

Gas Chamber Controversy

Forty-Six Important Unanswered Questions Regarding the Nazi Gas Chambers

By David Cole

FOREWORD

Professor Deborah Lipstadt, author of *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*, is the leading voice on college campuses and in the media arguing against intellectual freedom with regard to the holocaust controversy. She is passionate -- well, obsessive -- about not wanting to exchange views with revisionists.

"[A]t times," she writes, "I have felt compelled to prove something I knew to be true. I had constantly to avoid being inadvertently sucked into a debate that is no debate and an argument that is no argument." She adds that revisionism is "totally irrational . . . not responsive to logic" and that "evidence plays no role" in revisionist research.

I'm going to go out on a limb here. I know that Deborah Lipstadt and hundreds of other trained scholars with access to the relevant archives in Europe and the old Soviet Union have studied the Nazi gas chambers for half a century and know everything there is to know about them. Despite this universally accepted fact, I am presenting here a few questions about the notorious homicidal gassing chambers that are being raised by a young scholar named David Cole.

David Cole traveled to Europe twice to make on-site inspections of the still extant "gas chambers." The lady who financed each of these little expeditions wanted me to go with Cole to direct the project. I thought that would be a nifty idea. I'd never been to Europe and here was my chance. But Cole kept telling me he could handle it on his own. After awhile I got the message. He didn't want me to go. In the end, each time he went alone, or rather he and a camera woman. I think he was right. He didn't need direction from me. He handled his responsibilities very well on his own.

When you read David Cole's 46 unanswered questions about the Nazi gas chambers you may feel yourself hard-pressed -- despite what Deborah Lipstadt would have you believe -- to find them totally irrational, not responsive to logic, or that evidence plays no role in their design. Of course, you are probably not the towering intellectual that

Deborah Lipstadt is, so if you find a few or perhaps more than a few of the 46 questions disturbing in their logic and rationality, precisely because they are based on the physical evidence commonly used to identify the "gas chambers," why not ring up Professor Lipstadt at Emory University and ask her for the correct answers to these interesting puzzles?

Then pass her answers on to me. I'll run them by David Cole and see what he has to say about them. Maybe we'll be able to post Lipstadt's criticisms of the 46 Questions here, along with David's response to her criticisms. In the academy they call this process peer review. Ms. Lipstadt would probably point out to you that David Cole is not part of the "academy." Let's not call it peer review then. Let's just call it talking it over. Tell her you have 46 questions about the German gassing chambers and you would like to talk them over with her.

Bradley R. Smith
9 October 1995

The Zyklon-B Issue

AT THE FORMER concentration camps of Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau, we find the following scenario: The buildings which used to serve as the camp delousing facilities still have extremely high traces of the gas Zyklon B, which was used in these buildings to disinfest clothing, mattresses, etc. Also, there is heavy blue staining on the walls both inside the delousing chambers, **INSIDE** the hallways between the delousing chambers, and **OUTSIDE** the building, on the **EXTERIOR WALLS** of the delousing facilities.

However, the interiors of the Krema 1 gas chamber (Auschwitz Main Camp) and the Krema 2 and 3 gas chambers (Auschwitz-Birkenau), where hundreds of thousands if not millions of people are said to have been gassed, show only minute traces of Zyklon B and no blue staining.

Also, the Auschwitz camp barracks and offices, which were fumigated with the Zyklon B from time to time, show similarly minute traces of the gas, and no blue staining.

(1) What explanation can there be for the low levels of traces, and absence of blue staining, in the homicidal gas chambers?

(2) If one suggests that the Zyklon traces in the homicidal gas chambers have been "weathered away", how can one explain the traces and staining on the **OUTSIDE** of the delousing complexes...traces which have **NOT** been weathered away after fifty years?

(3) It has been suggested that the amount of Zyklon B needed to kill people, even cumulative millions of people, would not leave traces as strong as the amount needed to kill lice in the delousing chambers. But when we factor in the Zyklon B traces still existing in the camp barracks and offices, we see that infrequent gassings will still leave **SOME** traces. Thus, we have the traces in the camp offices and barracks, which reveal what levels of traces would remain, fifty years after the fact, in rooms which were gassed infrequently.

Then we have the delousing chambers, which reveal what levels of traces would remain, fifty years after the fact, in rooms which were gassed frequently. Can it not be

expected that the levels of traces in the homicidal gas chambers, while perhaps not being as high as those in the delousing rooms, would AT LEAST be substantially higher than the traces in the buildings which were only fumigated infrequently? Yet the traces in Kremas 1, 2 and 3 are not markedly higher than the office and barracks traces. Does this not suggest that the traces which DO exist in Kremas 1, 2 and 3 come from the same fumigation routine that all the other buildings went through?

(4) Once one has fashioned an explanation for the minute traces and no blue staining in Kremas 1, 2 and 3 at Auschwitz, how does one THEN explain the HIGH levels of Zyklon B traces and DEEP, FLOOR-TO-CEILING blue staining in three of the four Majdanek gas chambers? Far fewer people are said to have been killed at Majdanek than at Auschwitz. The four Majdanek gas chambers would never have had to handle the workload of Kremas 1,2 and 3. Yet whereas Kremas 1,2 and 3 have only minute traces and no blue staining, three of the four Majdanek gas chambers have heavy traces and deep blue staining. How could gassing a GREATER amount of people (at Auschwitz) leave minute traces and no blue staining, yet gassing a much SMALLER amount (at Majdanek) leave heavy traces and deep blue staining?

