

**Carlo Mattogno**

# **Chelmno**

**A German Camp  
in History and Propaganda**



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## Introduction

The alleged extermination camp at Chelmno (German: Kulmhof), a town in Poland in the region of Warta, called Warthegau by the Germans during the Second World War, is of major importance in orthodox Holocaust historiography, because it is claimed to be the first “death camp” built to serve the genocidal agenda of which the Germans are accused. Unlike other camps established afterwards, it is not said to have been equipped with stationary gas chambers, but with “*Gaswagen*” (gas vehicles),<sup>1</sup> mobile gassing trucks which allegedly used engine-exhaust gas to kill human beings. The camp is said to have operated, with occasional periods of inactivity, in two phases: from 8 December 1941 – the day it opened – to 7 April 1943, and again from April 1944 to January 1945, killing a total of 152,000 to 340,000 people (Jäckel *et al.*, vol. I, p. 280; see Chapter 11).

Documentation about it is almost nonexistent, which is why the picture outlined by orthodox Holocaust historiography is based almost exclusively on court records, which is to say, it is in fact based entirely on testimony. But even these data are rather limited: until 2007 they have only permitted the preparation of the odd leaflet by some Polish historians and a few articles by Western historians. As Israeli historian Shmuel Krakowski, who is currently the world’s leading Holocaust expert of the orthodox persuasion, wrote (Krakowski 1995, p. 55):

*“Research on the extermination camp at Chelmno upon Ner occupies a very small place in Holocaust historiography.”*

His 2007 study of this camp, despite its stated intention to “expand the state of knowledge” and to “try to complete what has not been taken into account in the existing literature” (Krakowski 2007, p. 10) actually reflects the accumulated historical-documentary inconsistency of the orthodox Holocaust historiography about Chelmno. He reaffirms, among other things, that “sources on the Chelmno camp are extremely few, hence the insignificant number of publications on the topic” (*ibid.*, p. 11).

In the revisionist school, the most important historiographic contribution is the 2003 article by Ingrid Weckert “What Was Kulmhof/Chelmno?”

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<sup>1</sup> This term became commonplace only after the war.

These studies have inevitably left many gray areas, and the history of the Chelmno camp is still in many aspects enigmatic. One of the most important issues, raised in 1999 by Bertrand Perz and Thomas Sandkühler, concerns the relationship between Chelmno and “Aktion Reinhardt,” but even more important is the relationship between the “field incinerators” of Chelmno and cremation at Auschwitz (see Matogno 2008).

The existence of “gas vans” during the Second World War is very controversial and is disputed by revisionist scholars (see Marais 1994; Weckert 2003; Alvarez 2011). However, the interpretation of documents relating to the alleged “gas vans” (called *Sonderwagen*, *Sonderfahrzeuge*, and *Spezialwagen*) is not the subject of this study, which restricts the scope of its investigation to determining whether such vehicles might have actually been used for the purpose of extermination at Chelmno. Yet even in this limited scope, it is important to initially examine the decision-making process and technical development that would be required to lead to the existence and use of the “gas vans.”

## 1. The Orthodox “Gas Van” History

In a paper setting out the conclusions of Holocaust historiography on the origins of the “gas van,” Mathias Beer notes that the first document on this issue dates from 26 March 1942, so that

*“the path of decisions leading to the construction and the operation/usage of these vans remains obscure.”* (Beer 1987, p. 404; all subsequent page numbers from the German version unless stated otherwise)

He claims that the well-known trials held since 1945 can remedy this lack of documentation, although he warns (*ibid.*):

*“However, the historian is not entitled to use court verdicts without examining them, because justice and historiography pursue different ends. For him [the historian] primarily witness testimonies are important, because they help to fill the gaps in the sources. But due to their peculiarities testimonies can be treated on an equal footing with documents, for example, and be used profitably by historical research only if certain principles are observed. The basic requirement is not to abandon the link between witness statements and documents which have been subject to thorough source criticism, that is to say, to always connect the probable with a certain fact. [But] even in this way we cannot respond satisfactorily to every question.”*

As there are no documents which can be used as a basis of comparison, this means that for Chelmno the testimonies cannot constitute historical sources, so that there cannot even exist a genuine historiography for this camp.

Beer follows the technical development of a euthanasia “gas van” through the intermediate stage of the “*Kaisers-Kaffee-Wagen*” (“Kaiser’s Coffee Cart” (pp. 404f.):

*“Testimonies exist which report that during the evacuation of nursing homes for the mentally ill in Poland in 1939-1940, a hermetically sealed trailer was used with the words ‘Kaiser’s Coffee Shop’ [Kaisers-Kaffee-Geschäft] on it, which was towed by a tractor. In the trailer sick persons are said to have been killed with pure carbon monoxide (CO) injected from steel cylinders. Precisely because there are no documents, the provenance of this vehicle cannot be clarified. However, there are indications that allow us to answer the*

*question whether there is a link between 'Kaiser's Coffee' van and gas vans."*

Then he sets out the Holocaust thesis on euthanasia (p. 405):

*"In a letter dated 1 September 1939, Hitler authorized his personal physician Dr. Karl Brandt and Reichsleiter Philipp Bouhler of the 'Führer's Chancellery' to carry out the 'euthanasia.' The Institute for Criminological Technology (Kriminaltechnische Institut, KTI) in the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) was charged with testing suitable killing methods, which concluded that the most appropriate method was killing with CO. After an experimental gassing was conducted in early 1940 in the former prison of Brandenburg/Havel – mentally ill persons were killed using CO in an airtight room – this procedure was also used in all other 'euthanasia' institutions. The Führer's Chancellery received the necessary CO under the aegis of the KTI on the basis of a conversation between Head of the Office [Viktor] Brack and [Albert] Widmann, head of section V D 2 (chemistry and biology). On the orders of [Arthur] Nebe, head of the Amt V (crime fighting unit) of the RSHA, SS Untersturmführer [August] Becker collected the steel cylinders at the IG Farben plant in Ludwigshafen and brought them to individual institutions."*

It must be emphasized here that the claim regarding the use of carbon monoxide bottles for homicidal purposes is based *exclusively* on testimonies (note 14-18, p. 405), which moreover were made rather late.<sup>2</sup> But since, as M. Beer rightly points out, justice and historiography pursue different ends, these legal testimonies have no historiographic value due to the total absence of documents. In fact, there is *no documentary evidence*:

1. that the euthanasia centers were equipped with *carbon-monoxide gas chambers*,
2. that *cylinders of carbon monoxide* were used for homicidal purposes by the euthanasia centers,
3. and that the IG-Farben plant in Ludwigshafen supplied *bottled carbon monoxide* to the euthanasia centers.

