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The writer, born and raised in Wisconsin, holds an M.A. and Ph.D. degree in English literature from the Catholic University, Washington, D.C., was instructor or professor of English at several colleges including the Catholic University, University of Scranton, LaSalle College, and has written hundreds of articles and reviews and eight books. For ten years he was chairman of the Pastorius Unit of the Steuben Society in Philadelphia, for six years he was national president of the Federation of American Citizens of German Descent, of which he is now honorary president. He has also for the last few years been chairman of the Greater Philadelphia Captive Nations Committee and considers the liberation of these nations, including the Soviet Zone of Germany, and the dissolution of the Soviet Russians colonialism the only hope of preventing World War III.

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Das Tor zum Konzentrationslager in Auschwitz

Entrance gate to Auschwitz camp

The German version
AN EYEWITNESS REPORT



AUSCHWITZ

TRUTH or LIE

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BY
THIES CHRISTOPHERSEN

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FORWORD

"Auschwitz — Truth or Lie. An Eyewitness Report" has received wide publicity in Europe as an underground best seller and as a newspaper headliner.

The Canadian publisher realises the opinions in this book are diametrically opposed to those being promoted and commonly held by the majority of the people. However, the reading public has the right to read this eyewitness report from Auschwitz and to see the photographs taken by the author whilst in that camp.

Reports from the International Red Cross book "Camps de Concentration en Allemagne (1939-1945) bear out the truth of Thies Christophersen's statements. Excerpts from the Red Cross book are included in this book. (Copies of "Camps de Concentration en Allemagne" can be obtained from Geneva).

A young, German lawyer, Herr Manfred Roeder of Bensheim, Roonstr. 8, West Germany, despite great opposition and much persecution, made possible the publication of the German edition, and his courage and dedication is to be commended.

THE PUBLISHER.



Author
as he looks today.

THE TRUTH OF AUSCHWITZ

This personal account is written for all people of goodwill

Silence by Blackmail

I was in Autschwitz from January to December 1944. After the war I heard about the alleged mass murders of Jews and I was quite taken aback. Despite all the testimony submitted and all the reports in the media, I know such atrocities were never committed. I have said so repeatedly, everywhere and at all times, but it has always been useless for no one has wanted to believe me. The evidence, I am told, is unequivocal and confirmed without contradiction. Court cases have clearly established that gas chambers existed in Auschwitz and the Camp Commander Höss, has himself said so. Whoever dares to deny this, makes himself suspect of perhaps, having personally participated in the murders of these Jews.

I have been warned to take care because war crimes have not yet come under the Statute of Limitation (as applicable in any civilized nation) and so I can still be tried and be prosecuted and it would be best to keep silent. Friends and acquaintances have said: "What would you serve were you still to try to correct history?" "You cannot change a thing!" "Acknowledgement of our guilt has brought us back into the community of nations." "Remember, you have a family". "No one will believe your reports . . . Keep silent, that's the smartest thing you can do."

Quite honestly, I began to have doubts myself. When one continually hears the same stories from all sides, it is only reasonable that finally one begins to believe them. "But what happened to all those Jews if they were not gassed?" I do not know, but I wonder where so many Jews come from if six million of them are supposed to have been killed during the war. In my area of the country there hardly ever were any Jews even before the war. So-called "cattle-Jews" simply did not exist in rural areas. Spiteful

people have remarked that the only reason for this was that the peasants in these northern lands were smarter than the Jews. Very many Jews were able to emigrate before the war, some escaped during the war and many of them have survived the concentration camps . . . and of course many Jews today live in our midst again.

My doubts were first roused when I read a flyer distributed by Einar Aberg of Norrviken (Sweden). He compared official statistics of the Jewish world population before the war with those after the war. He concluded their numbers had increased to the extent where every woman must have given birth to a child every year of her productive life, if the number of 6 million murdered Jews could be judged to be correct. In 1938 there were supposed to be 15,688,259 Jews in the world. This figure is derived from the "World Almanac" of the American Jewish Committee. In 1948, according to an article in the New York Times by W. Baldwin, there were supposed to be 18,700,000 Jews in the world. Baldwin is a well-known population expert, entirely neutral, and even the most far-fetched imagination could not describe him as "anti-Semitic." Thus the story of the 6 million murdered Jews cannot be true, for it is impossible for a nation's population to increase by 50% in just ten years.

