

The Holocaust Historiography Project

Remarkable Nonsense about the Holocaust

Gas Showers at Auschwitz

Concentration camp survivor in Anniston has many scars

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ANNISTON, Ala.

Some remain hidden, consumed by the darkness of memory, where the delicate suffering of hope serves only as a constant reminder of a pain once endured but never forgotten. These are the scars that never completely heal. Max Steinmetz has many scars.

[...]

In the fall of 1943, Steinmetz, along with his family and thousands of Jews, stood on the wooden ramp of a Polish railway station waiting in line for "the selection." [...]

[...]

Born in what would become Hungary, Steinmetz and his family were sequestered with other Jews in ghettos before German soldiers forced them onto train cars. They spent three days riding in freight cars packed with people, and with only a third of a loaf of bread to eat apiece during the entire trip. When the doors opened in Poland, they were thankful to breathe fresh air again.

[...]

After looking the 16-year-old Steinmetz over, with a wave of his hand [Dr. Joseph] Mengele sent the teenager, along with his younger brother, to the right. Steinmetz's mother, father and baby sister were sent to the left. He would never see them again.

Later that night, sick with worry, he grabbed the attention of a passing prisoner, a man who knew a great deal about the prison, including the horrible stench that hung heavy in the air, which Steinmetz describes as "smelling like burning meat:"

"I asked him what it was," Steinmetz says.

'You don't know?'

"No," I said.

'When did you come here?'

"This morning."

'What about your parents, did they come with you?'

"Yes."

'Where did they go when you got off the train?'

"To the left."

"That's what you smell. That's the crematorium. Your parents are dead and that's them being burned."

Prisoners sent to the left were urged quietly forward into "shower rooms," where they were stripped of their clothes and told that they were about to be bathed and given fresh clothes. **There were water pipes and sprays along the ceiling, but no drains on the floor. Instead of water, Zyklon B gas spewed from the showerheads, killing all inside within a matter of minutes.**

[...]

After only a few weeks, Steinmetz and his brother were again packed into freight cars and taken to **Dachau** in Germany, the oldest concentration camp and **known as "murder school"** because it trained troops that went to other concentration camps. [...]

[...]

Send all questions and comments to webmaster@historiography-project.org.