In addition, there is *no documentary evidence* either that the *KTI*, the Institute for Criminological Technology, had experimented with killing

<sup>2</sup> The sources are statements made by German defendants in 1959 and 1960 in connection with investigations by the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen* in Ludwigsburg.



procedures, that it had chosen carbon monoxide as a means of killing and that at the beginning of 1940, in the former prison of Brandenburg upon Havel, an experiment was carried out with a CO gas chamber.

M. Beer then returns to the “Kaiser’s Coffee” vans (p. 405f.):

*“The ‘Kaiser’s Coffee’ vans operated on the same principle as the gas chambers of the ‘euthanasia’ institutions. In a trailer, CO was released through pipes from a steel cylinder placed in the towing vehicle. Hence it was a gas chamber on wheels. Testimonies state that, from December 1939 on, mentally ill persons in nursing homes in Pomerania, East Prussia and Poland were killed in these vehicles by the Sonderkommando Lange. The name of the Kommando derived from its leader SS Obersturmführer and police adviser Herbert Lange. The letter from Higher SS and Police Leader [Wilhelm] Koppe to SS Gruppenführer [Jakob] Sporrenberg explains the use of this Kommando at Soldau:*

*‘The so-called Lange Sonderkommando for special tasks subordinated to me was seconded to Soldau, East Prussia, during the period of 21 May to 8 June 1940 in accordance with the agreement made with the RSHA, and in that time has evacuated 1,558 patients from the Soldau transit camp.’*

*Lange brought along one of these vans either from the RSHA (as is implied by the statements of Gustav Sorge and the important role of the Group II D, technical matters, within the RSHA in the progressive development of the gas van), or he himself had it fabricated in collaboration with the RSHA.”*

Beer expressed the suspicion that Lange had “the task of field-testing this vehicle” and adds that immediately after this task his Soldau *Sonderkommando* was disbanded, and from this moment “there are no more reports on the use of such vehicles.” (p. 406)

The connection between the alleged “Kaiser’s Coffee” vans and the alleged CO gas chambers at the euthanasia institutions is in fact totally inconsistent, since there is no documentary evidence that either actually existed. Koppe’s letter quoted above neither demonstrates the existence of a “Kaiser’s Coffee” van nor its homicidal use. And strictly speaking it doesn’t demonstrate either that the Lange *Sonderkommando* had killed 1,558 persons, because it speaks simply of an evacuation from a transit camp.

Before describing the alleged technical development from “Kaiser’s Coffee” vans to the “gas van,” it is necessary to explain the decision-

making process that would have motivated it. In this connection, M. Beer writes (p. 407):

*“On 15 and 16 August 1941 Himmler was in Baranovichi and Minsk and witnessed a shooting in the area of Einsatzgruppe B. The Higher SS and Police leader of Central Russia, von dem Bach-Zelewski, who was present, later reported that Himmler was visibly shaken. Then Himmler visited a nursing home for the mentally ill and subsequently ordered the head of Einsatzgruppe B, Nebe, to seek ways to end as soon as possible the suffering of these people, because after experiencing the shooting he had concluded that ‘shooting was certainly not the most humane way.’ He was to submit a ‘report’ on this. Himmler turned to Nebe, because the KTI, which answered to Amt V, had already distinguished itself in experimenting with killing methods in the context of ‘euthanasia,’ so that now its experience could be utilized.”*

But no document exists for this anecdote either. Its sole support allegedly comes from former SS *Obergruppenführer* Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski in a statement published on 23 August 1946 in the New York Jewish newspaper *Aufbau* and repeated in 1960 by Karl Wolff, Himmler’s adjutant (note 30, p. 407). It concerns an interrogation record drawn up for the Nuremberg trials. Before introducing the story, the German official declared that the extermination of the Jews “had been deliberately planned *before* the war by Heinrich Himmler” and that “Himmler had consequently focused on war in order to fulfill his plans” (Bach-Zelewski, p. 1). These are nonsensical claims to which not even the most-obtuse intentionalist would subscribe. This is followed by a description of the alleged Jewish shooting, without even an indication of the year! (Bach-Zelewski, p. 2)

M. Beer’s narrative continues (p. 407):

*“Nebe was at the same time head of Amt V of the RSHA. In this function he sent Widmann to Minsk with explosives and two metal hoses in early September.”*

They allegedly used the explosives to blow up a bunker which the mentally ill were forced to enter, but the result was not satisfactory, so a gassing experiment was carried out in a nursing home in Mogilev by cutting two holes into the wall of a sealed room, to which the exhaust pipes of two vehicles were hooked up using the metal hoses. Beer concludes (pp. 408f.):

*“The two experiments convinced Nebe that the only feasible idea was killing by exhaust gas, which most probably is to be attributed to him. But for the Einsatzgruppen, for whom the new ‘more humane’ killing method was sought, a stationary gas chamber, in which people could be killed with exhaust gas, was of no use. In order to fulfill its purpose, it had to be mobile. Based on these considerations and the experience so far gained, the KTI project to build gas vans was born. Nebe and [SS Sturmbannführer, head of the KTI Walter] Heess suggested such a proposal to their superior Heydrich, head of the Security Police and Security Service.”*

Here we need to examine the account by Widmann, on which M. Beer relies, in order to examine the reliability of these later anecdotal sources. The premise of the two killing “experiments” mentioned above is that it was not possible to transport cylinders of carbon monoxide (CO) to Russia. Why was it not possible? Widmann does not explain this. He received from Nebe, through his deputy Werner, an order to procure 250 kg of explosives. In an excess of zeal, Widmann bought 400 kg. To say the least, an exorbitant amount for a killing “experiment,” certainly more suitable for a mass extermination. The idea of the “experimental” gassing allegedly came to Nebe, who is *rumored* to once have fallen asleep in his car in the garage (with the engine running!) and thus had nearly died! Widmann then also obtained two metal hoses. With these materials he went to Minsk. The first “experiment” was performed in a forest near the city, where there were “two shelters” 3 m × 6 m. In one of the two, explosive charges were placed, and the mentally ill persons brought from a mental hospital in Minsk were made to enter. Then the charges were detonated. Since not all were dead after the first time, they reloaded more explosives and pulled the trigger once more. Result: 250 kg of explosives used to kill 18 people, but unfortunately their body parts had been scattered all over the place, some of them hanging in the surrounding trees! Smart as the Germans were, they subsequently concluded that blowing up people was messy and inefficient.

