

JEWISH CENTRAL INFORMATION OFFICE
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Documents of Nazi Guilt

No. 4

From Germany to the Riga Ghetto
and the
Kaiserwald and Salaspilz Extermination Camps
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THREE LETTERS BY DEPORTEES

This is the fourth in a series of personal reports
received by the

JEWISH CENTRAL INFORMATION OFFICE
from eye-witnesses of
the persecution of Jews under Nazi rule.

Johanna Rosenthal,
Haessleholm,
Sweden

Haessleholm,
26 June, 1945

Dear Dr. S.,

I was so glad my request was granted so soon. On Saturday, at noon, I received your telegram, and already four hours later came a telegram from my husband. My joy was even greater when I received the addresses of the children at the same time. Thank God they are all well. I hope these lines will find you too in good health. I am feeling better every day, thank God. They are now testing a new medicine to fight the germs, and they hope it will work quicker. The doctors as well as the nurses and all the people of Sweden are really wonderful. And now, my dear Dr. S., I want to give you a short account of the last few years.

DEPARTURE

FROM

BERLIN

When we were ordered, two days before our evacuation by the Potsdam Gestapo, to make a list of our belongings, we were expressly told that there was no reason for worrying. On Thursday we were ordered to assemble at the Gestapo H.Q., next morning at 8 o'clock. Two officials then saw us to our homes. When we arrived we were told that we would have to give up our flats at once as a new home would be found for us in the East. Though allowed to pack, under guard, and take with us all necessities of life, we never saw any of them again. At 11 o'clock we were back at the Gestapo where they took all our money and papers. Then they put us in jail for two days. On Sunday, January 11, we were taken, in closed cars, to Berlin where we were to join a transport. Here we were searched again and even food was taken from us. We met all the inmates of the Old Age Home, Grosse Hamburger-Strasse, as well as hospital patients whom the Gestapo had dragged out of their beds. On Tuesday, January 13, we were dispatched to Riga, 1200 of us, in a packed, unheated train. Eating and drinking were the first things they taught us to do without, so we travelled for three days and three nights without a drop of any liquid, warm or cold.

ARRIVAL

IN

RIGA

In a temperature of minus forty we arrived at Riga in the afternoon of Friday, January 16. We were welcomed at the station with blows and howls from the German and Latvian S.S. All the luggage we had been allowed to keep, such as rucksacks or briefcases, had to be left behind. Those able to walk had to walk for four hours to reach our new home. Invalids, etc., were packed into cars but never arrived in the Ghetto. We found the Ghetto in an indescribable mess. At the beginning of December they had shot between 35 and 40,000 Latvian Jews there. Plates and pots full of food were still on the tables, showing how unexpectedly the massacre had come. 3800 Latvian men and 200 women remained; they were separated from our Ghetto by barbed wire. Our Ghetto contained about 10,000 Jews from all parts of Germany: from Cologne, Dusseldorf, Kassel, Hanover, Leipzig, Berlin, Vienna, Prague.

Ours was the first transport from Berlin. Two more followed within the next fortnight. These transports were even worse in that they were made up almost exclusively of old people, all crowded in cattle-trucks. Some of these people had gone mad on the way, or died. In the midst of this desperate plight, we had to set up some sort of a home for ourselves. Sleeping on

EXTERMINATION

BY

SUCCESSIVE

PURGES

the floor, two pieces of bread a day - that's how we managed to keep alive through months. We were split up into teams for work. Digging away the snow at a temperature of minus forty, men were forced to go into the forest to prepare new communal graves, etc. On February 5, at 9 a.m., S.S. turned up, scores of them. All people out of their homes - Roll-call in the street. Invalids and old people, even some people in their best years, were selected and taken away in closed lorries. We never heard of them again. Out of 4000 people 2500 remained. This purge affected only the groups from Berlin and Vienna. At the end of March and the beginning of April something similar happened in the Ghetto. Again there were many thousands less. Roll-calls lasting five or six hours, without any reason, at a temperature of minus thirty-one to thirty-six, were frequently repeated.

DEFYING

DEATH

THREATS

On March 27 I received a permanent job with the Wehrmacht. It was called "Armeebekleidungsamt 709" ("A.B.A. 709", for short). Despite hunger, frost and hard work, I managed to stand up to it. This saved my life. After only two weeks I was appointed foreman. I kept this post until the dissolution of the camp on September 27, 1944. Gradually we got used to the Ghetto. To keep alive, we exchanged for food anything we found in our homes that was not absolutely essential. The penalty for this was death, but it didn't matter to us how we would have to die. Actually many were shot or hanged. In order to deter us, we were led past the gallows when we came home in the evening, tired from work. Yet the barter went on.