The losses of the Jewish people during WW II, certainly regrettable, were not 6 million, but approximately 200,000, according to facts compiled by the UNO, which body surely has no reason to grant special protection to any one nation in particular.

A book published in Brazil contains the following statement: ". . . These facts were used by the Canadian Anti-Defamation Committee of Christian Laymen in ascertaining that 200,000 Jews died in the twelve years of Hitler's rule (1933-45), regardless of how they died, i.e. whether they were killed, sentenced and shot as guerillas or saboteurs, or in air raids on camps, or through other circumstances due to war, including sickness and old age."

The leading Austrian Social Democrat, Dr. Benedikt Kautsky — himself a Jew — who spent the years from 1938 to 1945 in concentration camps, three of these in Auschwitz, said:

"I was in the big concentration camps in Germany. I must truthfully state that in no camp have I ever seen anything that might have resembled gas chambers."

Richard Baer, the last commander at Auschwitz (from 1943) and therefore the most important witness, of whom the Parisian weekly "Rivarol" reported that he could not be dissuaded from his insistence that "during all the time he was in Auschwitz, he had never seen gas chambers, nor had he known that any existed." Commander Baer died suddenly on June 17th, 1963 whilst being held under investigation, although two weeks previous to this he had been given a clean bill of health.

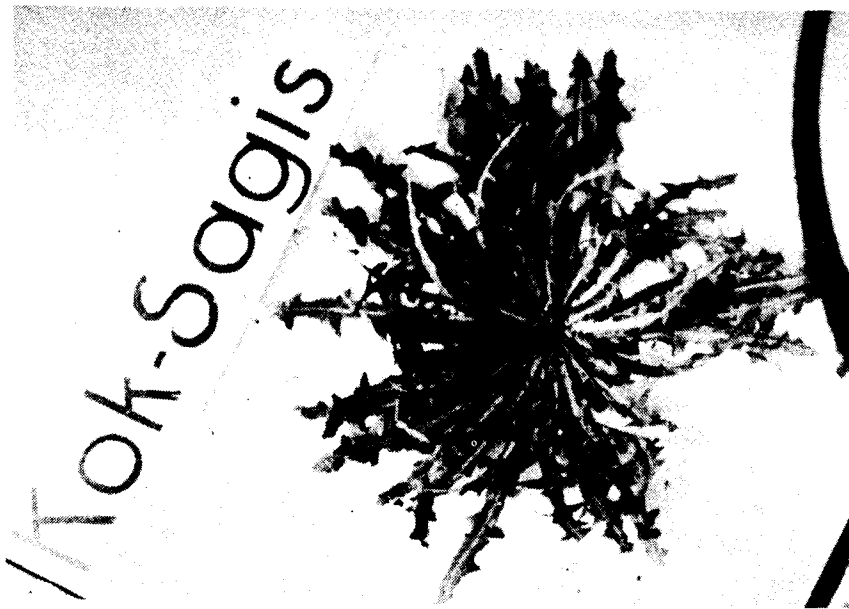
I never made a secret of my having been at Auschwitz. When asked about the destruction of Jews, I answered that I knew nothing about that. I simply marvelled at how quickly the populace was willing to accept and believe the stories about these mass gassings, without any apparent resistance.

As a result of a war injury in 1940 I developed a severe case of chronic sinus. The slightest cold put me back in hospital. The Autumn of 1942 brought an official medical finding: service on the home front. I filed a request for furlough to attend a higher agricultural school and did so in 1942/43. In the spring of 1943 a commander of Army Headquarters came to our school to solicit agrarians willing to go to the Ukraine to raise india rubber plants. I applied and was accepted.

Kok Sagis

A mobile war needs vehicles, and vehicles need tires,

and tires are made from rubber. Of course there is synthetic rubber, made from carbon, lime and sulphur, called "buna." But without the addition of natural india rubber to the mixture, it cannot be produced as there is then no cohesion. The Russians, in their attempt to become self-sufficient (in our case this was called preparation for war), had systematically searched their whole flora for plants that contained india rubber . . . and found some — among others, one called Kok Sagis, a close relation of the dandelion. The white latex in its roots contains india rubber. This became very important to carrying on the war. The motorized vehicles branch at HQ had organized departments for the cultivation, utilization and research of plants with india rubber content. After a short training period I was sent to the Ukraine to supervise the planting and cultivation of india rubber bearing plants. I had never seen a Kok Sagis plant, but practical work and assistance from some Russian agrarians soon provided the necessary knowledge.