Widmann then moved to Mogilev. In a mental hospital, among other buildings, a laboratory was chosen to carry out the gassing. The window was walled up, leaving two holes for inserting two metal hoses. Initially only one was inserted into a hole and was connected to the exhaust pipe of a car. Then 5 to 6 mentally ill persons were made to enter the room. At this point, “Nebe entered the building, where the

inside of the laboratory could be seen through a glass window in the door.” So a room with a door and with a “glass window” had been chosen as a “gas chamber”!

Because after 8 minutes no effect could be observed, Widmann and Nebe came to the conclusion that the gas flow was insufficient, so the second hose was inserted into the hole and connected to a truck; after “a few minutes,” the victims became unconscious. Widmann says nothing about the type of engine of the two motor vehicles. Leaving aside the absurdity of the “5-meter-high flames” which came out of the chimney of the crematorium of the Pirna Euthanasia Institute (which in his opinion was caused by the fact that too many corpses were cremated together),<sup>3</sup> I note only that such massive disorganization, such ridiculous incompetence, such gross carelessness is utterly irreconcilable with the procedures of the Institute for Criminological Technology of the *RSHA*. Hence the testimony is totally unbelievable, the witness utterly untrustworthy.

Let’s go back to Beer’s story. In October 1941 Heydrich allegedly turned to SS *Obersturmführer* Walter Rauff, head of Group II D 3, technical issues (*Technische Angelegenheiten*), whose Section II D 3a, Automotive Division of the Security Police (*Kraftfahrwesen der Sicherheitspolizei*), was directed by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Friedrich Pradel, who, according to Beer (p. 410),

*“gave [Harry] Wentritt [head of Section II D 3a, repair workshop] the task of verifying whether it was possible to inject the exhaust gases into the enclosed body of a van. After Wentritt had confirmed this, Pradel ordered Rauff to get in touch with Heess. They explained to him how such a truck had to be modified in order to work. Then, on Rauff’s orders, Pradel and Wentritt visited the Gaubschat Company in Berlin-Neukölln, which specialized in the construction of truck bodies, pretending to need vehicles to carry away the bodies of victims of typhus epidemics.”*

As soon as the first van was ready, it was taken to the workshop of the Office II D 3 a, where it was allegedly converted into a “gas van” by connecting a metal hose to the exhaust pipe, which piped the exhaust gases into the van’s cargo box. This “gas van” was then brought to the *KTI*, where analyses of the exhaust gas taken from the van’s loadspace were carried out. Beer continues (p. 411):

<sup>3</sup> Interrogation of Albert Widmann on 11 January 1960. ZSL, Az. 202 AR-Z 152/59, pp. 44-53.

*“A short time later an experimental gassing took place at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp (where the KTI had a workshop), which also involved SS officers in addition to Heess and the two chemists Leiding and Hoffmann.”*

In this way, according to Beer, the prototype of the “gas van” was built and tested. Regarding their use, he states (p. 412):

*“If we start from the time of the experimental gassing in Sachsenhausen and given the time required for the modification of vehicles, between eight to fourteen days or so, plus the time required to drive the vehicles to their operational area, it seems that the first gas van could have been used only starting in late November early December 1941. The first use of a gas van can be documented in the operational area of Einsatzgruppe C at Sonderkommando 4a at Poltava.”*

The conclusion of this labored story takes us to the specific theme of this study (*ibid.*):

*“The use of gas vans is attested to for 8 December [1941] at Chelмно by the previously mentioned Sonderkommando Lange.”*

In this scenario, *nothing* is documented: the experimental gassing at Mogilev, the transformation of a van into a “gas van,” the experimental gassing in Sachsenhausen, the first use of gas vans; all that is left to mere testimonies.

In conclusion, of the origin of the “gas van” of orthodox Holocaust historiography, *in documentation*, nothing is known.<sup>4</sup>

As noted by Friedrich Paul Berg, in the years between the two world wars and in particular during World War Two, so-called “producer-gas” vehicles were in use in many European countries. In Germany these vehicles were called “*Generatorgaswagen*” (producer-gas vehicles) or simply “gas vans” (*Gaswagen*). Although such gas generators, fired with wood or coal, produce a mixture rich in CO – from 18 to 35% – the CO content emitted by a gasoline engine is usually less than 10%. Oddly enough, the evidence does not suggest that the *KTI* ever thought of using gas generators for homicidal purposes (Berg 2003, pp. 459f.).

According to a document first mentioned by Christian Gerlach in 1997, but which has apparently remained unpublished – the “Report on the Activities and the Situation of *Einsatzgruppe B* for the Period 16 to

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<sup>4</sup> In 2011, Beer had a new, slightly shorter paper published on the same topic, which does not contain any new information relevant in this context (Morsch/Perz/Ley 2011, pp. 154-165). I discuss this paper in Mattogno 2016, pp. 55-62.

28 February 1942” of 1 March 1942, this unit had received two “gas vans” (*Gaswagen*; Gerlach 1997, p. 68, and note 83, p. 77). But considering the above-mentioned wartime terminology, I posit that these were *Generatorgaswagen* rather than homicidal “gas vans,” a term, moreover, which does not appear in any other wartime document as far as I know and which began to circulate as a designation for homicidal vehicles using exhaust gases only after the war.<sup>5</sup>

The “gas vans” were allegedly created primarily to facilitate the homicidal activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* and were then deployed precisely for this purpose. According to Beer, of the six alleged “gas vans” of the “first series” (Diamond brand or some generic “small” van) converted in 1941, one was assigned to *Einsatzgruppe C*, one to *Einsatzgruppe D*, two to Chelmno (p. 413); also in 1942, thirty other “gas vans” of the second series (Saurer brand) were produced, 20 of which had already been delivered by April 1942 (p. 415), one to Chelmno, the rest apparently to the *Einsatzgruppen*.

It should be noted that the *Einsatzgruppen* have left an enormous quantity of documents on their activities. The “*Ereignismeldungen UdSSR*” (Information on Events in the USSR) amounted to “more than 2,900 typewritten pages” (Krausnik/Wilhelm 1981, p. 333). “There are 195 numbered reports ranging from 23 June 1941 to 24 April 1942 (*ibid.*, pp. 650ff.). The “*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*” (Communications from the Occupied Eastern Territories) are 55 weekly reports numbered from 1 May 1942 to 23 May 1943 (*ibid.*, pp. 652f.). Finally there are 11 “*Tätigkeits-, Lageberichte der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR*” (Reports on the Activities and Situation of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and Security Service in the USSR) that are dated from 31 July 1941 to 31 March 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 654).