"KAISERWALD"

CONCENTRATION

CAMP

In the summer of 1943 came the order that the Ghetto was to be dissolved. All Jews were to be housed in a concentration camp. A giant concentration camp, called "Kaiserwald", was set up in Riga. Here not only was the S.S. in command but the most dangerous war criminals decided upon life or death of the Jews. However, some Jews were still billeted in barracks in the town and its suburbs. Our A.B.A., while incorporated in the "Kaiserwald", billeted us in barracks on November 6, 1943. On November 2 another giant purge was staged in the Ghetto. 2260 men, women and children were herded into cattle-trucks to be transported to no one knew where. Rumours said - Auschwitz. On that day a great number of children were torn from their parents. About four weeks later yet another purge occurred, and then the Ghetto was finally dissolved.

TEARING

FAMILIES

ASUNDER

The few children who had been saved in the purges, were fetched by the Gestapo on April 22. Destination unknown. In the evening of June 28, everyone to be on parade, without luggage. An S.S. doctor selecting people. Whether ill or not, made no difference. Again destination unknown. On July 17 all Jews had their hair shaved off. Between three and four weeks later, at 6 a.m., another roll-call. Five hundred people were picked out to be transported to Stuthof, near Danzig. Whether in a night-shirt or without shoes, did not matter. Riga was slowly being evacuated. On September 25 a sudden roll-call after work. Sixty people (50 men and 10 young girls) remained, all others off to Stuthof. Only in the last minute came permission for 200 Jews to remain with the A.B.A. I was already standing by the lorry when the camp commandant said to me, "Mrs. Rosenthal, get off to the right". Thus I was saved. That evening, as at all other purges, many families were torn asunder. It was really extraordinary how well they managed to tear families asunder.

BACK TO
GERMAN
PRISONS

Two days later, just on Yom Kippur, our branch of the A.B.A. was moved to Libau. We went there by boat. The first few days we were forced to work day and night, but then it became uncomfortable even here. The Russians were coming nearer and nearer. There were air raids many times a day. Twice it was nearly all up with me. I was standing only about one yard away from the spot where the bomb fell. On October 22, when the first incident occurred, one woman died. Owing to the explosion I lost my hearing for a fortnight. It is still not quite alright, but unfortunately they can do nothing about it here at the moment as they are afraid the germs will infect the ear. Exactly two months later was the second incident, in which thirteen people died and four were trapped. By sheer lucky chance I was not standing next to my friend, so I remained alive, but she was killed. From Libau we were now to go on to Stuthof. No ship, however, was available; besides, our Hauptsharfuehrer had been fatally injured in the air raid of December 22. So, on February 19, our branch was ready to take us to Luebeck. On the way the officer in charge received a radio message that we were to be put ashore in Hamburg. Here we were received by the Gestapo who put us in the Fuhlbuettel prison.

SLAVE
LABOUR
CAMP
near
K I E L

On April 11 instructions came that we were to be sent to the labour camp near Kiel. After a march of 90 km. we arrived in that hell on April 15, more dead than alive. Fifty-six men had meanwhile been sent to the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen, near Hanover. Without getting time to recover we were now forced to go to work every day. Two hours there, two hours back, extremely hard quarry work. We had to get up at 4 a.m., and then to stand for hours while the roll was called, till we went to work at 7. Rain or no rain made no difference as far as roll-calls or work was concerned. At 6 p.m. we went back. We had supper: beetroots or swedes boiled in water. In the morning we had two thin slices of bread. There was hardly enough time before another roll-call was due. There was no water, so we could not have a wash. Anyone trying to get some water, was beaten with sticks. There were no palliasses, so we had to sleep on the beds without them. We had nothing to change into, so we did not bother to undress. We women had a blanket, the men had not. About 40 people were shot in this hell every day, after they had first been tortured.

SALASPILZ
CAMP

But thank God, we did not have to stay there long, because on May 1 we were rescued. A woman of 69 who had come through all the ordeals, including the march from Hamburg to Kiel, was shot dead five days before our liberation. I forgot to mention at the beginning that about 2000 men were sent to an extermination camp near Riga. This camp, Salaspilz as it was called, actually caused about 1000 deaths, as the result of very hard labour, no possibility of washing and starvation. Hanging or shooting was a daily occurrence. This camp existed for eight months. Those who ever came back from that camp, were half-dead.