Kok-Sagis — cultivated in Auschwitz. Found to be high in India rubber content.

In 1943 we lost the Ukraine, and early in 1944 I was transferred to the department of plant cultivation at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institut. This institute had established a branch at Auschwitz, so I went there, and only on my way did I learn that it was a concentration camp.

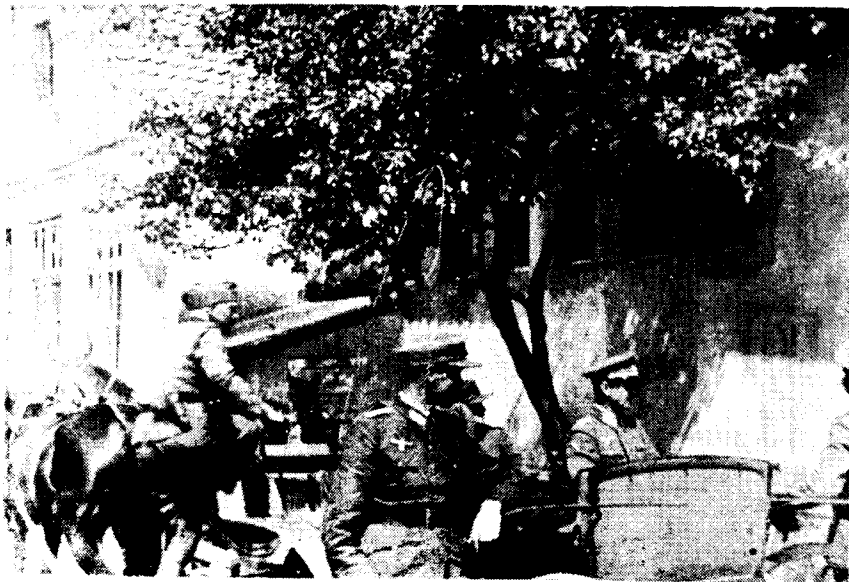
When relating my experiences at Auschwitz, I have some doubts as to whether I should mention names of former colleagues who today are still alive and with whom I still maintain contact. I know that I myself must be prepared for reprisals for breaking the silence. I am now ready to accept these . . . and in part already have had to do so.

Life in the Camp

It was cold and windy when I arrived at the railroad station of Auschwitz on January 15, 1944. I wondered whether to go by horse and carriage, but decided to walk. Leaving my baggage at the station, I asked my way to the camp. Actually the camp, consisting of barracks, that were ugly but massively built, was very near. The first thing I noticed was the inscription over the gate "ARBEIT MACHT FREI", ("Work will set us Free"). I was surprised to see so many inmates of the camp walk around unguarded. Later I learned that the camp, surrounded with an electrified barbed wire fence was under guard only at night. There were guards posted outside the grounds, however, who were pulled in at night after roll call.

I reported to my superior, Dr. A., a fine-looking man with steel-blue eyes and reddish hair. He greeted me warmly. I was curious about the camp and asked about the inmates. He said, "The Germans who are here belong here . . . apart from that it is the European elite that is here." Later I discovered there was some truth to that statement. I was introduced to his co-workers. There was a former Czarist officer, an exile, who also spoke German and French, and

he offered to drive me to my quarters. The officers had no cars but they did have a carriage and a driver at their disposal to travel on the extensive lands that were under cultivation. However, I found this somewhat pompous. I also found it embarrassing, that inmates whom we passed on the way, took off their caps and stood at attention as we went by, but we were officers and the SS-men also gave us the military salute.



Author (centre) with arm resting on horse-drawn buggy, used by officers for conveyance around the camp grounds.

My quarters were in Raisko, about 3 km from the main camp. This was where a women's camp, the botany buildings with their hot houses, and the laboratories for our research work were located. I was given a room in an unattached dwelling; I shared the house with a colleague who was the supervisor of the department of plant cultivation. He was a man with a happy disposition. There was something heart-

warming about his laughter and he was well liked by the inmates and he still corresponds with some of them today. Later on he had his wife and two young children join him. I then moved to an apartment in a botanic building that had just been completed. This I shared with a scientist whose name I can mention; it was Dr. Boehme. He was shot and killed by Polish civilians who went wild after the capitulation. He had never harmed anyone and had been kindness and courtesy personified.