In spite of this huge volume of documents, in these reports “gas vans” never appear (with the one exception mentioned above) and no victim is ever listed as killed with a “gas van.” Apparently no one has addressed this enormous contradiction so far.

<sup>5</sup> Although the term “gas lorries” appeared in an article of the British weekly *News Review* on 16 July 1942 (Sharf 1963, p. 187), and “gas lorries” as well as “gas vans” were one main focus of the Krasnodar show trial in 1943 (*The Peoples’ Verdict* 1944, pp. 49f., 53, 65, 78, 89f., 110). On the document mentioned by Gerlach see also my elaborations in Mattogno 2016, pp. 112-114.

## 2. The Alleged Hitler Order, Zyklon B & CO

Orthodox Holocaust historiography attributes to the Chancellery of the Führer not only the design of the “gas vans,” but also of the alleged eastern extermination camps. In 1976, Ino Arndt and Wolfgang Scheffler noted in this regard (Arndt/Scheffler 1976, p. 114.):

*“The successful testing of human extermination by carbon monoxide, and ‘experience’ therein acquired by the staff in relation to the technical apparatus of mass destruction, formed the immediate background to, and a precondition for, the killings of incomparably greater size (for which the aforementioned definition of mass extermination has become customary) that began immediately after the end of ‘Action T4’ outside the Reich in the territories of occupied Eastern Europe, especially the ‘Final Solution of the Jewish question,’ which was carried out in the gas chambers of the extermination camps and gas vans used by the Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and Security Service.”*

This thesis has become a kind of dogma of Holocaust historiography.

Heinz Peter Longerich, in his report in support of Deborah Lipstadt in the libel trial of David Irving (January-April 2000), reaffirms in this regard (Longerich 1999, Chapter III.B):

*“1. Parallel to the beginning of the deportations, the transfer of gas-killing technology into the Eastern European region was begun. This technology had been under development in the context of the ‘euthanasia’ programme since 1939.*

*2. This transfer was initiated after the programme of ‘euthanasia’ had been stopped on 24 August 1941. [...] Only a few weeks later, the first preparations can be documented for the construction of gas chambers in Eastern Europe.*

*3. The decision to build the first extermination camp in Belżec was made in mid-October. The killing was to proceed by means of exhaust from a permanently installed motor. Construction started at the beginning of November, and the killing experts of Operation T4 were ordered to Belżec in December 1941.”*

Such a transfer would of course also have involved Chelmno (*ibid.*):

*“9. Around the same time, from October/November 1941 onward, the gas vans were also deployed by the SK Lange in the Warthegau*

*to murder of Jews. On 8 December, the killing began in Chelmno, where a permanent location of gas vans was established – that is, a further variant of an extermination camp.”*

But this primary function of the killing system using engine-exhaust gas contrasts sharply with that allegedly adopted at Auschwitz. Longerich mentions this contradiction almost as a matter of compliance with record, without however attempting to explain it (*ibid.*):

*“10. While the mass murders were being prepared or already executed in Belzec, the Warthegau, and in the occupied eastern territories with the help of exhaust fumes, the Commandant of the Auschwitz concentration camp took another course. In September or December 1941, 600 Soviet prisoners of war, as well as a selected 250 sick prisoners, were murdered in the basement of Block 11 of Auschwitz by means of a high concentration of the extremely poisonous disinfectant Cyclon B. At a later point, in December 1941, a further 900 Soviet POWs were murdered by means of gas.*

*11. In his writings from the Krakow prison after the war, the former Commandant of Auschwitz Höß described how he had discussed the question of the most suitable poison gas to be employed, on the occasion of a visit by Eichmann. The date of this visit is still not certain – some of his comments indicate the autumn of 1941, others point to a later date somewhere in early 1942. Höß further states that during the time that he was not in Auschwitz himself, his deputy used Cyclon B to kill Soviet POWs on his own initiative.”*

The question is actually even more complex than it appears at first sight, because here comes into play not only the agent of killing – Zyklon B as against CO – but also the hierarchical path of the alleged extermination order. On this point, in fact, orthodox Holocaust historiography has an irresolvable dichotomy: on one hand the following path:

Hitler → Führer’s Chancellery → KTI (Technical Criminal Institute) → euthanasia → “gas vans” → the alleged extermination camps in Chelmno and the east

and on the other the path:

Hitler → Himmler → Eichmann → Höss → Auschwitz → Majdanek.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> According to orthodox historiography, the camp Lublin-Majdanek was equipped with a homicidal Zyklon B gas chamber since October 1942. Marszałek 1986, p. 140. See in this regard Graf/Mattogno 2003.



In his manuscript “*Die Endlösung der Judenfrage*” (“The Final Solution of the Jewish Question”), completed in November 1946 in Krakow, Höss explained the origin of the alleged extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz as follows (Broszat 1981, pp. 157-160):

“[Höss] *In the summer of 1941 – at the moment I cannot say the exact date – I was suddenly summoned to Berlin to the Reichsführer [Himmler], through his adjutant office.*<sup>[7]</sup>

[Himmler] *‘The Führer has ordered the final solution of the Jewish question, and we – the SS – must carry out that order. [...] You will learn further details from Sturmbannführer Eichmann, of the RSHA, who will contact you in the near future. [...] You are to maintain absolute silence regarding this order, even with your superiors.’*

*Shortly thereafter Eichmann came to me to Auschwitz.*<sup>[8]</sup> *He apprised me about the plans for the operations in the individual countries. [...] Furthermore we talked about implementing the extermination. Only gas would be an option [...]. Eichmann wanted to inquire and then inform me about a gas which could be procured easily and which did not require any special devices. We drove into the area in order to determine the suitable location. We considered the farmhouses [the future Bunker 1] to be suitable which were located at the northwestern corner of the later Construction Sector III [at] Birkenau. [...]*

*Eichmann drove back to Berlin in order to report to the RFSS [Himmler] about our conversation. [...]*

*At the end of November, a conference of the entire section on Jews took place at the Eichmann office, to which I was called as well. [...] I could not yet find out about the beginning of the operations. Also, Eichmann hadn’t managed to locate a suitable gas yet.*

*In the fall of 1941, by means of a secret special order, the Gestapo separated all [Soviet] political commissars and special political functionaries in the PoW camps and sent them to the closest concentration camp for liquidation. Smaller transports of that kind arrived continuously at Auschwitz, which were killed by shooting in the*

<sup>7</sup> The claim is not confirmed by any document.