(5) The gas chambers at the Majdanek camp not only have heavy Zyklon B blue stains on the INSIDE, but also on the OUTSIDE walls, as well. What could account for this? The delousing facilities at Birkenau have heavy blue staining on their outside walls, staining which is said to come from the mattresses which were propped up against the outside walls and beaten after delousing (to rid them of Zyklon B residue). Do the heavy blue stains on the outside walls of the Majdanek gas chambers therefore suggest that these rooms were used as delousing facilities? Isn't the building which contains the gas chambers labeled the "Bath and Disinfection" complex? If, as with Auschwitz, it is said that gassing people wouldn't leave blue stains on the INSIDE walls of a homicidal gas chamber, how then, at Majdanek, could gassing people leave heavy blue stains not only on the INSIDE walls but also on the OUTSIDE ones as well?

(6) To sum up the Zyklon B issue, we can take an overview of the Nazi gas chambers and their respective states RE Zyklon B traces:

Krema 1 (Auschwitz Main Camp): Minute traces, no blue staining

Krema 2 (Auschwitz-Birkenau): Minute traces, no blue staining

Krema 3 (Auschwitz-Birkenau): Minute traces, no blue staining.

Majdanek gas chambers 1, 3 and 4: Heavy traces, heavy blue staining (on inside and outside walls).

Dachau gas chamber: No traces, no blue staining.

Mauthausen gas chamber: No traces, no blue staining.

The revisionist explanation for the above is:

Kremas 1, 2 and 3 were not used as gas chambers; -- the only Zyklon B they saw was from the routine camp fumigations.

Majdanek rooms 1, 3 and 4 were delousing rooms, like the ones at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The Dachau gas chamber was a shower.

The Mauthausen gas chamber was a shower

What theory can be offered which explains the wildly divergent states of the gas chambers re Zyklon B traces, while still supporting the concept of mass homicidal gassings at these camps?

Unanswered Questions Regarding the Physical Evidence at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp (Poland)

(7) Why was the area between Kremas 2 and 3, the area where thousands of people were marched daily to their deaths, left completely unfenced? The ditches which run the length of the camp perimeter would make a person invisible both to ground fire AND fire from the guard tower. Why would the Nazis risk an attempted escape, especially considering the fact that many inmates were gassed after they had been in the camp for a while, and knew what their fate would be if marched into either of those buildings? Doesn't the Auschwitz State Museum claim that the inmates would often "riot" as they were being marched toward Kremas 2 and 3?

(8) Why were Kremas 2 and 3 not hidden in any way from the view of the inmates? Isn't it claimed at the Auschwitz State Museum that gassings were stopped at Krema 1 (Auschwitz Main Camp) and moved to Birkenau because the inmates were starting to get an idea of the homicidal purpose of Krema 1? Why then were Kremas 2 and 3 put in plain sight of all sectors of the Birkenau camp, with no camouflage of any kind? Wouldn't this just create hundreds of thousands of "eyewitnesses", with everyone in the camp becoming well aware of the exterminations (and with many of these inmates later transferred to other camps in other parts of Europe to "spread the word" about the gassing program)? How could this profit the Nazis?

(9) It is claimed that there were four holes on the roofs of Kremas 2 and 3, which served as Zyklon B induction holes. The best piece of evidence that these holes ever existed is found in the U.S. aerial photos taken of Auschwitz during the war. Is there any discrepancy between the size of these holes as depicted in the U.S. aerial photos, and the size of the holes as depicted on the model of the Krema 2 gas chamber (on display at the Auschwitz State Museum and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum), the size as theorized by Jean-Claude Pressac in his book "Auschwitz; Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers", the size as depicted in the movie "Triumph of the Spirit" (which recreated a gassing at Krema 2), and the size as described over the decades by eyewitnesses? Indeed, can it be said that the holes as depicted in the aerial photos are ridiculously large...larger than what would have been needed for pouring in a can of Zyklon B gas?

(10) Why are the four holes not present today in the roof slab of Krema 2? The roof slab, though collapsed, is intact and both the top and underside of the roof are still visible. There are two crudely chiseled holes at opposite ends of the roof slab (one is more like a huge crack than a hole), but the other two holes are non-existent, and the underside of the roof, with the two-by-fours lining the ceiling still visible, shows no sign of two holes having ever been present. There are also no traces of the two holes on the top of the roof. How can the absence of the two holes, and any traces of the two holes, be explained?

(11) What circumstances would produce the Krema 2 roof slab as we now see it, with

two holes visible and the other two non-existent? If the Nazis attempted to erase the traces of the roof holes, why did they stop after two? Why would they expend much effort to erase all traces of two of the roof holes, then not make any effort to erase the two which survived the demolition?

(12) Could the still existing roof holes have been added after the liberation, by the Soviets or Poles? Doesn't Pressac admit that these two holes don't correspond with the positions of the holes in the aerial photos (Pressac says that this might be because the roof "shifted" during demolition, but even if the roof "shifted", that wouldn't account for why these holes, which were supposed to run in a straight line down the middle of the roof, have changed their positions, and are no longer in a straight line down the middle of the intact roof slab)? These holes are in incredibly bad condition; their edges are consistently rough, with not an inch of smoothness left. And they are no longer circular. They look like someone took a jack-hammer and roughly hammered through the roof slab. It is explained by Auschwitz State Museum officials that the demolition of the roof is what accounts for the awful condition of the holes (that is, they USED to be round and smooth until the demolition).

But if one observes the wreckage of the "undressing room" roof slab, which was similarly destroyed and is now in even worse shape than the gas chamber roof slab, one sees the remains of the undressing room front ventilation hole, which is still round and smooth even after the demolition and fifty years of laying around as rubble. Why did the undressing room roof hole survive intact, while the two still existing gas chamber roof holes emerged from the demolition without even the slightest trace that they had once been round and smooth? If we consider that the two still existing gas chamber roof holes don't correspond with their supposed position on the roof, can we theorize that MAYBE these two holes were chiseled in after the liberation? It is now admitted by the Auschwitz State Museum that the Soviets, after liberation, drilled four "Zyklon B induction holes" in the roof of Krema 1 (Auschwitz Main Camp). One needn't assume bad faith on the part of the Soviets (they might have honestly believed that they were "restoring" the roof to the state in which it had once been), but this act clearly establishes that the Soviets DID in fact drill post-liberation "Zyklon B induction holes" in roofs that, at that time, had none. Is it possible that this accounts for the two sloppy "Zyklon B induction holes" in the roof slab of the Krema 2?

