to undress. To complete the fiction that they are going to bathe, each person receives a towel and a small piece of soap, issued by two men clad in white coats. Then they are crowded into the gas chamber in such numbers that there is, of course, only standing room."

### Doors Are Closed

"To compress this crowd into the narrow space, shots are often fired to induce those already at the far end to huddle still closer together. When everybody is inside, the heavy doors are closed. Then there is a short pause, presumably to allow the room temperature to rise to a certain level, after which 85 men with gas masks climb on the roof, open the traps and shake down a preparation in powder form

BALTIMORE  
NOV 26 1944

out of tin cans labeled 'Cyclon—for use against vermin,' which is manufactured by a Hamburg concern. It is presumed that this is a 'cyanide' mixture of some sort which turns into gas at a certain temperature.

"After 3 minutes, everyone in the chamber is dead."

The bodies are then taken out and burned.

"On principle, only Jews are gassed; Aryans very seldom, as they are usually given 'special treatment' by shooting.

"Guests" Watch Gassing

"Prominent guests from Berlin were present at the inauguration of the first crematorium in March, 1943. The 'program' consisted of the gassing and burning of 8,000 Cracow Jews. The guests, both officers and civilians, were extremely satisfied with the results, and the special peephole fitted into the door of the gas chamber was in constant use."

There is a "block recorder" who keeps the prisoners' files.

"His work is one of great responsibility and he has to keep his ledgers with painful exactitude as the index cards only indicate the number and not the name of the prisoners; errors are fatal.

"For instance, if the recorder has noted down a death by mistake, and that often occurs with the unusually high mortality—the discrepancy is simply straightened out by killing the bearer of the corresponding number."

The report by the Polish major asserted that prisoners were used for experiments in sterilizing by X-ray, in artificial insemination of women, as well as blood transfusions.

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