<sup>8</sup> Eichmann’s visit to Auschwitz is not confirmed by any document. At Nuremberg Höss declared that this visit was “about 4 weeks after having received that order from the *Reichsführer*” (IMT, vol. 11, p. 399), *i.e.* in July 1941, given that the meeting with Himmler had taken place in June. Höss’s affidavit of 5 April 1946 (PS-3868), p. 2.

*gravel pit close to the Cartel Building<sup>9</sup> or in the courtyard of Block 11. On the occasion of a business trip, my deputy, Hauptsturmführer Fritzsch, had used gas on his own initiative for the killing of these Russian PoWs; he did this in such a way that he cram-packed the individual cells located in the basement with Russians and threw in Cyklon B [Zyklon B] while using gas masks, which caused immediate death. [...]*

*During Eichmann's next visit I told him about the use of Cyklon B, and we decided to use this gas for the future mass extermination. [...]*

*I cannot say anymore at what time the extermination of the Jews began. Probably still in September 1941, but maybe only in January 1942."*

So here is involved a direct line Hitler → Himmler → Eichmann → Höss, which, precisely because it implies a presumed general order by Hitler for the extermination of the Jews, of which Höss was to be the main executor, precludes the parallel line via the Chancellery of the Führer, unless you assume a kind of schizophrenia in the top Nazis in charge of the implementation of the alleged extermination of the Jews.

Raul Hilberg inadvertently exacerbates this contradiction by describing the genesis of the alleged homicidal gas chambers as follows (Hilberg 1995, p. 951):

*"During the summer of 1941, when Himmler began to consider the physical destruction of the Jews throughout Europe, he consulted the chief SS doctor (SS und Polizei Reichsarzt), the Gruppenführer Dr. [Ernst Robert] Grawitz, to find out what the best way would be to carry out this mass extermination. Grawitz advised the gas chamber."*

He refers to the affidavit of Konrad Morgen of 13 July 1946, which says (IMT, vol. 42, p. 559; Document SS 65):

*"In order to implement the mass extermination as ordered by Hitler, Himmler asked him [Dr. Grawitz] at that time to suggest a killing method which would be both painless and would spare the victims any fear of death. Hence one had chosen a method which left the victims in complete ignorance of their fate up to the moment of the unexpected application of a fast-acting, highly volatile gas."*

<sup>9</sup> A former building of the Polish Tobacco Cartel, later incorporated into the camp.

The initiative in finding the most-appropriate system of extermination was therefore assumed by Himmler through Grawitz, not by the Chancellery of the Führer through the Institute for Criminological Technology. But even with this in mind, it is absolutely incredible that, while the Institute for Criminological Technology would carry out the alleged dilettante experiments referred to above, Himmler, instead of awaiting the results of the above killing experiments, is said to have delegated the search for a “fast-acting, highly volatile gas” to Eichmann. Eichmann’s performance, however, was so dismal that at the end of November 1941, four months after he was sent to Auschwitz, he had still not found the most-appropriate gas. Instead, this is said to have been found *without great effort* at Auschwitz by a mere SS captain and then used on large scale.

In reality, it would have been very simple to find an appropriate gas. During the First World War both sides used aggressive chemicals of all kinds.<sup>10</sup> At that time, the aggressiveness of the various substances was indicated by the product of mortality or toxicity index that is derived from the Haber Equation and given in “milligrams of toxic substance per m<sup>3</sup> to be inhaled in one minute to obtain the death of the individual.” The most-toxic substances found are given in Table 1. As is clear from this table (Izzo, pp. 45f.):

*“The most dangerous war gas, according to the Haber index, is phosgene, followed soon after by diphosgene.”*

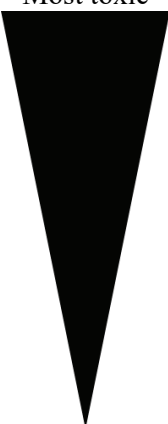
It is noteworthy that CO, with its high index of 70,000, was considered the least-effective gas: 150 times less effective than phosgene, from 17.5 to 70 times less effective than hydrocyanic acid: Who would have ever chosen it for mass extermination?

At that time, Germany was at the forefront of chemistry, and these data were in any reference book, such as *Schädliche Gase, Dämpfe*,

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<sup>10</sup> Here is the list for the curious reader: chlorine, bromine, phosgene (carbon oxychloride), thiophosgene (carbon sulphochloride), hydrogen cyanide, cyanogen chloride, cyanogen bromide, methyl chloroformate, monochloride chloroformate, dichloride chloroformate, trichloride chloroformate (diphosgene), ethyl iodoacetate, bromoacetone, iodoacetone, bromomethyl ethyl ketone, dimethyl sulphate, methyl chlorosulphate, ethyl chlorosulphate, chloropicrin (trichloronitromethane) dichloro methyl arsine, dichloro ethyl arsine, vinyl chloride dichloro arsine, ethyl sulfide dichloride, acrolein (allyl aldehyde), benzyl chloride, benzyl bromide, bromo benzyl cyanide, phenylimino phosgene (carbil phenyl amine chloride), chloroacetophenone, chlorinated diphenyl arsine, cyan diphenyl arsine, amino diphenyl chloro arsine, N-ethyl carbazole. See Izzo, “Principali aggressivi chimici,” table outside of text.

**Table 1:** Toxicity of poison gases used in WWI

SUBSTANCE	TOXICITY INDEX <sup>†</sup>		
phosgene	450		
diphosgene	500		
mustard	1,500		
ethyl iodo-acetate	1,500		
chloropicrin	2,000		
chloro ethyl sulfate	2,000		
hydrogen cyanide*	1,000-4,000		
ethyl bromo-acetate	3,000		
perchloro methyl mercaptan	3,000		
chloro acetone	3,000		
bromo acetone	4,000		
xylene bromide	6,000		
chlorine	7,500		
carbon monoxide	70,000		Least toxic

<sup>†</sup> using the Haber toxicity equation; \*depending on the concentration

*Nebel, Rauch- und Staubarten*, Ferdinand Flury and Franz Zernik, one of the best, which had appeared as early as 1931.<sup>11</sup>

The story of the origin of the alleged homicidal gas chambers is therefore not only documentarily unfounded, but also internally inconsistent.

