

TWO DEATH CAMPS PLACES OF HORROR

German Establishments for
Mass Killings of Jews
Described by Swiss

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By Telephone to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

BERNE, Switzerland, July 5—German "carelessness" engendered by more than two years of successful concealment of the existence of two "model extermination camps for Jews" at Auschwitz and Birkenau, in Upper Silesia, has finally led to the revelation of many startling facts and figures concerning their operation for the two years ended April 15, 1944, during which the execution and "disposal" of 1,715,000 Jews were effected "without a hitch."

This information is contained in a 9,000-word report by the Very Rev. Paul Vogt, head of the internationally known refugee organization, the Fluchtlingshilfe of Zurich, which has gathered, checked and finally permitted the publication of its information.

Incontrovertible confirmation of these facts and figures, Mr. Vogt admits, has been forthcoming simultaneously with the launching of a new campaign, this time directed against Hungarian Jews, some 400,000 of whom have already been deported with "losses" of some 30 per cent en route to their "internment" at these camps.

Life in Camps Is Misery

That the fate of the 30 per cent is to be pitied, however, is by implication denied in the report, for between their arrival and their extermination anywhere from a fortnight to three months later, the deportees have gone through living hell. While giving a tabulation by nationalities for the 1,715,000 cited above, the Fluchtlingshilfe report cannot indicate whether that figure covers the number of refugees in the country of origin or whether it represents merely the number actually killed. The implication appears to be that the truth would lie somewhere around the 2,000,000 mark, but "incontrovertible proof cannot be adduced for this estimate."

On arrival at one of the two camps—the administration of which is directed by Elite Guard Untersturmfuehrer Schwarzhuber, "a sadistic drunkard from the Tyrol"—the refugees are sorted into batches of 100 or so and taken to "bathing" sheds, where, after having been stripped and completely shaved, they are "deloused" with a solution of strong disinfectant and carbolic acid that burns their skins off. On leaving this shed they pass through a tunnel to a second "enumeration" shed with a typewritten slip bearing a serial number "proving" that they have been deloused.

Here, still naked, batches of men and women are tattooed with the numbers that they have on their slips of paper "under the most primitive and inhumane conditions, which often lead to fatal blood poisoning—which in itself is often a merciful alternative." Two fugitives from the Slovak extermination campaign who fled at three-month intervals and "are now on neutral soil" bear physical confirmation of this tattooing operation—one with a five-figure numeral on his left leg and the other with a six-numeral figure considerably above the 200,000 mark on his.

Got Russian Uniforms

The tale of the six-figure fugitive is quoted by Mr. Vogt's report. "From the tattooing shed," he said, "we were driven to a cellar where we received a sort of prisoner's 'uniform' that was later 'exchanged' for a ragged Russian soldier uniform scarcely adequate to cover our nakedness, let alone give us warmth from the cruel temperatures." The purpose of any clothing at all, in the refugee's opinion, was to bear "other indications," such as nationality and "degree of offense" of each person. Women in the tattooing sheds were tattooed on their breasts, according to the same witness.

The Auschwitz camp covers more than a square mile. At one end are shops for unskilled production for the Deutsche Aufruestungswerke (German Rearmament Works of Styria) and a buna plant. Their surface is "compartmented" into sections about a quarter mile square. Women are segregated from men by barbed-wire "alleys" through which armed guards constantly prowl. The barbed wire at certain points is charged with electricity and, when touched, automatically fires machine guns posted to intercept attempts at flight. There are only a few instances of women having been molested by the guards.

Though not absolutely impossible, flight is almost never successful, the report continues. The refugee is far luckier to be killed in the attempt than not, for, if recaptured, he is brought back for "questioning," after which he is hanged with wire in the presence of the entire camp, with a sign around his neck reading, "I have come back as a warning to you all." The hanging by wire not only is excruciating but is apparently done without any drop, so the victim is usually strangled.

The report also describes the inhuman conditions under which round-ups are carried out before the deportations. Dragged from their beds at 2 A. M., a group of well-to-do Hungarians from Budapest was beaten and ordered to dress and bring a fortnight's food—not to exceed fifty pounds in weight. Thrown into army trucks, the aged, the infirm, mothers and children were transported to a "ghetto" at Wosice throughout the night and most of the morning pending further disposition.

Four days later the prisoners were loaded, in lots of seventy to a freight car, with one bucket of water as "supplies" for a trip that lasted ten days, to Birkenau. On arrival, only a few more than 4,000 of 5,000 who had left survived.