Yours,

Hanna Rosenthal

Hermann Voosen,
Rosoege,
Harad,
Sweden

30 May, 1945

Dear L., family G., and friends,

It is wonderful, after 3 1/2 years of imprisonment and separation from the whole world, to be free again, to remember friends and acquaintances, and to be able to write to them. However, only a few of my friends have been left by the barbaric huns. All except the few lucky ones who reached safety in foreign countries were murdered. And with them those I loved most, my unforgettable mother and my beloved child. The wonderful kindness of the Almighty left me my wife, with whom, except for a few months of separation, I have shared all ordeals.

Together with a group of 86 Jewish women and girls and 63 Jewish men, the remnant of a group of 1400, who had been interned since November, 1943, I was rescued by the Swedish Red Cross from the Labour and Training Camp at Kiel-Russee on the 1st May, 1945. The following day, we stood on Swedish territory. These were the happiest days of my life. We were welcomed, treated and cared for like tender children. It seemed as if the kindness of the whole world was concentrated on us during our journey through Denmark, and in Malmoe, where we reached Swedish soil.

Now it will interest you to hear the tragedy of those who lived in GELSENKIRCHEN : At the beginning of January, 1942, the Gestapo told the Congregation that 400 Jews from Gelsenkirchen were to be evacuated to the East for labour service. We were allowed to take with us about 100 Pounds of luggage. There was also a rumour that suitable people would be permitted to settle out there. As a result, much more luggage was needed, as well as household utensils and tools. The Reichsbahn had to supply two goods-wagons at the cost of sacrificing two passenger carriages. The Gestapo helped and agreed with everything. In the congregation there began an all-out clearance sale and removal of furniture. A special transport service was organised to help with the packing. The luggage and furniture was brought to the Exhibition Hall. Large quantities of food, soap and many other things were, despite the rationing, procured with the agreement of the Gestapo. We had everything. The population was very sympathetic. Also, by agreement with the Gestapo, we packed Thora scrolls and devotional objects. On the 22nd January, 1942, those concerned were fetched from their homes by buses and taken to the Exhibition Hall. The people from Recklinghausen and Dorsten, led by Dr. Stern, also came to us. I was put in charge of the whole transport. This job was not very pleasant. The days till the 27th January, 1942, were spent on straw in the Exhibition Buildings. We were fed by the Nazi Welfare Organisation. Everything went well at first. Only one incident must be mentioned. An old spinster, slightly out of her mind (I forgot the name but she lived with Schettmars in the Moltkeplatz) cut the veins of her wrist. She was our first casualty. At 4 o'clock in the morning we were told to get ready. Through snow about 25 in. high, which is very unusual for Gelsenkirchen, we marched to the goods station carrying our heavy luggage.

OF 1400

ONLY

149 LEFT

FIRST

SUICIDE

CRAMMED

DEPORTATION

TRAIN

The old passenger coaches specially provided by the Reichsbahn for the occasion, partly with broken windows, could not normally accomodate the 500 people, certainly none of the luggage. We were simply pushed in. Men stood in the corridors. Everybody had to take someone else on his lap for the whole journey. At Dortmund the second half of the train was put on, with more Jews from Dortmund and surroundings, from Witten, Bochum, Herne, and a small party from Muenster. There were now 1,000 people in the train. The Dortmunders were headed by Mr. Elsbach.

On the way we suffered a lot from the cold and the lack of water; the lavatories froze. This was, however, only the beginning. At Lehrte the coach containing our food was taken off, the excuse being that an axle had become overheated. The police officer who accompanied our transport allowed me to make a telephone call to Tilsit to try and relieve this distress. As a result, the good Jews of Tilsit, headed by Mr. Altermum, brought hot drinks and food by sledge to the shunting station which was many miles away. We were permitted to give them a last message for our beloved ones who had remained behind; so they at least knew where we had gone.

On the way, on the 28th February, 1942, Mrs. Meier from Witten, died; she was already ill when she was put on the train. Two doctors from Dortmund went with our transport: Dr. Cohn, who was himself suffering from diabetes, and Dr. Gruenewald, who as a doctor had hitherto confined himself to writing on medical subjects. A nurse from Gelsenkirchen, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten, behaved splendidly. She was a qualified nurse and lived in the Schalkerstrasse.

Then one carriage had to be cleared because it had no windows at all. As a result the other carriages became even more crowded. One Froeling from Buer, who had gone mad, refused to leave the carriage. Next morning we discovered that he had jumped from the moving train.