<sup>11</sup> Similar data can be found in an Italian book by Michele Giua (1933). Another important work on this topic, likewise published in 1933, was Mario Dartori's *Chimica delle sostanze aggressive* (German 1935).

### 3. The Construction Order for the Chelmno Camp

On the design of the alleged extermination camp at Chelmno, Krakowski stated the following (1983, p. 110):

*“A letter, written on 16 July 1941 by SS Sturmbannführer Rolf Heinz Höppner, on the staff of the Höherer SS und Polizeiführer in the Warthegau, to SS Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, mentions for the first time that ‘the Jews [must] be eliminated with some quick-acting poison.’”*

In his book published in 2007, Krakowski sees in this letter a wider and more-systematic murderous intention (p. 21):

*“By this memorandum, as well as by events that happened on the ground, we can assume that already at this early stage there were debates on the extermination of the Jews of the Warthegau, although the manner and pace of implementation of this massacre had not yet been decided upon.”*

The text of the letter, as we shall see later, belies this interpretation, which extrapolates and emphasizes a proposal that is at odds with a general policy of extermination.<sup>12</sup> This document fits seamlessly into the National Socialist policy of Jewish deportation to the east, which renders extremely problematic the orthodox claim of a planned extermination of the Jews and the establishment of the alleged extermination camps, beginning with Chelmno, which is said to have been the first to become operational.

In another study I have documented this policy, which resulted in the deportation of more than 56,000 Jews from the *Altreich* (Old Reich), the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the *Ostmark* (Austria) to the eastern territories (Riga, Kaunas, Raasiku, Minsk, Baranov, Maly Trostinec) and more than 69,000 Jews from those three countries and Slovakia to the Lublin District (Mattogno/Graf 2004, Chapter VI and VIII). Auschwitz had an important role in this policy of deportation because – as was established on 15 September 1942, at a meeting between the Minister Albert Speer, SS *Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl

<sup>12</sup> The quotation is furthermore inaccurate, as the original text does not say “by some quick-acting poison (*durch irgendein schnell wirksames Gift*),” but “by some quick-acting substance” (*durch irgendein schnellwirkendes Mittel*). See below.

and other officials of the Reich – this area was the center for the assembly of forced-labor units that were selected during the deportation of Jews to the eastern territories, referred to in the “*Ostwanderung*” document.<sup>13</sup>

*“The Jews fit for work destined for migration to the east will therefore interrupt their journey [at Auschwitz] and shall have to perform armaments work.”*

Götz Aly has documented that from January 1941 onward the SS planned to transfer to the ghetto of Łódź in the General Government<sup>14</sup> the majority of Jews unfit for work, who would be replaced by Jews fit for work (Aly, pp. 264f.). He then sums up the plans of the SS (*ibid.*, p. 267):

*“In the spring of 1941 officials in the RSHA dealing with Jewish affairs and in the General Government considered employing Jews fit for work in ‘work columns’; due to new forced labor projects they would have to create ‘space’ in the ghettos of the General Government, into which Heydrich, Eichmann and Höppner wanted to deport Jews unfit for work from the regions of Łódź, Dombrowa and Zichenau.”*

Aly notes that the Jews were divided into two groups – those fit and those unfit for work – who were to be treated differently (*ibid.*, pp. 267f.). These measures, however, were regarded as temporary only in view of an impending “total solution (*Gesamtlösung*) of the European Jewish question,” which in the spring of 1941 took account of the future “potential of the east” (*ibid.*, p. 268).

In this respect, Aly makes it clear that in early 1941 the plans of the SS, to which he assigns undocumented intentions of extermination, were to concentrate Jews unfit for work in reservations or ghettos for the elderly on the eastern outskirts of the General Government and to transfer them later, after victory, to Soviet territories bordering the marshes of eastern Poland and present-day Belarus, while Jews fit for work reclaimed those marshes starting in the summer of 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 273).

<sup>13</sup> Pohl Report to Himmler of September 16, 1942 on the subject of armament work and bomb damage, BAK, NS 19.14, pp. 131-133. See Mattogno 2004c, pp. 52-54.

<sup>14</sup> The General Government (German: *Generalgouvernement*, Polish: *Generalne Gubernatorstwo*) was the German term for the part of Poland not incorporated into the Reich or annexed by the Soviet Union during World War II. It was governed by a German occupational administration.

Aly later documents that “the plan to deport the Jews to the Pripyat marshes, which used to be located in eastern Poland but later were part of White Russia,” was taken very seriously by the SS, and in this context he mentions, among other things, two studies that appeared in December 1941 and June 1942 in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (*Journal for Geopolitics*) entitled “*Die Pripjetsümpfe als Entwässerungsproblem*” authored by Richard Bergius, and “*Pripjet-Polesien, Land und Leute*,” by Hansjulius Schepers (*ibid.*, pp. 275f.). On 19 July 1941, the Governor General of Poland Hans Frank, in a paper to Hans Lammers, head of the Reich Chancellery, suggested the annexation of the “swamp lands of Pripyat” into the General Government (*i.e.* wartime Poland) in order to move there “elements of the population (especially Jews)” in order to use them for productive activities useful to the Reich (*ibid.*, p. 317).

Into this context fits the activity report allegedly written by SS *Sturmabführer* Rolf-Heinz Höppner<sup>15</sup> on 16 July 1941, of which I provide a translation:<sup>16</sup>

*“The L HÖ/S Posen, 16 July 1941*

*File Memo*

*Subject: solution of the Jewish question.*

*In meetings [held] at the provincial government of the Reich, the solution of the Jewish question in the territory of the Warthegau has been addressed from various aspects. The following solution is proposed:*

- 1. All the Warthegau Jews will be assembled in a camp for 300,000 Jews which will be built in the form of barracks as close as possible to the railway line carrying coal and which contains equipment for industrial workers, tailors, cobblers and so on.*
- 2. Into this camp will be brought all the Jews of the Warthegau. Jews fit for work, on request, can be organized into working groups and allowed outside the camp.*
- 3. Such a camp, in the opinion of SS Brigadeführer Albert,<sup>[17]</sup> can be guarded by much smaller police forces than is now the case. Moreo-*

<sup>15</sup> Adalbert Rückerl wrote in this regard (1979, p. 257, note 38): “In both the criminal proceedings before the District Court of Posen and subsequently in a preliminary investigation against him by prosecutors in Bonn Rolf H.[öppner] denied that the letter to the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* and the note attached to the documents had reached him.”