(13) It is said that the Nazis destroyed Kremas 2 and 3 in order to hide the proofs of their gas chambers. But what "proof" of gassings would have been provided by Krema 2 if Krema 2 had not been dynamited? There are no heavy Zyklon B traces or blue stains on the walls, and great care was obviously taken to remove even the slightest trace of two of the Zyklon B induction holes. The Krema 2 gas chamber would have resembled an ordinary morgue. Was the destruction of Krema 2 an attempt to hide the evidence of a gas chamber, or simply the destruction of a cremation facility in the face of the advancing Soviets? Were cremation facilities at other camps, camps that were never claimed to have gas chambers, also destroyed?

(14) If one is to believe that four Zyklon B induction holes were at one time in the roof slab of Krema 2, it must be assumed that the Nazis went through great pains to meticulously hide any traces of at least two of those holes. Yet we are told that when the Soviets, after liberation, "reopened" the Zyklon B induction holes in the Krema 1 gas chamber state (at the time of liberation, it was being used as an air-raid shelter), they know exactly where to "reopen" the four holes because the traces where these holes had been were STILL VISIBLE. The idea that the Zyklon B induction hole traces were still visible is supported by the Auschwitz State Museum officials, and by author Jean-Claude Pressac. Why didn't the Nazis attempt to "cover-up" THOSE holes, especially keeping in mind that the Krema 1 gas chamber had been abandoned as a gas chamber AT LEAST a year before liberation, giving the Nazis more than enough time to erase the traces.

The Nazis were apparently able to do an incredibly good job of erasing the hole

traces in the Krema 2 roof, even though time was short (the Nazis knew the Soviets were advancing, and they were busy making preparations to abandon the camp), yet we are told that they did NOT attempt to likewise cover up the hole traces in the Krema 1 roof slab, even though they had at least a year to do so. Why would the Nazis do such a fastidiously good job of hiding the existence of Zyklon B induction holes in a roof that they were then going to dynamite (Krema 2), yet allow the hole traces to remain in a roof that was left intact for the advancing Soviets (Krema 1)? Isn't that backwards?

Unanswered Questions Regarding the Physical Evidence at the Mauthausen Concentration Camp (Austria)

(15) The gas chamber at concentration camp Mauthausen (in Austria) has no locks on the doors, and no holes or fittings where locks may once have been. The doors can be opened from inside or outside. How could human beings have been gassed in this room?

(16) The peepholes in the two Mauthausen gas chamber doors have no hemispherical metal grid covering the glass, as would have been necessary to prevent the victims from knocking out the glass and causing a gas leak. There are no holes or fittings where a grid might once have been. Doesn't Pressac write extensively about the need for such hemispherical grids? Doesn't Pressac recount survivor testimony regarding the need for such grids during a homicidal gassing? With no grid, what stopped the inmates from knocking out the glass, using either their hands or the ample shower piping in the chamber?

(17) Why are there no Zyklon B traces, or blue stains, in this chamber?

(18) The hole in the ceiling of this chamber, through which the Zyklon B crystals were supposedly poured, is small enough to be blocked by the inmates hands, and the ceiling is low enough for them to block the hole. How could the Zyklon B be effectively poured in?

(19) There is a large drain in the floor of this room. There are no holes or fittings where a cover for this drain might have been attached. What would stop the victims from brushing the Zyklon B crystals down this drain?

(20) Unlike the Dachau "fake shower room", which indeed has fake shower heads (which were directly screwed into the concrete to a maze of water pipes which run the length of the ceiling AND across the walls. Doesn't this room resemble a real shower room? How do we know it wasn't?

(21) What would have been the wisdom of construction a fake shower room with such a maze of pipes running across the ceiling and walls? Wouldn't the victims have torn these fixtures down? Doesn't Pressac write about how the victims in the Auschwitz gas chambers would destroy the electrical fixtures and anything else in the chamber? Wouldn't the pipes serve as perfect weapons with which to smash a hole through the unguarded peepholes (not to mention the doors have no locks)? And if the prisoners didn't wish to block the Zyklon B induction hole with their hands, the shower heads would've fit inside the hole nicely. Why wasn't the "fake shower heads screwed directly into the ceiling" method (a la Dachau) employed here?

(22) Considering the absence of Zyklon B traces, locks on the doors, peephole covers, and a viable means of pouring in the Zyklon B, and factoring in the floor drain and the

water pipes and genuine shower heads in this room, why can't we assume this was a genuine shower room?

Unanswered Questions Regarding the Physical Evidence at the Dachau Concentration Camp (Germany)

(23) The method of Zyklon B induction for the Dachau gas chamber is claimed to be via two chutes carved through one of the walls, through which the Zyklon B would be poured. What would have stopped the victims from putting their backs against the mouths of these chutes, thus preventing the crystals from entering the room?

(24) If the crystals WERE able to enter the room, the two chutes are located just above two large drains in the floor. There are no holes or fittings where covers for these drains might have been. What would stop the crystals from falling down the drains?

(25) There is a mystery room (not open to the public but visible through several windows) adjoining the gas chamber room. This room appears to have water and steam pipes which appear to lead into the gas chamber. Was the gas chamber room actually a shower? What is the purpose of this "mystery room"? What can be gained by ignoring this room which, it stands to reason, must have had SOME purpose?