The first inmate I met was "Agnes." She was a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses and was our cleaning lady. I questioned her about conditions at the camp but she would not speak about them. Not so Mrs. Pohl who was in control of the kitchen. She also was a student of the Bible and made up flyers which she distributed to the inmates. Actually, this was against the regulations, but it wasn't my job to watch the inmates. Apart from that, her publications seemed harmless to me, and I had always been tolerant in matters of religion. Even now I cannot deny Jehovah's Witnesses a certain measure of respect, for they were willing to have themselves locked up and suffer for their faith simply because they wanted to suffer. There was no need to watch them and they were free to move even beyond the line of posted guards.

In our camp about 300 women were housed in three barracks. They were made up of a select type of worker who worked almost exclusively for the department of plants. For the most part they were Jewish and Polish with a sprinkling of French. All spoke German quite well and many had an academic degree. Their work was of a scientific nature and they were quite self-sufficient. In fact, it was not I who was training the inmates, they were training me, and they did so with a certain pride, in fact, I might almost say, with an air of self-importance. At any rate, I had the impression that the inmates performed their research tasks gladly and with enthusiasm.

The cultivation of plants proceeded on a basis of selectivity. The roots of the plants were examined as to their india rubber content and reproduced through seedlings. Their seeds were carefully gathered and re-sown. Sabotage could easily have been committed but we never learned of even a single instance. It must be mentioned, however, that the inmates did not trust each other. There was that ancient feeling of hate between Jews and Poles. Compared to this hate, so-called National Socialist hatred of the Jews was quite harmless.

The results in increased india rubber production were quite satisfactory. One of our superiors went to Russia, and returned with a number of scientists. They came with their families and worked for us as civilians, enjoying their work.



Russian agronomist (on left) and the author.

A sort of drama developed with the arrival of one Russian agronomist, J. Sassmoshek. He found a former sweetheart among the inmates and this re-union had its natural effects. Sassmoshek married the woman and she was released from her internment. After the evacuation from Auschwitz, I saw them again at Halle and both were radiantly happy. I myself was not so happy at the time, I had just been through that terrible air raid of February 13th on Dresden,

which had been declared an open, undefended city, and from which I had escaped unharmed, as if by some miracle. I believe on this one day in Dresden more people died than had supposedly died in Auschwitz throughout all the years of the war. But the war crimes of the Allies are not debatable, even to this day.

Just what was the daily routine at Auschwitz? Rising at 7 a.m., washing, showering, breakfast and roll call, on the job at 8. Lunch from 12-1, and work again until 5 p.m. Roll call once more at 7 p.m., following which the guards posted outside the camp were pulled in and the camp put under guard. Mail was delivered daily. Packages were opened at roll call and examined by the camp supervisor. Only rarely had some of the contents to be withheld, such as for instance, certain medical preparations, books and pamphlets, cameras, radios and technical instruments. These things, however, remained the property of the inmates and were stored in a huge warehouse called "Kanada", where also all possessions of Jews interned at Auschwitz, were kept.

L'ACTIVITE DU CICR
EN FAVEUR DES CIVILS DEVENUS PRISONNIERS
CAMPES DE CONCENTRATION
EN ALLEMAGNE
(1939-1945)
+
Suppressed Red Cross Report
Mentioned on page 20.
COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE
GENEVE