<sup>16</sup> T/219. Reproduction of the document in Leszczyński 1977, pp. 60f.

<sup>17</sup> Wilhelm Albert was head of the police (*Polizeipräsident*) in Łódź.

*ver, the danger of epidemics, which in Litzmannstadt [=Łódź] and other ghettos is always present for the surrounding population, is limited to a minimum.*

*4. This winter there is a danger that not all Jews can be fed any longer. We must seriously consider whether the most-humane solution is not to eliminate the Jews by some substance with rapid effect insofar as they are unfit to work.*

*5. For the rest a proposal was made to sterilize all the Jewesses in this camp who can still be expected to bear children so that with this generation the Jewish problem will indeed be solved completely.*

*6. On this matter the Reichsstatthalter [Arthur Greiser] has not yet ruled. One gets the impression that Regierungspräsident<sup>[18]</sup> Übelhör does not want the Litzmannstadt ghetto to disappear, as he has a lot to gain from it. As an example of how much profit can be made from the Jews, I was told that the Reich Ministry of Labor pays 6 RM from a special fund for every Jew employed in work, but the Jew only costs 80 Pfennigs.*

*SS Sturmbannführer.”*

The proposal attributed to Höppner is therefore not consistent with a plan of systematic extermination. That conclusion was also reached by Aly on the basis of an activity report from Höppner for Eichmann on 2 September 1941 (1995, p. 339):

*“So Höppner from early September stated for a fact that ‘the final solution of the Jewish question’ was a first essential part of the general program of evacuation of all Jews who were ‘under German influence.’ He did not yet consider that systematic murder had been decided upon”*

This is incontrovertibly confirmed by the rest of the letter from Himmler to Arthur Greiser, governor of Warthegau, of 18 September 1941:<sup>19</sup>

*“The Führer wishes that the Old Reich and the Protectorate be emptied and cleared of Jews from west to east as soon as possible. For this reason I have worked hard to transport, possibly even this year, the Jews of the Old Reich and the Protectorate, primarily as a first step, into the new eastern territories obtained two years ago by the Reich, and to expel them farther east next year.*

<sup>18</sup> President of the administrative district.

<sup>19</sup> Letter from Himmler to Greiser of 18 September 1941. BAK, NS 19/2655, p. 3; reproduction in Witte 1995, p. 50.



*I plan on deporting about 60,000 Jews from the Old Reich and the Protectorate to the Litzmannstadt ghetto, which, as I have heard, has the space to accommodate them. I beg you not only to understand this decision, which will certainly create difficulties for your Gau, but to support it with all your strength in the overall interest of the Reich.*

*SS Gruppenführer Heydrich, who has to carry out this Jewish emigration, will approach you in due course directly or through SS Gruppenführer Koppe.”*

While this document reflects perfectly the guidelines of the National Socialist policy of Jewish emigration, Holocaust historian Peter Witte found a way to twist the sentence, claiming that its “further transfer to the east” contains

*“already, in its essentials, the death sentence of the Jews to be deported, regardless of the fact that at that time there were not yet any death camps ready to receive Jews and that their construction had not yet been ordered, although the ground for the extermination had already been prepared, [...]”* (Witte 1995, p. 53)

where the last sentence refers to Höppner’s alleged letter of 16 July 1941!

Unexpectedly – and mysteriously – a few weeks after the above-mentioned letter, in October 1941, Himmler allegedly ordered the construction of the “killing fields” of Chełmno and Bełżec. However, the documents continued to speak of evacuation to the east. I have cited many of them in a previous work (Mattogno/Graf 2004, pp. 181-193). Aly also mentions others (1995, p. 274):

*“On 23 September 1941, Heydrich assured Goebbels, who approached him in his capacity as Gauleiter of Berlin, that, once the military situation would allow it, the Jews would have to be sent to the Communist camps on the Arctic Ocean. Immediately after the Wannsee conference, Heydrich returns to the ‘Arctic Ocean’ option: there they wanted to ‘get hold of the Russian concentration camps’; the territory – which, despite what one might suppose to the contrary, had a sound, concentrated agriculture and an excellent base of raw materials – was an ‘ideal future home for the 11 million Jews of Europe.’<sup>[20]</sup> In 1946, Frank’s secretary of state, Josef Bühler, during his interrogation at Nuremberg, declared that Heydrich had told him*

<sup>20</sup> This refers to a secret speech by Heydrich in Prague on 4 February 1942.

*at the beginning of 1942 that Himmler had the order from the Führer to gather all the Jews of Europe and evacuate them to the north-east of Europe, to Russia."*

The Jewish deportations to Minsk and Riga began on 8 and 15 November 1941, respectively (Mattogno/Graf 2004, pp. 200f.), but these were temporary locations only, because, as Heinrich Lohse, the *Reichskommissar des Ostlandes* (Imperial Commissioner for the Eastern Lands<sup>21</sup>), wrote on 9 October 1941, to Alfred Rosenberg, *Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete* (Imperial Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories), that "since Jewish camps must be shifted considerably farther to the east" (*ibid.*, p. 197) which is also consistent with the Arctic Ocean option.

The use of former Soviet prisoner-of-war camps to imprison Jews followed a general directive issued in Galicia as early as August 1941:<sup>22</sup>

*"In almost all towns of some size in the district of Galicia there are said to be prisoner-of-war camps set up by the Russians. These are said to be equipped with the necessary facilities and are said to be especially well-suited to serve as camps for Jewish forced laborers. All existing camps are to be surveyed and immediately reported. At the same time their capacity and their condition is to be determined."*

But then suddenly, just when the policy of deportation to the east began to be realized, for mysterious reasons the SS began to build not transit camps, but "extermination camps." But what about the subsequent documents that continue to speak of deportation to the east? All that is left to orthodox Holocaust historiography is the subterfuge of "coded language," according to which one merely has to swap terms like "emigration" and "deportation" with "annihilation" so that the sources suddenly document the creation of the alleged extermination machine since October 1941. Here, for example, is how Aly addresses these difficulties of interpretation (p. 358):

*"The minutes of the meeting in Prague on 10 October 1941 document how little difference there was in these days and in these weeks between the ideas of murderous deportation and immediate extermination."*

<sup>21</sup> The territories of the Baltic countries, Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Germans.

<sup>22</sup> Letter of *Oberst der Schutzpolizei und Regimentskommandeur* Worm to Police Battalions 315, 133 and 254 as well as to the *Kommandos der Schutzpolizei* in Lemberg, Tarnopol, Stanislaw of 14 August 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 158.