(26) It is often said that the Nazis tried to hide the evidence of their extermination program by speaking in code, and rarely speaking of the exterminations on the record. It is similarly held that, as it became clear that they were losing the war, the Nazis tried to destroy the proofs of their crimes (the destruction of the four Birkenau Kremas is said to have been part of this "cover-up"). How, then, does one explain the Dachau gas chamber? The obviously false shower heads are incontrovertible proof of the homicidal purpose of this room. It is impossible not explain away the fake shower heads/a homicidal gas chamber. Yet we are to believe that this gas chamber was NEVER USED. And we are also supposed to believe that the room in its present state is exactly as the U.S. Army found it when the camp was liberated. Now, the details of the liberation of Dachau are well known: Dachau was not taken in some surprise attack. The guards at Dachau knew that the Americans were on their way. Therefore, we are asked to believe that the Nazis, KNOWING the camp would be surrendered, left the gas chamber room (which was not even being USED as a gas chamber) in a state which unashamedly points to its homicidal purpose. Why were the fake shower heads not removed? *

Why was there no attempt at a "cover-up," like at Auschwitz? Unlike the Auschwitz gas chambers, THIS one was not even in use! What good was an unused room which only served to scream to the world "the Nazis are gassing the Jews"? Why would the Nazis, who were NOT using the "gas chamber" to kill people, leave it in this blatantly homicidal state, especially as the Americans drew closer? Keep in mind that, with the fake shower heads, this room was also impossible to us as a SHOWER. Therefore, this room served NO PURPOSE: it wasn't used as a gas chamber, and couldn't be used as a shower. We are asked to accept that the Nazis kept a large, USELESS room in one of the more important buildings in the Dachau camp (the "gas chamber" is located in the building which houses the Zyklon B clothing fumigation cubicles) and that this room remained UNUSED for years but was never stripped of the fake shower heads which pointed irrefutably to the Nazi's murderous intentions.

Surely, understanding the great pains the Nazis took to keep their gassing/extermination plans a secret, and the great pains they supposedly took at OTHER camps to "hide their crimes" once the Allies were advancing (i.e. the destruction of Kremas 2 through 5 at Auschwitz), we can expect that they would have performed the very simple task of removing the fake shower heads (and perhaps

plastering over the marks where the shower heads had been). Why didn't the Nazis do this?

* There might be a simple answer to the Dachau shower head issue. The height of the ceiling in the "Dachau gas chamber" is presently 7.6 feet. However, in Document L-159, No. 47 of the 79th Congress, 1st Session (Exhibit NO. USA-222; IMT, XXXVII, p. 621), which details the U.S. Army's investigation of the Dachau camp after liberation, the ceiling of this room is measured at 10 feet high. The fake shower heads which exist today embedded in the 7.6 foot high ceiling are made of sheet metal. Document No. 47 describes the 10 foot high ceiling as having "brass fixtures", which might very well have been genuine shower heads and pipes but which, in any event, are long absent from the ceiling of this room. Basically, sometime between the liberation of Dachau, and the media blitz regarding the "Dachau gas chamber", a 10 foot high ceiling with brass fixtures became a 7.6 foot high ceiling with cone-shaped sheet metal fake shower heads. How? I think we can take a guess!

Remember that the record of the U.S. Army (and the U.S. government, for that matter) is not very good when it comes to being honest about Dachau. If we are to assume that the Army created a fraudulent "gas chamber", it helps to understand that there is already proof that the Army was less than honest when presenting Dachau to the world. Most notable in this respect is the photographic sleight-of-hand which is still employed today (especially at the Weisenthal Center's high-tech "Museum of Tolerance" here in L.A.) where a photo of a door to one of the Dachau ZYKLON B FUMIGATION CUBICLES, complete with poisonous gas warning, skull and crossbones, and gassing schedule, is shown (often with a soldier standing in front) along with the caption that this is the door to the Dachau "HOMICIDAL" gas chamber (thus giving the impression that Zyklon B gas was used in the alleged homicidal gas chamber). This is pure fraud, and not the kind of fraud that the Army could have perpetrated "by accident". In pictures released by the Army, the doors to the small fumigation cubicles were portrayed as the doors to the alleged homicidal gas chamber...and this is something that doesn't happen by accident. For people like my mother and her family, Jews living in the U.S. during the forties, it's the Dachau gas chamber propaganda that they most clearly remember as their first exposure to the concept of homicidal gas chambers.

Unanswered Questions Regarding the Physical Evidence at the Majdanek Concentration Camp (Poland)

(27) Gas chamber 1 has two doors, both of which open INTO the gas chamber room. How can a homicidal gas chamber have two doors which open IN? Wouldn't the bodies be pressed up against the doors, as described numerous times by eyewitnesses?

(28) The main door into the gas chamber 1 has no locks. It can be opened from either the inside or the outside. There are no holes or fittings where a lock might have been. What stopped the inmates from opening this door?

(29) Gas chamber 1 has a plate glass window in it. There are no holes or fittings around the window where bars or any other kind of cover might once have been. Since

the plaster around the window is covered with blue stains, we know that it is the plaster that existed during the time Zyklon B gas was used in this room. If there WERE bars or any other type of cover attached to this window, why are there no traces? What would have stopped the inmates from trying to climb out the window, or breaking the window and causing a gas leak?

(30) There is a room INSIDE gas chamber 1. Why would there be a separate room INSIDE a gas chamber? Doesn't this room indicate that gas chamber 1 was used for something OTHER than killing people?

(31) Gas chambers 2 and 3 are designed backwards. Chamber 2 has a Zyklon B induction hole in the ceiling, but no Zyklon B traces or blue stains. Chamber 3 has heavy, floor-to-ceiling Zyklon B traces and blue stains, but no Zyklon B induction hole. And, like the roof of Krema 2 at Auschwitz, the ceiling shows no sign of a hole having ever been there. Why would chamber 2 have a Zyklon B induction hole and no traces, and chamber 3 plenty of traces but no hole?

(32) The ceilings in chambers 2 and 4 are low enough so that the Zyklon B induction holes could have been blocked by the victims. What would have stopped the inmates from blocking the holes?

