

ZEUGENSCHRIFTUM

Name:  OCHSHORN, Isaak Egon	ZS Nr.  2455	Bd.  I	Vermerk:
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Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
KZ IV - Auschwitz (1942/43)	Ochshorn, Isaak Egon		
Juden III - Behandlung (1939-45)			

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UNITED NATIONS WAR CRIMES COMMISSION  
(Research Office)

(R/C/21/8a)

DOCUMENTS SERIES  
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STATEMENT BY OCHSHORN ON MASSACRES OF JEWS  
IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS.  
(Communicated by Major, E.L. Rothschild, R.A.,  
604, Battery, 200 Jewish Field Regiment,  
R.A., B.L.A.)

I. EXTRACT FROM COVERING LETTER DATED 21st AUGUST, 1945, FROM  
GENERAL DE BARR, CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE I OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS WAR CRIMES COMMISSION:

"I am sending, enclosed, a translation of  
a statement of an eye-witness account of six  
German concentration camps. The eye-witness  
is Isaak Egon OCHSHORN, who is now available  
through the Jewish Infantry Brigade Group.  
He could testify in any witness box as evidence  
of the facts listed in his document. His  
address is as follows: Isaak Egon OCHSHORN,  
c/o Captain HOTER-ISHAI, 2nd Battalion,  
The Palestine Rgt., Jewish Infantry Brigade  
Group, B.L.A.

I have heard from other sources that  
Mr. Ochshorn is now in Brussels where he can  
be reached through Capt. Hoter-Ishai of the  
Second Battalion of the Palestine Regiment  
(B.L.A.). I believe it would be useful if  
he could be subjected to a hearing by the  
proper authority."

II. . . .

Institut für Zeitgeschichte	
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II. STATEMENT OF EYE-WITNESS (Translation)

ISAAC EGON COHENSON, born on 19.2.1901 in RYSCHEKOW, lived in VIENNA XIII, Amhofstrasse 212. For six consecutive years he was an inmate of a number of concentration camps specified below. Functioning at various periods during that time as a camp clerk and senior of the block, his duties were to write and file all reports. He was thus not only able to gain a first hand insight into the extermination actions, but he also witnessed those mass annihilations with his own eyes.

P R E C I S   O F   E V I D E N C E

I was in the following camps:

Camp	Periods of internment	Prisoners No.
Buchenwald	2.10.1939 to 27. 9.1940	7397
Dachau	27. 9.1940 to 16. 6.1941	20954
Gross-Rosen	16. 6.1941 to 16.10.1942	852
Auschwitz-Birkenau	16.10.1942 to 8.10.1943	68244
Warsaw	8.10.1943 to 7. 8.1944	1690
Dachau and sub-sections Daufering and Allach	7. 8.1944 to 29. 4.1945	89109

On the 29th of April 1945 I was freed by the American Army at ALLACH, a sub-section of Dachau. Of my already partly written memoirs I shall relate for example the following facts which I witnessed personally:

B U C H E N W A L D

In November 1939, the Central Bureau for Concentration Camps in Berlin-Oranienburg, Amt D.II, informed the Camp Commandant, that, since a monthly schedule of 20,000 Polish Jews was to be sent to Buchenwald, care was to be taken for their quickest possible liquidation (murder). The Camp Commandantur put this order into effect by the following methods: The new-coming Jews were immediately subjected to such sadistic maltreatment that more than half were murdered on the day of arrival, while the surviving Jews were put into separate cages where they were denied any sort of nourishment or water and were bestially mishandled, so that they would die within 14 days. I myself overheard the Camp Commandant, SS Obersturmführer SCHOBER giving SS Hauptscharführer HINKELMANN the order: "I want every day at least 600 Jewish death reports in the Camp Office."

By an order of Camp Commandant SCHOBER issued to the SS men HINKELMANN, KUBITZ and ABRAHAM all University graduates and Rabbis were taken to the Camp gate and there these learned men, some of whom enjoyed world-wide reputation, were buried alive, standing up to their neck, dying a dreadful death.

The Camp Commandantur handed daily to the SS doctors a nominal roll of prisoners who had to die on that same day. They were brought to the sick bay for a medical inspection, and were murdered by an injection.