1. — Visite au Commandant du camp d'Auschwitz (septembre 1944)
... Tout au long des routes, des postes polonaises pour être plus exact, qui mènent de Posen à Auschwitz, nous avons rencontré des groupes d'hommes et de femmes, encadrés de SS, portant l'habit (détachements de travail). Ces Kommandos travaillent tantôt à l'agriculture, tantôt aux mines. Ces gens, malgré le travail en plein air, ont tous le teint blafard, foncé. Tous marchent au pas et en rang de quatre. Les cartes, le fusil sous le bras, sont des SS de la Division Totenkopf.
Nous arrivons enfin à Auschwitz et, après avoir eu la patience nécessaire, nous sommes introduits à l'intérieur du camp de concentration. Les distributions des envois faits par le Comité se font par petites tractions. Les paquets adressés personnellement à un détenu sont toujours remis intégralement (Français, Belges, pas d'autre nationalité citée, mais certainement pour l'ensemble des internés juifs).
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3) Il existe des hommes de confiance et le « Judenältester » peuvent recevoir des envois collectifs, ces envois sont distribués librement par eux. Les paquets personnels arrivant à un homme interné au camp sont remis à l'homme de confiance de la nationalité correspondante.
4) Il existe un « Judenältester » (doyen des Juifs) responsable pour l'ensemble des internés juifs.
5) Les hommes de confiance et le « Judenältester » peuvent recevoir des envois collectifs, ces envois sont distribués librement par eux. Les paquets personnels arrivant à un homme interné au camp sont remis à l'homme de confiance de la nationalité correspondante.
6) La distribution des envois faits par le Comité nous paraît certaine. Nous n'avons pas de preuve, mais notre impression est que le Commandant dit vrai quand il affirme que ces distributions se font régulièrement et que tout va et vient plus soigneusement.

Translated synopsis: —
September, 1944, International Red Cross Committee Report on Auschwitz P. 91 and 92. The Red Cross Delegate states that the inmates could receive parcels. That the officers with whom he came in contact were amicable and reticent, like those at Oranienburg and Ravensbruck. That he saw many groups of men and women in small working commandos. That the British Red Cross "Insider" was a member of the British Commandos and that he mentioned to the Red Cross delegate he had heard rumours of gas chambers. However, the Red Cross delegate after careful inspection, could not verify these rumours.



Author and wife on leave in the East. 1944.

"Kanada" was kept under guard at all times to prevent looting from the outside. In our weather station we had a female SS-worker who, on one occasion, "organized" a pair of stockings for herself from "Kanada". She was court-martialled for "plundering". However, the inmates themselves, who worked there, stole constantly.

Surprising to me was the elegance of the inmates' wearing apparel. Their outer garments did, of course, consist of uniforms, but all other apparel, including shoes, was of the finest quality, nor was there any lack in beauty care, and make-up was all part of the female dress. Every Saturday our women were sent to the main camp for an exchange of laundry and they brought back alluring bits of booty, which were then distributed among the inmates. It was a type of theft that I think was being quietly tolerated.

Olga

In May my wife, for the first time, came to visit me. She was a teacher in agricultural home economics and was curious about my work at the concentration camp. This fact alone, that we were able to have our relatives visit us at any time, should prove that the camp administration had nothing to hide. Had Auschwitz been the death factory it is reputed to have been, such visits would certainly not have been permitted. Formalities, such as even today are required for a visit to that prison camp, otherwise known as East Germany, were not required at Auschwitz. We were a young married couple and had not seen too much of each other in our marriage. I met my wife at the railway station. She wore wooden sandals without stockings and a kerchief over her hair. It was war time and elegance was a luxury we could not afford.

At that time I had a new cleaning lady — personal maid would have been a more fitting title. Olga! Olga was Polish. She was a factotum. But there was something touching about the solicitous care with which she took my affairs in hand. There were always flowers in my room; always a clean table cloth and clean curtains, and somehow she always managed to have a surprise for me.

She had taken special pains in getting my room ready for my wife's visit. Above my bed she had attached a praying angel to the wall — Lord only knows where she got

that! Actually, her care was a bit overpowering, but I had to accept since I didn't want to hurt the concerned soul that she was.



Author on "second honeymoon," celebrated in camp, with table-setting lovingly prepared by Olga.

During my wife's visit, work was commenced on the india rubber fields and I did not have too much time for my visitor, but she had the best possible companion in Olga, who could talk like a waterfall. My wife felt she should compensate Olga for her thoughtfulness and bought her a small gift. The result was that when I took my wife to the railway station for her trip back home, I hardly recognized her. She was dressed in new clothes from head to toe. Olga had "obtained" everything for her, even a brand new suitcase. My wife had brought me a few delicate morsels saved from her own meager rations, among other things, a piece of butter. Olga managed to make fried potatoes for me evenings and strangely enough there was no end to the butter. Care packages arrived daily and Olga felt duty-bound to include me in the distribution of this bounty. The inmates at Raisko never went hungry, and any new arrival looking somewhat undernourished, after only a few days seemed to have a "smooth fur."