(33) The doors to chambers 2,3 and 4 are built to latch from the outside AND the inside. The latches can be opened from either side. Does this suggest that the rooms were used for something other than killing people?

(34) Getting back to the issue of hemispherical grids covering the peepholes, it is said that the point of these grids was to prevent the inmates from breaking the glass of the peepholes and causing a gas leak. Yet the hemispherical grids attached to the peepholes on the doors of chambers 2, 3 and 4 are attached on the OUTSIDE of the doors. These grids wouldn't prevent someone INSIDE the room from breaking the glass...but they WOULD prevent someone OUTSIDE the room from doing so. Why are the grids not on the inside? Does this contradict with the statements by Pressac and the eyewitnesses regarding the need for grids in a homicidal gas chamber?

(35) The Majdanek camp is built on a hill. At the top of the hill is the camp crematorium. At the opposite end of the camp, at the bottom of the hill, is the "Bath and Disinfection" complex, which houses the gas chambers. From the Nazi's point of view, what was the wisdom in putting the gas chambers at the opposite end of the camp from the ovens, and at the bottom of the hill (after each gassing, the dead bodies would have to have been dragged up the hill, the length of the entire camp, to the ovens)?

(36) As the Nazis were preparing to abandon the Majdanek camp, they destroyed the crematorium building. Why were the gas chambers not similarly destroyed? Why would the Nazis leave their weapons of mass murder intact for the world to see? How hard would it have been for the Nazis to destroy the gas chambers, just like they did the crematorium building? At least, shouldn't the Nazis have filled in the Zyklon B induction holes, which serve as direct proofs of homicidal gassings? Either way, the destruction of the crematorium is clear proof that the Nazis had both the time and the ability to demolish buildings in the camp if they wanted to. Why were the gas chambers not demolished?

(37) In his book "Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers", Jean-Claude Pressac publishes a photo of the Majdanek gas chambers, with the caption "Photograph taken at the Majdanek concentration camp in June 1979, showing one of the disinfestation gas chambers thought to be a homicidal gas chamber." On page 555, he also has this to say about the Majdanek gas chambers: "I am sorry to say,

and I am not the only one in the West, that the Majdanek homicidal and/or delousing gas chambers are still waiting for a true historian, which is mildly upsetting in view of the fact that the camp fell into the hands of the Russians intact in 1944." Do these comments suggest that the gas chambers at Majdanek may in fact have been disinfestation gas chambers? At least, don't these comments suggest that there has not yet been a thorough investigation into the purpose of these rooms? **

(38) To sum up the Majdanek gas chamber issue: If we take Pressac's comments and then factor in the doors that don't lock, the doors that open INTO the gas chamber, the doors with latches that can be manipulated from both the outside AND the inside, the window in gas chamber 1, the room inside gas chamber 1, the lack of any Zyklon B induction hole in gas chamber 3, the lack of any Zyklon B traces in gas chamber 2 (which DOES have a "Zyklon B induction hole"), the heavy blue stains on the OUTSIDE of the building, and the location of the building, at the bottom of a hill, at the opposite end of the camp from the crematorium, is it reasonable to suggest that these rooms were delousing chambers?

** In what can only be considered an unfortunate example of how major disputes between Holocaust historians are shielded from the public, the same room Pressac describes in his book as a "disinfestation gas chamber" is featured in the book "The World Must Know," the official book of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., written by Museum director Dr. Michael Berenbaum. In that book, Berenbaum describes the room as a HOMICIDAL gas chamber and, what's more, a CASTING of this room was made for display AT THE MUSEUM, as PROOF of the homicidal gas chambers! Thus, in both Berenbaum's book AND in the Museum itself, the ONLY material proof given of homicidal gassings is THIS ROOM, a room Pressac staunchly believes to be a disinfestation gas chamber (in fact, in his Auschwitz book, Pressac actually RIDICULES those who say that this Majdanek room is proof of homicidal gassings, and criticizes everyone from the man who prosecuted Faurisson in France to the Majdanek State Museum personnel for perpetuating a fraud).

But does anyone give a damn that the general public, all the millions, might be receiving fraudulent information? Some might suggest that disputes such as these should be kept private so as not to shake the public's confidence in Holocaust history, or in the Holocaust historians. But don't you think we have a RESPONSIBILITY not to knowingly feed the public falsehoods or unproven claims disguised as unquestioned facts? Don't you think we have a responsibility to be honest about our research? If not, what makes us any different from the "historians" of the Soviet Union, or Hitler's Germany, who knowingly tailored their research to produce a politically expedient conclusion? When the ends begin justifying the means, watch integrity go flying out the window.

As bad as the public misinformation about Majdanek is, the Stalin-esque purging of Pressac's "Auschwitz; Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers" from the official record is worse. This master-work of historiography, once loudly heralded in the press (see enclosed clippings), is NOW nowhere to be found when references to Pressac are made. A recent article in "Publishers Weekly," detailing a forthcoming U.S. Holocaust Museum book containing 29 original essays from Holocaust scholars including Berenbaum and Pressac, not only neglects to mention Pressac's gas chamber book, but seems to suggest that Pressac's conversion from revisionist to gas chamber believer came only recently, as he was researching his just-published "slim volume" about

the Auschwitz crematorium. The entire period of the 1980's, which Pressac spent researching his gas chamber book after his "conversion", is omitted.

Yet scholars around the world continue to use Pressac's gas chamber book (if they're lucky enough to have one of the few copies), mainly because, even if one disagrees with Pressac's conclusions, his book is STILL the best (and the only) single source for the blueprints, construction slips, alteration plans, and inter-office communiques regarding the Auschwitz "gas chambers". Neither side in this debate agrees entirely with Pressac...but for the gas chamber supporters, his book is an embarrassment because it IS so thorough. It is the most thorough work yet produced about the gas chambers, yet Pressac cannot find that elusive objective proof of gassings. So now, apparently, the historians have just decided to pretend the book doesn't exist. I've always referred to the Pressac gas chamber book as the most popular book that never existed!