The Camp Commandant gave an order to the "Capos" to chase the Jews through the chain of sentries where they were shot. This was registered as "shot whilst trying to escape."

#### P A C H A U

The Jews were thrown alive into huge concrete mixers where they were milled into pulp. This material served as street plaster; hence, these streets were commonly called "Juden-strassen" (Jew-roads).

HITLER visited the Camp in March 1941. Seeing the accidental treatment of a Jew in the sick bay, he issued the order that all Jews reporting sick should be murdered.

#### G R O S S - R O S E N

Camp Commandant ANTON TOBIANN gave the SS men the order to murder all incoming Jews on the day of arrival. He himself stood at the camp gate, and those whose faces displeased him were separated into a special group, which was then murdered in various fashions.

From October 1941 to August 1942 500 to 600 Russian Prisoners of War were daily murdered by poison or gas. I myself was always present, since I had to note the appropriate numbers.

Russian Civilians, allegedly "Kommissars", were daily brought in buses to GROSS-ROSEN where they all were shot. All prisoners had to leave work, parade on the parade ground and sing loudly whilst the executions were going on.

The sport of Camp Commandant TOBIANN, favoured in winter, was to have many Jews daily thrown alive into a pit and to have them covered with snow until they were suffocated.

The order of Camp Commandant TOBIANN to the "Capos" on December 2nd, 1941 was: "No Jew is to remain alive by Christmas."

#### A U S C H W I T Z - B I R K E N A U

I saw how newcoming transports of Jews marked for gassing arrived at BIRKENAU station. I myself heard the Political Officer of AUSCHWITZ giving to the newcoming Jews misleading speeches and instructing them to take a bath where instead of water - Gas was being inducted.

I saw how Dr. HENGEL always selected a small number of healthy looking Jews, led them to the Camp and ordered them to write letters to relatives in which they stated that they arrived at "MONOWITZ LABOUR CAMP" that they were very well treated, that life there was pleasant and that work was easy and finally advising their relatives to join the transports to the East. These letters were all dictated. Those refusing to send such dictated letters were immediately shot.

I saw the lorries with the Jews marked for gassing arriving at the Gas chambers and crematoriums. I saw how the Jews were bestially driven into the undressing-halls of the Gas chambers naked. I saw how these unfortunates were handed soap and towel as if they were going to bath. I also saw how, after the Gas chambers had been stuffed with human beings, the doors were closed, a Gas bomb was taken out of a Red-Cross lorry, how the Duty SS Officer handed the bomb to the SS man; how the latter put on his respirator, prepared the bomb and how he threw the lethal Gas bomb through a hole in the roof of the Gas chamber, which looked from a distance like a bee-hive, and how he immediately reported to the Officer.

After the gassing had been completed, the so-called SONDERKOMMANDO appeared, who extracted the golden teeth of the dead Jews and shaved the women's hair for further utilization. The clothing of the gassed and the burnt had to be washed and sorted by a special "Arbeitskommando", to which also 300 Jewish women belonged, and was then sent in separate waggons to Berlin. Thus the German State literally derived an enormous income from the murdered Jews.

The gassed Jews were brought from the Gas chambers into the adjoining Crematoriums which had many hundreds of ovens. In each oven a man, a woman and a child were laid, since experience had taught that such an arrangement ensured the best method of burning them.

From the old Birkenau Camp of block 27, which was occupied by prisoners and was separated from the Gas chamber only by a wire fence, these mass murders could be seen accurately. One could even hear the terrible cries for help of the desperate, and their shrieks of horror.

I once heard the Camp Commandant of AUSCHWITZ say: "Our system is so terrible that no man in this world will believe it to be possible - even should a Jew succeed in escaping from AUSCHWITZ and telling the world all he saw. The world will brand him as a fantastic liar and nobody will believe him.