On February 1st, 1942, the train reached the Skirotava Station at Riga. The S.S. gave us a hot reception. We received a hail of blows for no reason at all, but nevertheless we were glad to have firm ground under our feet again. Except for some frozen toes and feet everything had gone alright, in contrast to transports from Berlin and Vienna which had arrived before us with many casualties. Our luggage we had to throw on a heap; we never saw it again, not even the household goods, tools and devotional objects we had brought with us.

DISPOSING

of the

INFIRM

Mr. Wolff from Dortmund was summoned by the S.S. Before our departure from Dortmund he had had an incident with an officer of the Gestapo. He, Miss Goldbaum from Gelsenkirchen, who had a weak heart, Mr. Goldschmidt from Bochum whose feet were frozen, and a 12-year old boy, Rosenberg from Bochum, who also suffered from frozen feet, were taken away on a small sledge and presumably shot.

We who were left had to march 10 km into the Riga Ghetto. The transport from Gelsenkirchen/Dortmund was the last to arrive and with it the Ghetto was practically full. It contained 12,000 people. Now began a time of slave-labour, suffering, and sorrow. Purges, shootings and hangings were the rule. We hardly took any notice. Death was no longer unknown to us nor did we fear it any more. I myself organised our group together with Dr. Stern.

SALASPILZ

On May 4th, I was separated from my wife and child and sent to the Labour, or rather hunger and extermination camp at Salaspilz, near Riga. In Salaspilz, 897 of 2,000 men died of hunger, or were either shot or hanged within 6 months. The necessity of accomodating the growing number of Latvian political prisoners led to the clearing of the camp.

On July 4th, 1942, I unexpectedly held my wife and child in my arms again. After that I continued to go to work every day, including Sundays.

MY CHILD

DEPORTED

Meanwhile it was the middle of 1943. The front-line was breaking up; rumours began to circulate that the Ghetto was to be dissolved; the new concentration camp at Kaiserwald was built. It was filled with people from the Ghetto. Smaller transports went also to Esthonia. On November 2nd, 1943, the Ghetto was finally closed. All the invalids in the hospitals, some of whom had been operated upon only the day before, people who were unfit for work, people who could only do very little work, children, women, altogether 2,286 people without blankets or straw were herded into cattle trucks and, so they said, and so it very likely happened, were sent to Auschwitz. Among them was my child.

Those who remained were put into billets in Riga by military units. My wife and I came to the Armeebekleidungsamt 701. There we were treated relatively well. At least we were together. The front then drew nearer and nearer. The A.B.A. 701 packed up on September 27th, 1944, and moved to Libau. Before that happened there had again been a number of purges, especially concerning old people and invalids (broken bones, varicose veins, etc.), and transports to the concentration camp at Stutthof near Danzig took place. I saved my wife from that fate by hiding her for many hours on a window-sill behind the black-out curtain, till the transport had left. I still do not know where I took all my energy from. Everything I did was very dangerous. Everything turned out alright, however, owing to my efficiency at work which they valued.

17 DEATHS

AT LIBAU

The "Sanga", a new German transport ship, landed us in Libau on October 1st, 1944, after a very stormy passage. During the entire journey we had to stay in the front hatch of the ship. We remained in Libau till February 19th, 1945. These were bad months. We had to work day and night, without protection against air-raids and with insufficient food. When we left Libau we mourned the death of 17 comrades, male and female. One died of a fever. Two were shot by the S.S. because, being hungry and driven by despair, they had stolen army food. 14 were killed by Russian bombs. If I and many of my comrades are still alive it is only due to the fact that the Russians used small calibre bombs.

BACK TO

GERMANY

We were then brought to Germany on a small coal tug. What fate were we going to meet now? Everyone was very depressed. The Armeebekleidungsamt tried to soothe us and made many promises. But we knew the Nazis and did not trust them. We did not judge them wrongly. On February 24th, 1945, we were brought to Hamburg and at once taken charge of by the Gestapo who put us into Fuhlsbuettel prison. Our time was spent with extremely hard work, hunger, and the terror of the unceasing air-raids by Flying Fortresses which we had to undergo without any protection. We were separated from the women.

On April 11th, the prison was cleared. All of us, including the women, had to march about 60 miles to Kiel. We arrived in the Labour and Training Camp of Kiel-Russee on April 14th. It was an extermination camp. Daily people starved to death, were shot or killed by injections; added to this was the ordeal of air-raids which we had to go through even there. Insufficient food, no end of vermin, wooden beds with nothing on them, no blankets. We had the first deaths by starvation in the first few days. We would all have died within a few weeks, but a miracle happened : the Swedish Red Cross came and rescued us from hell.