Four Unanswered Questions About Stutthof

When preparing the original 38 questions, I didn't bother with the tiny Stutthof "gas chamber" because so few people take it seriously anymore. Stutthof was the camp where the Nazis supposedly made the "human soap.". When the soap story was dropped, so was much of the testimony about the Stutthof "gas chamber." However, recently an NBC prime-time news show, "The Crusaders," decided to revive this rarely mentioned "homicidal gas chamber," producing a segment about Stutthof that played up the existence of an intact gas chamber at the camp. This segment of "The Crusaders" has now been adopted as part of California's public school Holocaust-education curriculum. Therefore, I thought a brief overview of, and a few questions about, the Stutthof "gas chamber" were in order

Brief Overview: The Stutthof concentration camp, located 35 km east of Gdansk, was designed for Polish civilians and designated as a "civilian internees camp." The Stutthof "gas chamber," a relatively small building (8 meters long, 3 meters wide, and 2.30 meters high) located next door to the camp crematorium (which was destroyed as the Nazis abandoned the camp, and has been rebuilt by the Poles) has walls soaked both inside and out with the tell-tale blue staining that comes from repeated Zyklon B usage. There is a stove and chimney outside, for heating the interior. Inside, a long clay heating conduit runs the length of one wall. This building was clearly a delousing gas chamber. The Zyklon granules would be placed on the heating conduit, and the stove would be fired up. The conduit would become hot, and the granules would release their gas. The two doors would then be opened for natural ventilation. This is an "old style" German Zyklon B delousing chamber, built before the more modern chambers, like the ones at Dachau, were designed (the newer, more energy efficient chambers came equipped with Zyklon evaporators, which would heat the granules on a kind of hot plate, and blow the gas onto the clothes, mattresses, etc. This was more energy efficient because it was a waste of fuel to heat an ENTIRE ROOM when it was only the ZYKLON GRANULES that needed to be warmed up. These Zyklon evaporators remain at Dachau today, in the delousing chambers of "Barrack X.").

The "evidence" of homicidal usage of the Stutthof gas chamber is a "Zyklon B induction hole" in the roof. We are told that the Zyklon would be poured in through the this hole on the heads of the unsuspecting victims. The roof of this chamber is

accessible only via ladder.

Let's pause to read what Pressac has to say about Stutthof:

"It is not known when this gas chamber FOR DELOUSING PRISONERS' EFFECTS (emphasis his) was installed. Its dimensions are close to the standard dimensions of those erected by BOOS or DEGESCH...From 22nd June to the beginning of November 1944, it was used as a HOMICIDAL gas chamber for groups of about 100 people, Zyklon B being poured in through a small opening of 15 cm diameter in the roof, a system apparently introduced on the advice of SS Lieutenant Colonel Rudolf Hoess, former commandant of Auschwitz-Birkenau and at that time head of Department D1 of the WVHA-SS (SS Economic Administration Head Office). While the history of this gas chamber is known from TESTIMONIES reported by Father Krzysztof Dunin-Wasowicz, there has been no scientific examination of the "murder weapon" since 1945, which means that we do not know how the chamber functioned as a delousing installation and are unable to provide material proof of its criminal use.

(Pressac cont.) The number of victims is estimated at one or two thousand. The visit (to Stutthof) did not greatly impress us." (Pressac; "Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers" pages 539-540)

The Stutthof Museum personnel agree with Pressac's claim that this was FIRST AND FOREMOST a delousing chamber, used as such for years, only LATER "converted" into a homicidal one.

Now, let's ask some questions, picking up from where we left off in the "38 Questions"

(39) The Stutthof "gas chamber" has a large floor drain right in the middle of the room, DIRECTLY BELOW the "Zyklon B induction hole." Any granules dropped through this hole would automatically go right down the drain. What's more, the floor of this room is DEPRESSED in the middle, where the drain is, so that any water or, in this case, Zyklon granules, would automatically roll into the drain. what would stop the Zyklon granules from going down the drain, since they were being poured into the room directly over this drain? And, if a few granules missed the drain, wouldn't they simply roll, or couldn't the inmates brush them, down the drain?

(40) The roof of this room is low enough so that a tall person could reach up and block the "Zyklon B induction hole." However, the thoughtful Nazis, by installing the heating conduit that runs the length of on wall, have made it possible for ANYONE, of whatever height, to stand on this conduit and block the hole. What would stop the inmates from blocking the "Zyklon B induction hole," especially since they would be EXPECTING foul play (this room was the official Stutthof delousing chamber, known as such by all the inmates. No Stutthof inmate would expect to be given a "shower" in this room, and indeed the Stutthof Museum makes no claims about such a deception (neither do the eyewitnesses)?

(41) Why was this building - a clear "proof" of Nazi crimes, what with its " Zyklon B induction hole," - not DESTROYED as the Nazis evacuated the camp? Amazingly, the crematorium RIGHT NEXT DOOR was blown up, and, in fact, one side of the gas chamber building was actually HIT by shrapnel from the exploding crematorium. Yet the gas chamber was allowed to remain intact, even though, as reported by the Stutthof survivor interviewed on the "Crusaders" TV show, at the end of the war the

Nazis were ordered to KILL EVERY INMATE at Stutthof, in order to erase any evidence of the gassings (by killing all the eyewitnesses). For some unknown reason, this order was never carried out, and the Stutthof inmates were evacuated west.

Why would the Nazis BLOW UP the crematorium, yet leave the "homicidal" gas chamber standing? Why would the Nazis decide to KILL EVERY INMATE in order to "cover up" their crimes, yet leave the PHYSICAL EVIDENCE of those crimes standing? Why wouldn't the Nazis AT LEAST cover up the "Zyklon B induction hole," which would serve as CLEAR AND INDISPUTABLE PROOF of homicidal usage (unless we dare to imagine that this hole was put in by the Soviets/Poles, as they ADMIT doing at the building the Nazis abandoned knowing it was soon to fall into Soviet hands. Considering the great pains that the Nazis went through to "cover up" the gassings elsewhere, how hard would it have been to dynamite THIS building along with the crematorium just a few yards away?

