

The Holocaust Historiography Project

Remarkable Nonsense about the Holocaust

Pedal-actuated brain-bashing machine at Sachsenhausen

Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal. Volume VII. Nuremberg: IMT, 1947. pp. 376-377.

13 Feb. 46

[...]

On the 2d day of May 1945, there was captured in Berlin a member of the SS, Paul Ludwig Gottlieb Waldmann...

He testified personally to facts known to him regarding the mass extermination of Soviet prisoners of war. He witnessed these exterminations while working as a driver in different camps and himself participated in the mass killings. His testimony is on Page 9 of Exhibit Number USSR-52 (Document Number USSR-52), entitled "Camp Auschwitz." He provides more detailed information on the murders in the camp at Sachsenhausen.

Towards the end of summer 1941, the Sonderkommando of the Security Police in this camp exterminated Russian prisoners of war daily for a whole month. Paul Ludwig Gottlieb Waldmann testified -- you will find the excerpt I am quoting on Page 82 -- that:

"[...]

376

13 Feb. 46

"One room was reserved for undressing and another for waiting; in one of them a radio played rather loudly. It was done purposely so that the prisoners could not guess that death awaited them. From the second room they went, one by one, through a passage into a small fenced-in room with an iron grid let into the floor. Under the grid was a drain. As soon as a prisoner of war was killed, the corpse was carried out by two German prisoners while the blood was washed off the grid.

"In this small room there was a slot in the wall, approximately 50 centimeters in length. **The prisoner of war stood with the back of his head against the slot and a sniper shot at him from behind the slot.** In practice this arrangement did not prove satisfactory, since **the sniper often missed the prisoner.** After 8 days a new arrangement was made. The prisoner, as before, was placed against the wall; **an iron plate was then slowly lowered onto his head. The prisoner was under the impression that he was being measured for height. The iron plate contained a ramrod which shot out suddenly and poleaxed the prisoner with a blow on the back of the head. He dropped dead. The iron plate was operated by a foot lever in a corner of the room.** The personnel working in the room belonged to the above-mentioned Sonderkommando.

"By request of the execution squad. I was also forced to work this apparatus. I shall refer to the subject later. **The bodies of prisoners thus murdered were burned in four mobile crematories transported in trailers and attached to motor cars.** I had to ride constantly from the inner camp to the execution yard. I had to make 10 trips a night with 10 minutes' interval between trips. It was during these intervals that I witnessed the executions...."

It is a long way from these individual murders to the death factories of Treblinka, Dachau, and Auschwitz, but the tendency, the line of action are identical. Methods and extent of the killings varied...

377

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