The Death Camp

"The death camp was not in Auschwitz, it was at Birkenau." This is what I heard and read after the war. Well, I was also in Birkenau. This camp I did not like. It was overcrowded and the people there did not make a good impression on me. Everything looked neglected and grubby. I also saw families with children. It hurt to see them, but I was told that the authorities felt it kinder not to separate children from their parents when the latter were interned. Some children played ball merrily enough. Still, I felt children did not belong there and the fact that the English had done likewise — in the Boer War, for instance, was a poor excuse, I said so to my superior. His answer: "I agree with you, but I can't change it."

I had been commissioned to pick 100 workers for hoeing the Kok-Sagis plants. At roll call the inmates were asked if they were interested in this kind of work and if they had done it before. Then followed the "selection" of the workers. This "selection" was later completely misinterpreted. The purpose was to give the inmates something to do and they themselves wanted to be occupied. Selecting them meant



Kok-Sagis plants in various stages of development.

no more than to inquire about their inclinations, their capabilities, and their physical state of health with regard to the work they were to do.

The fact was, however, that in Auschwitz there were more people than were jobs. Naturally, I was concerned with getting workers who had experience on farms. Jews, of course, were not experienced for any kind of farm work, whilst on the other had, Poles were excellent farm workers. Gypsies were entirely useless. Detachment 11 — that was the name of our female workers from Birkenau — came every day to work in the fields that lay beyond the outer line of posted guards. I dealt with these people almost daily and listened to their complaints. On one occasion I saw an SS-guard kick a woman. I confronted him about this. He claimed



Women inmates working Kok-Sagis fields. Note absence of guards and standard attire of women.

that the woman had called him a Nazi pig, but the fact was that he had first insulted her. I reported this case and the SS-guard was sent to "Strafbataillon" in Danzig. From this day on, my favor with the inmates rose significantly, especially with those in Detachment 11. They often came to me

with requests or complaints and I did whatever I could for them, because to me they were not enemies, they were simply interned. Often, I did favours for them that were against the regulations. Their greatest joy was for me to take them for a walk down to the river Sula, where on those hot summer days of 1944 I allowed them to go bathing.

Apart from all else, the hoeing-detachment from Birkenau was a merry bunch. They sang their Polish folk songs while working and the gypsies danced to the melodies. In the beginning, I was quite upset and worried about the undernourished appearance of some of the inmates. Then I learned that they had arrived in rather poor physical shape and it took some time before they had padded themselves with some extra poundage. Often I shared their common noonday meals and fared well doing so.

But Detachment 11 also had a secret supply source. The most wonderful things were found by them in unknown hiding places. In the night these were replenished by friends of the inmates. Sometimes these friends even donned inmate attire and marched into the camp, allowing an inmate to take a few days off. Auschwitz was located in Poland and the population helped the inmates as much as possible, though this was officially not permitted.



Inmate working in fields (almost hidden by horses). Note only one single guard at great distance, in far left of photograph.

The occupation troops, but especially the so-called civil administration, often roused the antagonism of the population, as was well-known. One measure I decidedly disapproved of was the expropriation of land from small farmers. They had to give it up for agricultural use by the concentration camp. I was told, however, that they were compensated for their property on the same basis as land expropriated from Germans for the construction of autobahns. I also did not like the re-settlement measures that were carried out, but I was told repeatedly that these were never forced on anyone. Curtailment of freedom is hard, but war is tough and it became increasingly tougher for us too. In the fall of 1944, for the first time, the camp at Auschwitz was bombed by American planes. There were about 20 victims among the inmates. I myself had lost faith in victory after the successful landing at the English Channel. Reports from the front became more and more ominous, and the inmates too were well informed — the devil knows through whom.

In our area the inmates were looked after now just as well as they had been before. Once a week a film was shown. Camp supervisors and inmates jointly saw, among others, the film "Muenchhausen" and the "Golden City." Church services were held in community halls. I attended several myself and found them to be quite solemn, especially those of the Russian Orthodox Community, to which our Russian civilian workers also belonged. A theater group had been organized by the inmates and one evening they invited us to a performance of "Faust." Professional actors could not have produced a better show.