(42) Since personal testimony is all we have to go on regarding the homicidal usage of this chamber, and since much of this testimony also mentions the "human soap" - which has long been officially debunked - what evidence do we have that the testimony about the Stutthof homicidal gas chamber is any more reliable than the testimony about the human soap?

I could add one more question (but I won't), something about the fact that the Stutthof gas chamber is located in full view of all the inmates, inmates who were NOT destined for extermination, and not, to a great extent, Jewish. Strangely, the secrecy-obsessed Nazis also seemed obsessed with conducting their homicidal gassings in the most open, noticeable places possible...especially at the non-"extermination" camps (at Mauthausen, another non-extermination camp, the "gas chamber" is right in the middle of the inmate barracks), thus hoping, I suppose, to create tens or hundreds of thousands of "eyewitnesses" to something the Nazis would not even discuss privately in coded transmissions. Go figure.

The following four questions are based on personal meetings I had during my last trip to Europe in October of 1994. In Lublin, Poland, I met with Tomasz Kranz, Curator of the Majdanek State Museum. I spoke at length with Mr. Kranz, who has been Curator for ten years, in his office on the Majdanek concentration camp site. Two weeks later, in a suburb outside Paris, I met with Jean-Claude Pressac, the celebrated Holocaust author who has become perhaps the man most recognized with defending the gas chamber theory. I met with Mr. Pressac in his office, and got to spend roughly six hours discussing gas chambers, Holocaust history, the demands of publishing in the mainstream, and much more.

For the purpose of this list of questions, I have chosen four simple ones based on these meetings.

(43) Majdanek Curator Tomasz Kranz had to admit, after I raised the same questions I've raised in this list, that the biggest Majdanek "gas chamber," chamber #1, was not intended or used homicidally. Big revelation. With the doors, window, and everything else that precludes homicidal usage, this is a conclusion even a five year old child would come to. Although Kranz could offer no evidence for homicidal usage in the other three chambers, chamber #1 was the only one he was willing to completely jettison as a homicidal room. Pressac went further. He is only willing to even CONSIDER homicidal gassings in chamber #3. Of course, he has no evidence. What's more, he admits that the Soviets laid down fake "gas piping" in chamber #3 to give the room the appearance of a homicidal gas chamber. This is certainly in keeping with Soviet precedent regarding the mishandling and faking of important historical evidence. Pressac could offer no REAL evidence for gassings in this room. But my question is: Why does Curator Tomasz Kranz continue to allow this room to be represented to tourists and the world as a homicidal gas chamber, when he privately acknowledges it never was? If there is agreement that this room was never homicidally used, why continue to promote it as a death chamber? If the Majdanek

Curator and Europe's most well known Holocaust author express such uncertainty about homicidal usage of this and the other rooms, why are people like me who ask basic questions like these labeled as anti-Semitic irrational cranks? If, as Pressac believes, rooms 1,2 and 4 were not homicidal gas chambers, what evidence is there that anyone was killed in room 3?

(44) At Auschwitz Birkenau, the rooms in Kremas 4 and 5 that are supposed to have been used as homicidal gas chambers all had drains in the floor that led right into the camp sewage system. These floor drains can still be seen today. Since, in these "gas chambers," it is said that the Zyklon pellets were dumped in loose, what stopped the pellets from going down the drain or being kicked or brushed down by the victims? Pressac was aware of this problem. He has tried to prove that the Zyklon pellets would present no problem. He has tried to prove that the Zyklon pellets would present no danger in the camp sewer, since the water would (in his opinion; this is a debatable point) "neutralize" the poison so it wouldn't present a danger when going through Birkenau's large sewage treatment plants. But Pressac misses the point; the question of just how harmful the Zyklon would be in the sewer is SECONDARY to the point that if the Zyklon is IN the sewer that means it's NOT in the gas chamber doing the job the Nazis intended! If the victims can dump the Zyklon into the sewer, that means they themselves won't be gassed. How could these rooms have functioned as homicidal gas chambers?

(45) There is a large square manhole in the floor of the Krema 1 "gas chamber" at the Auschwitz Main Camp. The manhole has a concrete cover with a metal handle. It is possible for anybody of normal or even below-normal strength to lift off the lid, and the manhole is large enough for anyone of any size to climb down. What would stop the victims from climbing down the manhole to either escape the gas chamber via the sewer OR at least escape the gas? And even if escape wasn't possible, what would stop the victims from kicking or brushing the Zyklon B pellets down the manhole and closing the cover? There is something I should mention here, since several times I've talked about the possibility of the victims brushing the pellets down floor drains of in this, the worst case yet, a manhole. Zyklon B can kill a human being quite effectively when its gas is INHALED. It kills through the lungs. It doesn't kill through the skin (unless it is in contact with the skin for a very long period of time and in a very high concentration). Therefore, the pellets could easily be handled by victims in a gas chamber without posing any threat to the victims via absorption through the skin. In fact, a Zyklon mixture was frequently brushed directly onto people's arms and legs during disinfestation procedures at Auschwitz, and Zyklon was also used in a liquid solution to bathe people in for delousing. As for the Zyklon pellets giving off their gas, it should be remembered that Zyklon B begins giving off gas when warmed. The hotter it is, the quicker the evaporation.