Now we are free again. During the last four weeks we have been treated very well. We have even begun to recover physically. Yet what of the future ? We are German and stateless. I see no future for us older people.

Yours,

Hermann Voosen

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Heinz Samuel,
Flykting Slægret,
Holsby Brunn,
Sweden.

June, 1945

SHORT REPORT ON OUR SUFFERINGS

On December 11th, 1941, we were sent from Krefeld to Riga. We arrived there on December 15th, and were transported to the Ghetto. Our trunks which we had with us were confiscated. Two days before our arrival something terrible had happened in the Ghetto. Of 40,000 Latvian Jews only 5,000 remained. All the others had been got rid of by the S.S. who were in charge there, with the aid of the Latvian S.S. . We found the homes in a devastated condition and we still waded in the blood of the murdered. To report all that happened would be attempting too much. Before we had got used to the Ghetto there were many more victims. In the beginning we were housed in one small room with 17 other people. The food situation gave us much trouble. A fortnight's ration lasted only for two days. People tried to obtain extra food by barter. The punishment for barter was death, and lots of people were hanged or shot for this offence. We men had to make a daily 7-hour march to the harbour in snow and ice to do hard work there. Our food was frozen swedes which we found. When we returned hungry children were waiting at the fence for a piece of bread or a swede which we sometimes smuggled into the Ghetto on pain of death. Our dear father, who had a very weak heart, did not have to go to work with us.

STARVING

GHETTO

On December 22nd, 1941, Werner and I went with a big transport to the notorious extermination camp at Salaspilz, about 10 miles from Riga. We left our family sadly and unwillingly. Most of us, without knowing it, marched to our death. Of 2,000 people 1,200 found their death in a communal grave. Vermin, the lack of washing arrangements and particularly starvation were the cause of many suicides.

Our Werner was sentenced to be hanged for carrying money on him at a search but, thank God, was saved at the last moment as we seemed to be well liked by those running the camp. Our boxing gloves, which we always carried with us, were of great use to us.

This hell lasted eight months during which we had no word from our beloved ones. Then those who had survived returned to the Ghetto half dead. Our dear father had died of starvation. Mother and our dear sister had grown very thin. Many friends failed to find their relatives who had been removed by the S.S. Even mother had been marked out but escaped that fate. Many transports which came after us were sent straight into the forest and finished off in a communal grave by hand-grenades and machine-gun fire. The communal grave had to be dug the day before by my friends under heavy guard.

In the Ghetto were 15,000 people from Cologne, Duesseldorf, Prague, Vienna, Berlin, etc. 15,000 men and women went in columns to the many S.S. and army branches for hard labour. There were shootings and hangings daily. Mother worked indoors and did the housework for eight persons. Ruth worked at a scrap-metal depot where she had to load heavy pieces of iron. She got me employed there and my job was welding. There at least you got a chance of bringing home a piece of bread or some other bit of food which was often given to me by Latvian workers as a token of their appreciation of my work. My joy was very great, but even greater was the risk of smuggling the food into the Ghetto. Obersturmfuehrer Krause would lead innocent people, mostly mothers who had to feed their children, to the cemetery and shoot them there for bringing food into the Ghetto.

LATVIAN

WORKERS

HELP

At the beginning of June, 1943, a lot of Jews were sent to dig peat, and even Ruth had to go. I was ordered to stay as I was a skilled worker. So I remained with mother and sister. Then they built a new concentration camp in the Kaiserwald near Riga. The Ghetto was slowly being cleared. Our Werner too had to go there. It was the first time that we boys had been separated. I would gladly have gone with him, but on the other hand I didn't want to desert my mother and sister. Saying good-bye to each other we cried like children. Werner was lucky again and became Camp Leader in Dondangen extermination camp.

When my group was dissolved I too was lucky and became a mechanic at the Armeebekleidungsamt (ABA). This group remained in the Ghetto to the end. So I could stay on with my loved ones. It was only through my job that I managed to save my mother and sister from the terrible Kaiserwald camp. Often we had to unload hospital trains day and night. For food we had nothing but dry bread. On October 24th, 1943, Ruth came back from digging peat with infected legs. Her parents, too, were no longer there. She brought some food with her which she had earned in her free hours by sewing for the director of the peat factory. Our little sister, too, was ordered to work in the hospital. She had to walk four hours but in the evening she came back, proudly, with her rucksack full of bread and potatoes which she had been given there. She felt like the breadwinner of the family. It is awful to think what terrible years the child had to share with us.