As for myself, I would have liked to take some more time off for studies but the war situation was serious and chances were poor. It was suggested that I take a correspondence course, and I sent away for books. An inmate, a Jewish female doctor from Prague offered to help me cram, and she did so every afternoon. This was possible in Raisko.

The Jews were intelligent and so far as I got to know them in Auschwitz, quite nice too. In the summer my mother came for a visit and stayed several days. Of course, a fat friendship developed between her and Olga. One evening my mother asked about the crematorium where corpses were supposed to be burned. I knew nothing about this, so I asked Olga. She could not tell me anything definite either. She did intimate, however, that around Bielitz there always was what seemed to be a reflection against the sky, as if from a fire.

So I went in the direction of Bielitz and there found a mining camp in which some inmates also worked. I travelled around the entire camp and examined all fire grates and all smoke stacks, but found nothing. I asked my colleagues; the answer . . . a shrug of the shoulder and "don't pay any attention to those rumors." Actually, there was a crematorium in Auschwitz, I was told, for there were 20,000 people there and any city of that size has a crematorium. Of course people died here as they did elsewhere, but not only inmates at the camp. The wife of one of our supervisors had also died here. As far as I was concerned, that was enough of an answer.

During all the time I was in Auschwitz I never in the least observed anything that even indicated mass killings in gas chambers. Also the story of a smell of burned flesh that allegedly hovered over the camp at times was an infamous lie. In the vicinity of the main camp there was a smithy where horses' hooves were shod. The burning of the horses' hooves when fitting them with shoes naturally caused an unpleasant smell. Incidentally, the man who was in charge of this particular smithy at the time, now lives in a neighboring village.

As a matter of fact, camp regulations became more generous all the time. In the main camp there was now a brothel for the men. Love and sex, is something human after all, and was not withheld from those who were interned. Of course there were also love relationships among the in-

mates. I doubt that the so-called "house of pleasure" was a deterrent. The fact that such houses did exist for the inmates in Auschwitz was completely ignored in all post-war reports. An admission to such a brothel was a kind of reward for good behaviour. There were also some inmates who flung their ticket into the Kapo's face. Hats off to them, I say, for that to me was a special show of good behaviour.

Olga loved to constantly chatter and her continual gossiping, rumouring and wondering as to whether or not corpses were being burned (whilst I knew for sure there was no such happening) finally got on my nerves. This, plus her almost slavish servitude, brought us to a parting of the ways. She was given a new job, one I did not begrudge her. She was made "overseer" in the women's camp and it was her job to keep out men who had no business there. Olga had a gift for "raising hell" and could scold so beautifully that it was a joy to see her eject males from the female camp. Her fellow inmates called her "Zerberus", (hound of hell).

Good old Olga, sometimes I wonder what became of her. She didn't want to return to a Communist Poland — almost none of the inmates wanted that, not even the Jews. Many of them even prayed for a German victory. From a colleague, whom I visited recently, I learned that quite a number of them are in the U.S. He still corresponds with some. Some were also willing to testify on behalf of SS Officers at their trials but were denied this privilege by Allied and especially by West German authorities. These reports were publicized by the "right wing" press at the time.

There were no secrets in Auschwitz. In September 1944 a Commission of the Red Cross came to inspect the camp, but it was more interested in the camp at Birkenau. We also

Publishers note:— Having read the 156-page Report put out by the International Red Cross, it seems strange that Auschwitz, one of the largest camps of its kind and much publicized as being a "death camp," should warrant only a few paragraphs in the Red Cross reporting, and this would seem to add verity to the statements of Thies Christoffersen.

had a great many inspections at Raisko, but the people who came were largely interested in plant cultivation. I was often involved in these tours. Although it was actually not permitted that inmates converse with visitors, they did explain their work to them.



Visiting delegation.

At the time we experimented with colchizin. This is a poison of the Autumn Crocus (*colchium autumnale*). With the aid of this poison we developed a plant with twice its number of chromosomes. Such plants tended to grow into giants, but at the cost of fertility. The collection of plant seed therefore still played an important role, but the harvesting of the seed was not exactly simple, because the reproduction device of this plant was similar to that of the dandelion. With the aid of some talented mechanics and Russian agronomists, I had begun to construct a harvesting machine. Some Russian agronomists worked with a so-called "longalvanization" method. For this purpose, the inmates

built tools that worked with ultra short waves. The material for these I picked up at a shop where planes that had been brought down were dismembered. The inmates also found material there with which they could build small radios. These of course they could not take into the camp. I myself learned to build radios at Auschwitz. My teachers were the inmates and they supplied me with everything I needed for a small receiving set.