From my experience at the Camp Office in the Gipsy Camp (all the Gipsies were likewise gassed), I recollect the following incident: At the end of March, 1943 a Gipsy was brought into the Camp, who according to official documents and photographs had served as a Lieutenant of the German Wehrmacht in this war. He showed all this to the higher SS Officers who promised him to intervene at Higher Authority. This Lieutenant learned all about the gassing and burning. After four weeks a Colonel of the Wehrmacht appeared in the Office in order to intervene on behalf of this Lieutenant. SS Rapportführer SCHILLINGER could not prevent the Gipsy Lieutenant from informing the Colonel about the occurrences and the mass murders of AUSCHWITZ. This caused the Colonel to remark to the higher Officers in the Office in my presence:

"After all that happened at AUSCHWITZ it will devolve upon the SS now to win the war as quickly as possible. For, if Germany were to lose the war, then let us be assured that after all that happened at AUSCHWITZ - certainly no German will be left alive."

Towards the end of 1943, when almost all the Jews of Europe (with the exception of the Hungarian Jews) had passed through the Gas chambers and crematoriums, it was the opinion of the SS Führers of AUSCHWITZ that the Gas chambers and crematoriums would now be destroyed. But they were greatly mistaken. Already in September 1943 there arrived an important SS Commission with engineers and technicians under the personal leadership of HIMMLER. A technical Commission was set up with the task of enlarging the capacity of extermination in the Gas chambers and crematoriums from 8,000 to 40,000 per day. The building of these tremendous installations was commenced as early as September. These new plans included the laying of a railway directly to the Gas chambers. Since there were no more Jews left in Europe, the SS Officers believed that after the extermination of the Jewish people it was now the turn of the Poles and Czechs.

I myself saw the routine returns which were rendered daily, fortnightly and monthly to BERLIN, reporting the mass murders. Only that instead of the word "Gassed" the covering word "Sonderbehandelt" (specially treated) was used.

I myself saw how Hauptsturmführer HOLL and five SS men seized 386 Jewish children under 10 years, after they had been brought to AUSCHWITZ in lorries, by the hair, lifted them up, and shot them.

I saw how Dr. HÄCKELE sorted out young Jewish girls and women, had them brought to block 10, where Prof. Dr. SCHUBACHER used these unfortunates for medical experiments like rabbits or guinea pigs. On these girls various experiments of a surgical nature were practised, artificial inoculation, removal of the ovaries, removal of the breasts, sterilisation by means of electricity and various other experiments. Also young Jewish men were experimented upon, then they were brought together with young Jewish women and the results observed. On completion of these experiments and after the results had been obtained and noted, all these men were invariably gassed. I myself saw a lorry with 40 completely naked Jewish girls being brought from block 10 to the Gas chamber. I also saw how several of these naked girls jumped off the lorry but were immediately shot by the SS escort.

I saw how Dr. HÄCKELE inspected from time to time the Jews in the Camp and decided who was to be gassed.

I saw how the Camp Kommandantur ordered the Capos who were almost invariably German professional criminals, to report to the Office where they were told to murder far more Jews, otherwise they would be dismissed.

In AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU there was a punishment block to which Jews were arbitrarily brought. The senior of the block and later the Camp Senior - FRANZ DANIES - erected a gallows in the yard and invited every newcoming Jew to hang himself, otherwise he would die a terrible death. Most Jews, indeed almost all of them, complied, because it was well known that DANIES promptly carried out the threatened tortures.

I once saw how the Camp senior FRANZ DANIES stopped a passing column of a hundred Jews who were going to work, drew his notebook from his pocket and said: "I, FRANZ DANIES, master of the life and death of the Jews, shall now inspect you to see who will be gassed to-morrow." He marked 68 Jews in his note-book. As the Jews knew that this meant certain death by gas, they begged insistently for their lives. He said: "He of the 68 Jews who will bear three blows on their neck with my cudgel, will be struck out, for he is able to live." And really many of the unfortunate Jews bent down to receive the blows on their neck. But most of the Jews fell down lifeless under the murderous blows. Those responsible for the gassing were: HESS, AUBEIER, SCHWARZ, HOFFMANN, SCHWARZHUBER, MOLL, TAUBER, PALLISCH, SCHILLINGER.