SELECTION

FOR MURDER

out to meet their parents and brothers and sisters as they came home from work. Here and there a light was to be seen and terrible crying and shouting to be heard. When I entered our home I found it in the same state as it had been in December, 1941, but mother and sister were no longer there. I ran around the house but found nothing. After a long search I discovered Ruth as she was seeking shelter with Mendels from Kempen who had seen everything that had happened that day. At eight o'clock in the morning the order had come that children and old people had to line up. Afterwards the whole Ghetto had to assemble. The people had been driven out of their homes by the S.S. with revolvers. They had to line up on the assembly square; there they were sorted out by the murderer Krause. A nod by this criminal decided the fate of the poor Jews who had at once to board big lorries and were then packed into railway wagons. From that moment onwards they disappeared without leaving any trace. Many young mothers hid their children and gave them sleeping draughts to keep them quiet. Most of them, however, were discovered by the criminals.

A dreadful depression now settled on the Ghetto. The few people who remained had lost nearly all their relatives. We stayed in the Ghetto until November 6th, 1943, and were then put into barracks by the ABA. People with children under ten had to stay on in the Ghetto. At the next purge they went the same way as our beloved ones.

We who were working for ABA had to register through the Kaiserwald camp. We came into a special concentration camp of the ABA. The work was very hard, the food situation very bad. We bartered our clothes to keep us from starving to death. We had to wear very thin convict clothes and men and women had their heads shaved. Ruth came home from the hospital on two different occasions with a high temperature. I secretly stole away from the camp to a neighbouring house and begged for medicine and food. I wanted to give the good woman there the shirt I was wearing but she replied that God would reward her.

THE LAST

CHILDREN

KILLED

I myself was twice operated upon in the hospital. Then there came another bad day; the rest of the children were fetched by the S.S. There were terrible scenes. The parents had to hand their own children over to the murderers. The small children who had been smuggled with great danger from the Ghetto into our camp now ended in the forest in the same way in which so many of our fellow-Jews had met their death. As the Russians came nearer, another purge followed in which 176 people from our camp lost their lives. The sorting out was done by the S.S. doctor Krabsbach. After this our camp was reduced from 1,500 to 200 people, all the others were sent to the Stutthof extermination camp. Again most people had their relatives torn from them. At any rate, by working hard to the satisfaction of the criminals, Ruth and I managed to remain among the last.

Later, a transport of 1,400 went to Libau by ship and Ruth had to go too. We remained with 50 men and 10 women. After a fortnight, we were also sent to Libau where we met the 1,400 others.

Our commander was now Hauptscharfuehrer Brünner who must be held responsible for the death of a great number of people. Meanwhile we had some heavy Russian air-raids. One incendiary-bomb which fell into the air-raid trench burnt half of Ruth's face. After an operation on my hand I was employed as a stoker

and often had to work during the night. We remained till February 19th, 1945.

From Libau we were then shipped to Hamburg. There we were thrown into the prison of Fuhlsbuettel concentration camp. We remained in that hell for seven weeks. Our strength dwindled from day to day. Sixty comrades were sent to Bergen-Belsen camp. On April 14th, we were called together and given 750 grams of bread and 100 grams of margarine; that had to last us for four days. We had to march straightaway under S.S. guard the 60 odd miles to Kiel. On the first day we marched 20 miles and were hardly able to move afterwards as our bodies had been weakened by all the previous exertions and privations. We lived only on swedes which we found by the way, and even then we were beaten and kicked for picking them up.

After four days we arrived at Kiel where we were welcomed by the S.S. Leader and camp commander with the words : " You synagogue worshippers will have a fine time with me." We had to repair bomb-damaged houses in Kiel and were treated inhumanly. Every evening S.S. Leader Baumann showed us how well he could shoot. Thirty inmates of the camp had to bite the dust for that. The inmates were now only skeletons and we had come to the stage when our legs could barely sustain our bodies. Legs and feet were badly swollen with water. On April 30th, we had to put on the blood-soaked clothes of those who had been shot the day before. This boded no good for us, as many comrades had started on their last journey with torn clothes. But we were in such a state that we simply didn't care. But then the unbelievable happened. On May 1st, 1945, the Danish Red Cross fetched us out of this hell and brought us back to freedom.

This report tells but part of our terrible adventures.

HUMAN BEINGS

AS SHOOTING

TARGETS

—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—O—