Yet Kremas 1 (and 2 and 3) were not only UNHEATED but partially or completely UNDERGROUND! All three rooms were used or designed as morgues; they were MEANT to be cold all the time. It has never been explained just how the Zyklon was heated, especially in the freezing winter months. The best that the other side can do is say that the body temperatures of the victims warmed the rooms. But that would take time, and the "confession" of Auschwitz Commandant Hoess speaks of a very swift process - herd 'em in, drop down the gas, ventilate the room. No time mentioned to let the victims warm up the room. Zyklon pellets dropped down into a cold room, landing on the cold floor, would not only give off gas slowly, but would be safe to brush down a drain or manhole. What would stop the inmates from doing this? (For the record, there is a floor drain in the Krema 1 "gas chamber" AS WELL as a manhole...but with a manhole of that size, the drain becomes almost irrelevant!)

In 1992 I ran my manhole question past Dr. Franciszek Piper, Senior Curator of the Auschwitz State Museum, and he had no answer. When I ran it by Pressac, he thought I was trying to put one over on him; he didn't believe there WAS a manhole in Krema 1! I was floored that he had never seen it. We argued about this for some time until I

had to go through his files and find a picture of Krema 1 and POINT OUT the damn manhole. Now HE was floored. "Over the last ten years I've been to Krema 1 more times than I can possibly count," he said (in French, of course), " and I've never noticed the manhole!"

"The next time you go, Jean-Claude," I responded, "you should look down!" "Ah, that is the problem David," he said. "You look down while I look up." Well, for the record, I look up too. My aim is to notice things, to take these gas chambers seriously; to walk into these rooms and ask three questions:

"How is this gas chamber supposed to have worked?" "What would have happened if it worked that way?," "What evidence is there that it did?"

The mainstream historians gloss over the difficult questions. They have nothing to gain by challenging their own beliefs. As a result, all too often they don't pay attention to the crucial details of their own stories. They come up with their conclusion first, and then they only pay attention to the evidence that supports that conclusion. They don't look at ALL the evidence.

As a result, the mainstream Holocaust historians have only had to explain the problems and discrepancies in their story (like the absence of Zyklon B traces) after revisionists have pointed out these problems. Mainstream Holocaust historians have never tried to explain problems with the gas chamber story willingly; they've always had to be prodded into doing so. (This, by the way, is not a situation unique to Holocaust history. The value of a society where dissent is allowed to exist is that often times it is the existence of two or more opposing sides to an issue that prompts and encourages the search for the truth; each side critiques the other side mercilessly and, therefore, the public is made aware of possible flaws in ALL sides. If a school of thought is insulated from criticism, as Holocaust history is in all the countries where questioning the gas chambers in an illegal and punishable offense, that school of thought can remain unchecked for errors).

As for the manhole, apparently the other side has not yet been able to rationalize its presence in as supposedly homicidal gas chamber. I welcome their attempts. Maybe there's something I'M missing. It doesn't matter to me if one proceeds with the hypothesis that there were homicidal gas chambers, or with the hypothesis that there weren't. As long as we search in good faith for the facts. The only crime is to wish away the difficult questions, pretending they don't exist and slandering the people who do nothing more than ask them.

(46) Another thing I learned from Pressac is that he believes that the Krema 1 "gas chamber" had THREE "Zyklon B induction holes," running in a straight line in the ceiling. But the Auschwitz State Museum believes that there were FOUR holes, running in two lines of two holes. When the Poles and Soviets put holes in the Krema 1 roof after liberation, this is the version they installed; four holes in two lines. This is the version that can be seen today in Krema 1. But Pressac says they're wrong; it was THREE holes in a straight line. Who's right? Were there three holes or four? And how do we know that there were ever ANY holes? There are no holes present in any of the aerial photos, and there were no holes when the Soviets liberated the camp.

The important question is; HOW can such a debate (three holes or four?) among major Holocaust scholars exist in the first place? It is only because hard evidence for gassings at Auschwitz is so lacking that something like this can still be an issue fifty years later. Whatever the evidence for gassings at Krema 1, it is apparently not good ENOUGH evidence to provide a description of the gas chamber that all scholars can agree on. Now, it would be one thing if we had tons of SUPPLEMENTARY evidence (i.e. Zyklon B traces in the walls that were heavier than all the other rooms, evidence of people entering the building en masse and never coming out, a special ventilation system and heating equipment, or German coded transmissions or documents talking about gassings, etc.); then we could at least say "Well, we know there were gassings, we're just not sure about the design of the gas chamber." But there is no supplementary evidence. We have no description of the Krema 1 murder weapon, but

we ALSO have no evidence of any murders in Krema 1. Even the best prosecutor in the world would be hard pressed to get a conviction were this case to be tried in any standard American court.

All that we have are testimonies. And just a few. Yet Pressac spends much of his gas chamber book demolishing these testimonies as false. We have the testimony of camp Commandant Hoess, the man who SHOULD have been able to provide us with the best description of the Krema 1 gas chamber, but Pressac, Hilberg, Lipstadt, Chris Browning, and most other Holocaust scholars dismiss his account as unreliable, fabricated, or just plain false. So what's left? Pressac searches in vain for ANY hard evidence to reproduce in his chapter on Kremas 1, and ends up with nothing. As a result, this chapter is perhaps the most awkward in Pressac's book. Pressac begins the chapter by affirming his belief in homicidal gassings in this room, but then goes on to offer no evidence, and what's more he doubts the credibility of the testimonies, which are the only evidence he offers. One is left saying "Jean-Claude Pressac believes in Homicidal gassings in Krema 1...I'm just not sure why."

What I try to do is look at the evidence that calls gassings into question (the manhole, the floor drain, the lack of Zyklon B traces, the absence of documentary evidence, the lack of evidence in the aerial photos, the lack of ventilation, the fact that the room is extremely cold, etc. etc.) and weigh that against any evidence FOR gassings (a few testimonies which the experts themselves doubt). You can see how a debate over the design of this "gas chamber" can still be raging among mainstream historians; it is because of the lack of evidence.

And it is therefore legitimate to ask, "If you don't know whether there were three or four holes, how do you know that there were ANY holes?"

- David Cole

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