*nation, with as little fuss as possible, of the European Jews, as the term 'evacuation' became synonymous with killing."*

But the document of 10 October 1941 speaks explicitly of deportations to the east and reception of the deportees in the appropriate camps.<sup>23</sup>

*"Because of the evacuation, difficulties arose. It was planned to begin with it roughly on 15 October 1941, in order to let the transports take off one by one until 15 November, up to the number of some 5,000 Jews – from Prague alone. For now, one still has to be considerate of the Litzmannstadt [Łódź] authorities. Minsk and Riga are to obtain 50,000. [...] During the following weeks the 5,000 Jews are now to be evacuated from Prague. SS Brif. [Brigadeführer] Nebe and Rasch can include the Jews in the camps for communist inmates in the area of operation. According to SS Stubaf. Eichmann this has already been initiated."*

Theresienstadt was considered to be a "provisional assembly camp (*vorübergehenden Sammellager*), albeit with a high mortality, from which evacuation was then to continue "to the eastern territories" (*in die östlichen Gebiete; ibid.*). Nothing in this document suggests any intention on the part of the SS to exterminate the Jews.

About the genesis of the Chelmno camp, Krakowski states (2007, p. 27):

*"It is neither known when exactly the decision was made to establish the Chelmno camp, nor at which moment and under which circumstances the respective orders were issued."*

He repeatedly asserts that it was inaugurated on 8 December 1941 (*ibid.*, pp. 31-32, 35), but does not provide any documentary evidence, not even a single testimony.<sup>24</sup> Despite this, he even claims that "on that 8 December 1941 the gas vans made their awful journey three times" (*ibid.*, pp. 34f.), but this statement too is devoid of any documentary evidence. This applies also to the connection which Krakowski sees between the camp's alleged date of opening and the original date of the Wannsee Conference. He notes that the latter was initially convened for 9 December 1941, but was later postponed to 20 January 1942, because

<sup>23</sup> *Notizen aus der Besprechung am 10.10.41 über die Lösung der Judenfrage*. T 37/299. Transcription in Kryl 1983, pp. 38-41.

<sup>24</sup> According to the testimony of Andrzej Miszczak, the first transport of inmates (700 Jews from Koło) arrived at the camp on 9 December 1941: Blumental 1946, p. 241. This is a simple claim without any documentary confirmation.

of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the subsequent entry of the U.S. into the war, and he concludes (*ibid.*, pp. 31f.):

*“While the conference date was postponed, the opening date of the Chelmno extermination camp was not changed, and the massacre commenced – as planned – on 8 December 1941.”*

But that unfounded conjecture does not turn this purely fictitious date into reality.

Furthermore, the guidelines set out by Heydrich at the Wannsee Conference are in sharp contrast to the alleged establishment of a death camp at Chelmno in early December 1941. Krakowski is forced to completely distort them. He writes (*ibid.*, p. 77):

*“[...] already during this conference it was agreed to leave a small percentage of Jews alive in order to use their strength for forced labor. Working conditions would then gradually bring about the killing of all the forced laborers, according to the Nazi program called ‘extermination through work.’”*

The truth is, however, that at the Wannsee Conference Heydrich announced the change in the National Socialist policy toward the Jews which had evolved a few months earlier:<sup>25</sup>

*“In the meantime, the Reichsfuehrer SS and Chief of the German Police [Himmler] had prohibited emigration of Jews due to the dangers of an emigration in wartime and due to the possibilities of the east. Another possible solution of the problem has now taken the place of emigration, i.e. the evacuation of the Jews to the east, provided that the Fuehrer gives the appropriate approval in advance.”*

That here was a genuine plan to deport the Jews to the east is admitted even by Hilberg, who comments (1995, p. 428):

*“Heydrich explained what would be done with the evacuees: they were organized in huge labor columns; by using their labor, many of them would no doubt ‘perish due to their physical weakness’ (wobei zweifellos ein Grossteil durch natuͤrliche Verminderung ausfallen wird).<sup>[26]</sup> The remainder (Restbestand) of this process of ‘natural selection’ – that is, the more resistant core of the Jews – would have to be ‘treated accordingly’ (wird entsprechend behandelt werden muͤssen), since history had shown how these Jews carry within them*

<sup>25</sup> NG-2586-G, p. 5 of the original.

<sup>26</sup> The expression “*durch natuͤrliche Verminderung*” does not mean “due to their physical weakness,” but instead “by natural attrition,” that is: by natural mortality.

*the seeds of a new Jewish revival. Heydrich does not dwell on this 'according' treatment, but based on the language of the Einsatzgruppen reports we know that he alluded to their death sentence."*

But Hilberg himself distorts the final destiny of the remaining Jews, omitting the words "in case of liberation" (*bei Freilassung*), which categorically excludes both the "death sentence" he posits and the gradual "extermination through work" alleged by Krakowski, making clear that "*entsprechend behandelt*" probably simply meant that these Jews were not to be released.<sup>27</sup>

But if, as late as 20 January 1942, the National Socialist policy toward the Jews still provided for a *genuine* evacuation of the Jews to the east, then how can this be reconciled with the establishment of a camp at Chelmno? In this context Chelmno could only have been a transit camp for the evacuation of Jews from the Warthegau to the east.

Greiser's letter to Himmler of 1 May 1942, from which Krakowski infers that the Nazis intended "giving up – at least for a certain period of time – the total extermination of the entire Jewish population of the Warthegau in order to admit a certain percentage of them for the implementation of forced labor" (2007, p. 78) should be interpreted precisely in this sense.

The passage of the document relied upon by Krakowski says:<sup>28</sup>

*"Reichsführer!*

*The operation of special treatment of some 100,000 Jews in my governmental area, as approved by you in agreement with the Head of the Imperial Security Main Office, SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich, will be finished within the next 2-3 months."*

This "special treatment" was merely an extension to the Jews in Warthegau of the order that Himmler had sent to Greiser on 18 September 1941 concerning the expulsion of the Jews of the Reich proper and the Protectorate via the ghetto of Łódź during "next year," that is 1942.

But if the alleged establishment of the Chelmno "extermination camp" remains inexplicable and contrary to the sources, the report of the first alleged systematic extermination in this camp, as discussed in Chapter 5, is likewise contradictory and inexplicable.

<sup>27</sup> As in the Madagascar project, the deported Jews were under the supervision of the SS in the eastern settlements as well.

<sup>28</sup> NO-246.