At Auschwitz we did not of course only cultivate plants. Innumerable research tasks were carried out. Because of the availability of workers there, more and more research work was being delegated to Auschwitz. At that time the place was also fairly safe from air attacks. About every two weeks the SS officers met for a casino night. On these occasions, department leaders spoke about their particular field of work. I heard many interesting lectures there and I do not recall anything that might have been offensive. Later on I heard that experiments were supposed to have been carried out on living human beings. I remember having listened to a lecture on the development of the embryo in the womb of the mother under various kinds of diet. Whether these women had to carry and give birth to a child while subjected to starvation diets, I cannot say. We were told, however, that these experiments produced valuable insights into the dietary care of pregnancies. Reports on experiments of newly developed medicines carried out on inmates do not appear plausible to me. A medical doctor at Auschwitz told me that new medicines were given to people only when experiments on animals were concluded. This practise is still carried on in all civilized countries.

After the war I saw a TV film about Auschwitz that showed a building with huge smoke stacks. I am very sorry, but when I left the camp at Auschwitz in December 1944, I did not see this building. I cannot imagine that these smoke stacks were built in the cold winter of 1944/45, but I suspect that these structures were erected after the war. It also seems implausible that, if they should have existed, the SS did not destroy them. During the past few days I have heard a report on the radio according to which 4 million people are supposed to have been shot at Auschwitz. It is an ab-

absolute certainty that no people were shot at Auschwitz, because this we would have heard. I do, however, recall one occasion when there was great excitement in the camp. A rumour was being spread that hostages were to be shot. This type of revenge is the most despicable I can think of because it hits innocent people. That it did take place — on either side — is quite likely. If for every bombing victim an inmate should have been killed, none of the 200,000 inmates would have left a concentration camp alive. On this basis, considering that Auschwitz was in operation only four years, one million people a year or 3,000 per day would have had to die. Just what would a crematorium look like in which 3,000 corpses were burned every day? Even mass graves on this order could not be kept secret.

Yet the German people continue to believe in these mass murders. Why? We who know the truth, have we not burdened ourselves with an awful responsibility? Why did we keep silent for so long? I shall try to answer these questions.

1. We have not kept silent at all. There was no one who wanted to hear our reports, no paper wanted to publish them, no publisher print them.
2. Even today there are still enough witnesses alive who could verify my statements and make similar ones of their own. What we need, however, is an unbiased constitutional state. To tell the truth is tantamount to social ostracism and financial suicide.
3. I cannot say that I am tired of life, but my life's task lies behind me; my children are taken care of, and my wife should receive her well-earned pension at 65. At least, I hope it will not be withheld from her if something should happen to me.
4. During the long years that I have worked as a journalist and publisher, I have created a small circle of readers and with the aid of the German Citizenship Initiative I can publish my reports independently.

5. It is being maintained and regretfully also by members and voters of the main German political parties, that "only recognition of our guilt in starting the war and destroying 6 million Jews will make it possible for us to re-enter the community of nations and that whoever denies that, brings great harm to the German people."
6. However, to disprove the mass murders in concentration camps would not only prove the entire thrust of post-war German politics to be a mistake, but the post-war politicians still in power would have to admit their political concepts to be entirely false. This must not be allowed.
7. Of course, there were also cowards, liars and paid witnesses. Some of the accused who **must** have known that the testimony against them was false, still made a confession because they thought — and of this they were no doubt assured — that they would gain advantages for themselves if they adjusted their statements to the testimony of the accusers. However, it must also be stated here, that confessions were obtained through torture.

What changes will take place when the disclosure of my own personal experience is made public? Most likely none. Some sort of decree may be issued against me and an attempt might be made to confiscate this pamphlet.

Our people, especially our children, must be freed from the feeling of guilt being forced upon them by the victors of the last war — and it is only the truth that will make them free.

I have recorded the memories of my experiences as I recall them. I have stated the truth, so help me God. If these my statements contribute to our youth having more respect for their fathers, who as soldiers fought for Germany, and who were definitely not criminals, then I shall be very happy.

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