#### WARSAW

Though we arrived at Warsaw on 8th October 1943, i.e. 5 months after the burning down of the Ghetto, we still found the dead bodies lying around and saw many hundred SS men searching the dead for valuables and removing their gold-teeth. In the bunkers of the houses we still found Jews living. But since, by the clearing action the bunkers were then in danger of being covered by the debris, these Jews emerged from their holes and were shot immediately by the SS. We succeeded to provide some Jews with prisoner-uniforms. They told us that some Jews had food supplies in their bunkers. Others had some brought to them at night by Poles, but against heavy payment; and when the Jews had no more money or valuables these Poles betrayed them to the SS.

The Commander, Hauptsturmführer Herbeth, negotiated with me conceding that the Jews need not work if they collect for him money. That was done. The other SS, too, approached me for the same purpose.

In December, 1943 a typhus epidemic broke out in the camp. Berlin was informed and ordered the liquidation of the camp as soon as the epidemic reached a certain percentage. The Camp Commandant Herbeth, his deputy Untersturmführer Hertl and the SS doctor Dr. Jobst conferred how to arrange the murder of the Jews. Hertl declared he had experience in such matters. Once he had already shot in a single night 15000 Jews. The German Aryan prisoners were already removed from the camp to another building, and all preparations for the liquidation of the Jews were in full swing. I approached the camp-senior Walter Warziniak and offered to him and to the Commandant money and valuables. Warziniak accepted money for the Commandant and Dr. Jobst only but for him I would have to testify, if we survived Hitler, that he saved 2000 Jews. On this basis the deal was made.

When at the end of 1944 the camp command thought the Bar-revolt would break out soon, they feared the Jews could join it, and decided to liquidate the camp. The commandant secured for the murder the active cooperation of the German Aryan prisoners as well. Machine guns were fixed around the camp. I had to leave the orderly room, though being the chief clerk, but the other Aryan clerks were called to a serious conference. I heard that on Monday morning all Jews were to be shot. We decided to defend ourselves and a group of 200 Jews was formed who had to storm the Camp exit. The Camp Command suspected our preparations and asked from the Police Commander of Warsaw reinforcements. The Commander of the Police appeared himself in the Camp and claimed that a battle in the camp, in the heart of Warsaw, could lead to an earlier outbreak of the imminent Polish revolt. He, therefore, cancelled the machine-gunning but ordered the transport of all prisoners, by foot, to Dachau. The transport started on 28th of July, 1944.

At that time there were in the sick-quarters 248 Jews. They were shot by a SS detachment commanded by SS Oberscharführer Franz Mielenz. I saw him throw a grenade into the quarter.

The march from Warsaw to Dachau was commanded by Hauptscharführer Kramer who let us have neither food nor water. So at Dachau arrived 2000, at least, less than started the march. Kramer had the exhausted beings shot.

APPENDIX "A"

The Camp Commandant  
Concentration Camp,  
AUSCHWITZ

October 19th, 1942

FILE FIGURES

To the

Ant D. II.

Oranienburg

AGE CATEGORIES OF THE "SPECIALLY TREATED" JEWS  
during the week 12.10 to 18.10.1942.

Total figure	-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-
54.287	6.285	8.975	6.894	8.764	8.759	7.206	7.118	286
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

THE CAMP COMMANDANT.

I would like to remark that the total figure of 54,287 is absolutely correct, for I remember this figure well and I shall never in my life forget it.

The figures appertaining to the ages are approximate.

APPENDIX "B" ...

APPENDIX "B"

The Camp Commandant  
Concentration Camp  
AUSCHWITZ

October 16th, 1942.

AGE CATEGORIES OF DECEASED PRISONERS  
during the week 12.10.42. to 18.10.42.

Kind of Prisoners	Total	-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-
In Protective Custody	2.185	306	388	422	445	510	114
Professional Criminals	4	-	-	-	4	-	-
Foreign Civil Labourers	882	186	175	162	197	162	-
Clergymen	14	-	-	-	5	7	-
J E W S	13.845	3166	4984	3340	2355	-	-
Prisoners of War	2.144	195	944	186	19	-	-
Asocial Elements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bible Researchers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Homosexuelles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
para 176 (Abortus)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gipsies	17	-	8	2	7	-	-
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>19.091</b>	<b>3.853</b>	<b>6.499</b>	<b>4.912</b>	<b>3.032</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>114</b>

THE CAMP COMMANDANT.

The Total figures are absolutely right, the age categories are approximate.